

Embracing Bold Authenticity With Confidence

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Your voyage of self-discovery and purposeful
living begins now!

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What it means to be Bold and Authentic

Welcome to the journey of self-discovery and empowerment, designed especially for Women of Color!

I am passionate about helping women of color take bold action to authentically achieve more visibility, connectivity, influence, and success – without compromise. This requires a deep understanding of yourself and those around you. My value proposition is two-fold. I bring the perspective of someone who has “been there” and I coach from a vantage point of real experience. As a result, I’m able to genuinely acknowledge what you are thinking and feeling. Secondly, I bring objectivity, which allows us to talk candidly about what it means to be self-aware and in touch with the experiences you create with every interaction.



Being bold and authentic means embracing your true self with confidence and courage, acknowledging the unique intersections of your identity. It's about navigating life with authenticity, staying true to your values, and making choices that honor the richness of your experiences.

In this workbook, we'll explore key aspects of personal development, from emotional intelligence to career and leadership offering practical strategies and reflective questions to help you plan and execute your thinking. The goal is to begin the act of unlocking the potency of your boldness and authenticity. The strategies included in this workbook are seeds; you must water them by taking action.

This workbook is not about New Year’s resolutions. It is about refining your unique awesomeness. It’s about optimizing your ability to assert yourself, engage with others, and set boundaries when necessary. Some of the suggestions may not work for you but take the tips that do work and exploit them shamelessly. If you are considering something, but it feels like it’s out of your comfort zone, go for it anyway! Our growth lives in our discomfort.

What it Means to be Bold and Authentic

There are eight sections in this workbook. Explore one section at a time and then circle back and make monthly or quarterly plans that will be most impactful for you. As you move through the sections, consider, which of these sections or strategies would you like to become a personal and professional signature for you? Which would you like to role model for the growth of those around you?

Okay, enough talk, let's get started!

Be Assertive, Resolve Conflict, and Set Boundaries

In a world where effective communication and healthy relationships are paramount, mastering the art of asserting yourself, honing interpersonal skills, and setting boundaries is the key to unlocking personal and professional fulfillment. This exploration aims to provide you with practical insights and actionable tips, empowering you to navigate the intricacies of human interaction with confidence and grace.

Assert Yourself: Clearly express your thoughts, needs, and feelings without being aggressive. Use "I" statements to convey your perspective, such as "I feel" or "I need." Combine clear communication with confident body language. Maintain eye contact, stand or sit up straight, and use a calm and steady voice. Non-verbal cues play a significant role in how your assertiveness is perceived.

Saying "no," which is a complete sentence, is a vital part of self-assertion. Understand your limits and don't be afraid to decline requests that go beyond your capacity. This self-awareness helps you articulate your needs and boundaries more effectively. Practice self-reflection to get clear on your values, beliefs, and priorities. Finally, use positive affirmations to boost your confidence with positive self-talk. Remind yourself of your strengths and capabilities, and accomplishments.

Strengthen Interpersonal Skills: Start by developing your empathy. Put yourself in others' shoes to understand their perspectives and feelings. This helps build rapport and strengthens your relationships. Being clear, concise, and considerate in your communication will engage those with whom you interact. Tailor your message to the audience and be mindful of their reactions.

A critical aspect of conflict resolution is your ability to address conflicts calmly and constructively. Focus on finding solutions rather than placing blame. Seek other perspectives on the situation and partner with everyone involved to resolve conflict constructively.

Set Boundaries: Defining your limits is critical here. You must clearly understand what you are comfortable with and what crosses your boundaries. This self-awareness is crucial. Express your boundaries assertively but respectfully. Use specific examples to illustrate your points. Consistently uphold your boundaries; this helps establish a pattern of behavior that others will come to respect.

Setting boundaries is an essential aspect of self-care. Recognize the importance of taking care of your mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Finally, surround yourself with people who respect your boundaries. If necessary, seek guidance from friends, family, or professionals.

Remember, developing these skills takes time and practice. Be patient with yourself as you work towards becoming more assertive, improving interpersonal skills, and setting boundaries. **As you embark on this journey, remember it's a transformative process that leads to effective self-management and a fulfilling life.**

"The one thing you can't take away from me, is the way I choose to respond to what you do to me. The last of one's freedoms is to choose one's attitude in a given situation. ~ Viktor E. Frankl

Reflective Questions

1. When was the last time I hesitated to express my needs or opinions? What factors contributed to that hesitation, and how can I approach similar situations more assertively in the future?

2. What communication habits have I observed in myself during interactions? How do these habits impact my relationships, and what steps can I take to enhance my active listening and empathetic communication skills?

3. Which areas of my life currently lack clear boundaries, leading to potential stress or discomfort? How can I establish and communicate those boundaries effectively to prioritize my well-being and maintain healthier connections?

Strengthen Your Emotional Intelligence

Mastery of emotional intelligence is an intentional and transformative experience. Without a doubt, strong emotional intelligence will fortify your ability to navigate life's complexities with greater resilience and understanding of yourself and others. Here are some practices for you to consider.

1. **Practice Self-Regulation:** When experiencing strong emotions, pause before reacting. Take deep breaths and mentally count to ten before responding -- thoughtfully.
2. **See Mistakes as Growth** - When you miss social/emotional cues or mishandle a relationship, own it as an opportunity for improvement. Strive for insight rather than self-criticism.
3. **Practice micro-expressions:** Study facial expressions and learn to notice the small expressions that reveal the emotions people may attempt to conceal. Be curious and caring by asking about what you observe, e.g., "It looks like something is bothering you, is everything okay?"
4. **Mindful Reflection:** By incorporating mindful reflection into your daily routine, you are fostering a deeper understanding of your emotions and reactions. These moments of introspection will empower you to navigate various situations with heightened emotional intelligence. It is so easy to move from one thing or one interaction to another without giving much thought to the richness of it or the opportunity it presents. Mindful reflection allows you to make mental notes that you can leverage from one experience to the next.
5. **Emotion Journaling:** The practice of keeping an Emotion journal creates a unique and personal guide for understanding your emotional landscape. This reflective exercise will unveil patterns and generate insights that will empower you to make informed choices. In some ways emotion journaling is an extension of mindful reflection. The ability to name and capture how an interaction made you "feel" will put you in touch with yourself at an even deeper level and with intention. Use emotional journaling to explore the "why" of your feelings.
6. **Practice Gratitude:** The integration of gratitude practices into your life contributes not only to emotional well-being but also to a positive outlook. Acknowledging and appreciating the positive aspects of life enhances your emotional resilience and authenticity.

"In a very real sense we have two minds, one that thinks and one that feels" ~ Daniel Goleman

These practices, when woven into your daily life, serve as a compass, guiding you toward enriched authenticity, greater resilience and increased emotional intelligence. Respond to the reflective questions that follow. Reflect on your answers. What would you do differently? What might you do more often?

Reflective Questions

1. How do your emotions influence your decision-making process? Is the influence positive or negative?

2. Identify a recent situation where you effectively managed your emotions. What strategies did you employ? What would you do to elevate the positive outcome even more?

3. Empathy is a critical component of emotional intelligence. How can you enhance your empathy towards others in both personal and professional settings?

Employ Holistic Well-Being

Health and well-being are the cornerstones of a full and satisfying life, both personally and professionally. You can cultivate holistic well-being by exploring mindful practices that prioritize physical health.

1. **Mind-Body Practices:** Explore mind-body practices that promote holistic well-being. Techniques such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, or progressive muscle relaxation can be integrated into your routine to reduce stress. A YouTube search will provide a variety of guided meditations for Body Scanning and Sitting meditation.

Body scan meditation. Lie on your back with your legs extended and arms at your sides, palms facing up. Focus your attention slowly and deliberately on each part of your body, in order, from toe to head or head to toe. Be aware of any sensations, emotions or thoughts associated with each part of your body.

Sitting meditation. Sit comfortably with your back straight, feet flat on the floor and hands in your lap. Breathing through your nose, focus on your breath moving in and out of your body. If physical sensations or thoughts interrupt your meditation, note the experience, and then return your focus to your breath.

2. **Nutrition Habits:** Develop mindful eating habits that focus on nourishing your body. Pay attention to portion sizes, incorporate a variety of foods, and savor the flavors. This approach promotes not only physical health but also an awareness of the mind-body connection.
3. **Sleep Hygiene:** Establish healthy sleep routines like limiting electronics before bed, using blackout curtains, etc. Adequate, high-quality sleep is vital for wellness.
4. **Social Connection:** Nurture close relationships and community bonds. Humans thrive through interpersonal support, laughter, and belonging.
5. **Movement Exploration:** Engage in diverse forms of movement that bring joy and vitality. Whether it's dancing, martial arts, or recreational sports, exploring different activities can enhance physical health and contribute to a more vibrant sense of self.
6. **Reflective Journaling:** Start a reflective journal to track your well-being journey. Record your thoughts and feelings related to health, nutrition, and self-care. Regular reflection can help identify patterns or areas for improvement.

"A person too busy to take care of their health, is like a mechanic too busy to take care of their tools. You can't pour from an empty cup. Take care of yourself first. A year from now, you'll wish you had started today." ~ Unknown

Remember, cultivating well-being is an ongoing journey, and these practices can be adapted to suit your preferences and lifestyle. Embrace the ones that resonate with you and integrate them gradually into your routine for lasting positive impact. Consider the reflective questions on the next page. Use them to help you create and implement wellness practices that work for you.

Reflective Questions

1. What self-care practices are currently part of your routine, and how do they contribute to your overall well-being?

2. Identify one area of your life where you can enhance your self-awareness. What steps can you take to achieve this?

3. How can you integrate mindfulness into your daily life to promote a healthier mind-body connection?

Embrace Your Spiritual Journey

Embrace your spiritual journey and foster self-acceptance by delving into practices that connect you with your innermost beliefs and a higher sense of purpose.

1. **Explore Your Beliefs** - Examine your existing beliefs and what spiritual traditions resonate with you through study, self-inquiry journaling, or conversation. Allow your perspectives to evolve.
 2. **Foster Self-Acceptance** - Work on embracing yourself as you are - a flawed, changing, spiritual being having a human experience. Acceptance breeds inner peace.
 3. **Release Fear** - Examine fears, acknowledge them with compassion, and visualize yourself moving beyond them. Fear often signals where our spiritual growth lives.
 4. **Nourish Connection** - Surround yourself with positive communities, relationships, and spaces that honor your spiritual growth. Find kindred spirits.
 5. **Discover Meaning** - Explore your unique spiritual gifts and purpose. How can you use them to serve others and make meaning from your experiences?
1. **Mindful Prayer or Meditation:** Integrating mindful prayer or meditation into your spiritual routine establishes moments of tranquility and connection. These practices serve as anchors, grounding you in your spirituality and fostering self-acceptance.
 2. **Service to Others:** Acts of service contribute positively to your community and reinforce the interconnectedness of all beings and affirms your place within this larger tapestry.

Your spiritual journey is a unique exploration of self-acceptance and connection to something greater than yourself. By incorporating these practices into your life, you are not only deepening your spiritual understanding but also embracing the authentic and spiritual essence within you.

“Spirituality: the art of keeping your internal fire alive.” ~Maxime Lagacé

Reflective Questions

1. Reflect on moments when you felt a sense of spiritual connection or fulfillment. What were the circumstances, and how can you cultivate more of these experiences?

2. How does self-acceptance contribute to your overall well-being and authenticity? Identify areas where self-acceptance can be strengthened.

What spiritual practices or rituals resonate with you, and how can you incorporate them into your daily life?

Foster Meaningful Connections

When our community is full of diversity in thought, ethnicity, race, and gender we can explore different perspectives, get rich feedback, and learn from those different from ourselves. The social, mental, and emotional benefits of connecting with a diverse group of people are countless. In the most basic ways, fostering meaningful connections enriches our lived experiences. Here are several simple ways to strengthen your connections.

1. **Network Outside Your Comfort Zones:** Stepping into networking events beyond your usual circles broadens your community. By connecting with diverse groups, you enrich your relational landscape, fostering meaningful relationships that transcend boundaries.
2. **Ask Thoughtful Questions** - Move beyond small talk by asking questions that allow for vulnerability and reflection about purpose, values, and dreams. Explore. Learn. Connect.
3. **Share Your Authentic Self** - Be open and allow yourself to be seen. Mutual vulnerability builds deeper bonds.
4. **Express Appreciation** - Regularly communicate gratitude and praise to those who impact you in big and small ways. Appreciation touches hearts.
5. **Collaborate Generously** - Support others' talents and ideas. Look for opportunities to collaborate rather than compete. This will highlight everyone's value. People want to feel valued.
6. **Celebrate Milestone Moments** - Show up fully for happy occasions, challenging transitions, and major milestones. Your presence is a gift.
7. **Random Acts of Kindness:** Practicing random acts of kindness within your community creates a ripple effect of positivity. Through these gestures, you actively contribute to a supportive and empathetic community environment.
8. **Collaborative Volunteer Projects:** Participating in collaborative projects within your community becomes a shared endeavor. By working together towards common goals, you strengthen interpersonal connections, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose.

Fostering meaningful connections within your community is an ongoing journey. It takes effort to explore and identify the opportunities that resonate with you and align with your values. As you

“The key to the happy life, it seems, is the good life: a life with sustained relationships, challenging work, and connections to community.” ~ Paul Bloom

implement these strategies, you are not only enriching your own life but also contributing to a bigger world of connections that form the heart of a thriving community. Use the reflective questions that follow to develop your approach to building or expanding the size and quality of your community and enriching your relationships.

Reflective Questions

1. Identify the qualities that matter most to you in your relationships. How can you ensure these qualities are present in your connections?

2. Reflect on a challenging relationship. What steps can you take to improve communication and understanding?

3. How can you contribute positively to your community, and what impact do you aspire to have on those around you?

Family Connection and Engagement

Navigate the delicate balance of family dynamics by implementing strategies that address the unique needs of aging parents and children with special needs while nurturing a harmonious family environment.

1. **Family Wellness Plans:** Creating family wellness plans is a collaborative step towards collective well-being. As part of this plan, recognize and address the unique needs of aging parents and children with special needs. Develop strategies that cater to their specific requirements, fostering an inclusive approach to family well-being. Here is a resource that provides “5 Easy Steps” for getting started: <https://www.lifetrackcounseling.com/blog/develop-family-wellness-plan-5-easy-steps>
2. **Weekly Family Check-Ins:** Implementing weekly family check-ins becomes a vital forum for discussing the evolving needs of everyone, but especially those of aging parents and children with special needs. Use this time to collaboratively address challenges, celebrate achievements, and ensure that everyone feels heard and supported.
3. **Shared Responsibilities Chart:** Developing a shared responsibilities chart within your family is a helpful tool. This visual aid not only ensures fairness but also serves as a reference for meeting the distinctive needs of different family members. Consider this resource for getting started: <https://www.getorganizedwizard.com/blog/2018/06/dividing-household-chores-family/>
4. **Family Hobby Time:** Dedicating time to shared family hobbies or activities is an opportunity to create inclusive and enjoyable experiences. Choose activities that accommodate the varying abilities and preferences of all family members, fostering a sense of unity and joy.
5. **Virtual Family Gatherings:** Utilizing virtual platforms for family gatherings becomes a lifeline, especially when caring for aging parents and children with special needs. Ensure that these digital connections are accessible and tailored to the unique requirements of each family member, fostering a sense of togetherness despite physical distances.

"If the family were a boat, it would be a canoe that makes no progress unless everyone paddles." ~ Letty Cottin Pogrebin

"In family life, love is the oil that eases friction, the cement that binds closer together, and the music that brings harmony." ~ Friedrich Nietzsche

The integration of the considerations that make the most sense for your family allows you to create a nurturing environment as well as foster a culture of inclusivity, resilience, and shared support within your family unit. This is especially important if you are caring for aging parents or children with special needs. Taking the time to implement some of these strategies will contribute significantly to your family's overall well-being. Reflect on the questions below to get started.

Reflective Questions

1. What are your current priorities in terms of family and caregiving responsibilities? How well are you balancing these with your personal needs?

2. Reflect on a challenging family situation. How can you apply effective communication and problem-solving skills to navigate such situations more smoothly?

3. In what ways can you prioritize self-care while fulfilling your family and care-giving roles?

Managing A Successful Career

Your career and leadership journeys should be filled with fulfilling achievement, satisfaction, and acknowledgement of your impact on the organizations that you choose to employ you and in which you choose to lead. To help accomplish this, you must lead with authenticity by aligning your decisions with core values, embracing continuous learning, and championing purpose-driven initiatives that shape your career portfolio and influence workplace culture.

1. **Values-Based Decision-Making:** Making values-based decisions in your professional life becomes a compass guiding you toward authenticity. Reflect regularly on your core values, ensuring that they align with your career choices. This practice not only enhances your authenticity but also cultivates a sense of purpose in your professional journey.
2. **Continuous Learning:** Prioritizing continuous learning and skill development is a commitment to personal and professional growth. Identify learning opportunities that expand your skill set and knowledge base. This proactive approach not only keeps you adaptable in a dynamic work environment but also demonstrates your dedication to staying relevant and innovative.
3. **Advisory Network:** Building an advisory network that extends beyond your immediate industry broadens your perspective and enriches your leadership approach. Seek advisors who provide diverse insights and experiences, and who are able to help you skillfully navigate the complexities of business and leadership challenges.
4. **Cross-Functional Collaborations:** Actively seek cross-functional collaborations within your organization. Engaging with colleagues from different departments promotes diversity of thought, encourages collaborative problem-solving, and contributes to a more authentic and inclusive work culture.
5. **Balancing Ambition with Well-being:** Recognize the importance of balance in your professional ambitions and personal well-being. Set realistic goals, prioritize self-care, and establish boundaries to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

This integrated approach ensures sustainable success and reinforces your commitment to being true to you. By embracing values, fostering inclusivity, and prioritizing personal well-being, you not only walk the path of a fulfilling career, but also inspire those around you.

“The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don’t have any.”~ Alice Walker

Reflective Questions

1. Reflect on your current career path. How well does it align with your values and aspirations?

2. Identify a career challenge you've faced. What lessons did you learn, and how can you apply them to future situations?

3. How can you bring more authenticity into your professional relationships?

Lead with Authenticity

1. **Networking with Purpose:** Cultivate meaningful connections within and beyond your industry. Attend relevant events, join executive forums, and engage in purposeful networking. Authentic relationships open doors and enhance your visibility.
2. **Share your story:** Appropriately open up about your background, mistakes made, and lessons learned. This builds trust and humanizes you as a real, fallible person.
3. **Public Speaking Opportunities:** Seize opportunities to speak at conferences, webinars, or internal events. Sharing your expertise on a public platform not only amplifies your voice but also establishes you as a thought leader in your field.
4. **Purpose-Driven Initiatives:** Champion purpose-driven initiatives within your workplace. Advocate for projects and policies that align with your values. You'll demonstrate authentic leadership through your commitment to making a positive impact on both your organization and the broader community.
5. **Set Clear Expectations and Empower Decision-Making:** Clearly communicate performance expectations and empower your team members to make decisions within their areas of expertise. Trusting your team fosters a sense of ownership and accountability, driving higher performance.
6. **Measure and Adjust:** Implement performance metrics aligned with your strategic goals. Regularly assess team performance and make data-driven adjustments. This iterative process ensures continuous improvement and adaptation to changing circumstances.
7. **Admit When You're Wrong:** If you make a mistake or false claim, own up to it transparently. Apologize sincerely without excuses. This demonstrates courage and accountability.
8. **Encourage Critical Feedback** - Create psychologically safe spaces for your team to question ideas, processes and provide input without fear of retaliation. Welcome critiques.

Ensuring your own visibility, sharing more of yourself, and fostering a culture of collaboration and innovation, executives not only enhance team performance but also

elevate the overall visibility of the organization. A strategically led team becomes a valued and powerful asset, driving success and making a lasting impact. As you navigate your professional journey with authenticity, remember that the path to genuine leadership is a continuous evolution.

“Authentic leadership is the full expression of “me” for the benefit of “we”.” ~ Henna Inam

Reflective Questions

How consistently do my daily actions and decisions align with the core values I prioritize as a leader?

In what ways does my leadership positively impact the well-being and growth of my team members, and am I fostering an environment that aligns with our shared values?

What steps can I take today to ensure that my leadership legacy aligns with the values I hold dear, and how am I actively contributing to the development of future authentic and value-driven leaders within the organization?

The Journey to Bold Authenticity

This journey has been about embracing authenticity in every facet of your life. We have covered many important topics in this workbook - building our emotional intelligence, practicing self-care, nurturing our spirituality, strategizing for career success, and stepping into our power as leaders. You've probably noted that there are several obvious themes that run through each section of this workbook. Practices like collaboration (personally and professionally), reflection, journaling, and meditation are staples to being centered, in touch with ourselves, and promote healthy relationships (personally and professionally). May this workbook be a guide, a companion, and a source of inspiration as you navigate the path to authentic and bold living.

Bold Authenticity is not a destination but an ongoing journey. It's about weaving these practices into your daily existence, making them a natural and integral part of who you are. Embrace the uniqueness of your journey and celebrate the diversity of your experiences. I hope you have found value in each recommendation and reflective question. More importantly, I hope you feel inspired to take bold action to live the fulfilling, joyful, and purpose-driven life you deserve.

Your story is unique, and your authenticity is your greatest gift to the world. Remember, the path won't always be easy, but you have an incredible strength within you. Let the sisterhood of powerful women around you, lift you up when times get hard. And pay that sisterhood forward - reach out your hand to other women of color to remind them of their light.

Trust in your talents, skills, and vision - they are needed in this world. Have courage to speak your truth, stand confidently in who you are, and to boldly lead the way for other women.

You are worthy. You are seen. You are valued. And you have so much to offer this world. Now is the time! Spread your wings and soar. Here's to living boldly, authentically, and with a heart full of purpose.

Boldy Yours,

Dr. Kym Harris-Lee