



**Write your next chapter with intention**

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## Welcome to the Space Between Stories – a Powerful Place!

In his book, *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible*. The space between stories is often caused by disruptive events, collective social challenges or life transitions.

It is the time when old ways of operating — business habits, family dynamics, social norms, politics-as-usual, mindsets — are coming to an end but the new ways have not yet been fully established.

The space between stories, while the old is concluding and the new is not written, feels uncomfortable. It feels unmoored. It is also the place that grants us time to think, time to decide or refine our values, time to imagine what our ideals could be and dissolve old stereotypes.

The space between stories is thus a place of power. And a place of creation. *Every single person* in the space between stories has the agency and authority to make intentional, conscious choices about what comes next.

## What Do We Do While We're Here?

Between stories we have the opportunity to turn off auto-pilot and become someone who drives, navigates and innovates right from wherever we are. We have the opportunity and the right to know that we are the authority and we are always at choice — and to remember that in fact this was *always* the case, no matter what the prior story said. We have the opportunity to keep our power and choose not to numb out, hope someone else fixes things, or turn our choices over to other people. The space between stories grants each of us the title of leader, chooser, author, activist, pilot.

The most important thing we can do in the space between stories, is to use our authority and power as leader, chooser, author, activist, pilot — from wherever we sit and with whomever we influence — to set a high bar for what is valuable. By doing so we start to write the new story, and by writing the new story from a place of thoughtful intentional choice, we start to travel the pathway of the story and step into a new normal created *by* us all rather than *done to* us.

## Why Design a New Story?

After a disruptive societal or life event, like a pandemic, cultural upheaval, job change, relationship change or illness, how do we establish a post-event new normal? A chosen story set to our individual values and highest ideals can help.

If we want to walk away from disruption having shed what was dysfunctional, uninspiring, short-sighted or mean-spirited from before, then the answer is to consciously choose. Not to *hope* the reset we yearn for happens, but to thoughtfully craft it. That crafting starts with deciding our intentions, and it's not hard to do.

If you haven't done something like this before, or it's been some time, this is worth pausing to do. Our values and priorities naturally evolve over time and experience, yet we don't often stop to reflect and understand what is important to us now, after all the living we've done since our last big pause.

**This workbook will get you started on your new story.**

# Design Your New Story



## **Step 1. Reflect on your disruptive event**

**What happened?**

**What changes did the disruptive event cause for you personally?**

**What hopes and dreams do you have for your post-event future?**

**What hidden opportunities do you think the disruptive event offers?**

**What from the pre-event time do you hope never to go back to?**

## Step 2: Get clear on your true values

Even if you've done a values exercise in the past, now is a good time to look at them again. Values may naturally evolve over time as we gain experience and wisdom. Disruptive events may offer new insight, or cause us to question old values.

Use a worksheet like [this one](#) for ideas.

**Enter your top three values below.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**What makes these values important to you?**

**Where in your life do these values show up regularly and clearly?**

**How might you make room to live by your values more deliberately?**

## Step 3: Identify Three Higher Ideals You Want to Live By

Higher ideals call us to higher levels of conscious intention in our decisions and actions. They set a high bar for us to meet – and humans *love* to rise to the occasion. Personal higher ideals can serve as motivators, decision guides and inspiration.

**Check three from the list that resonate with you most strongly. Or, write your own.**

- Intentionality and choice.** Consciously choosing our words and actions. Freeing ourselves from “shoulds”
- Self-efficacy.** Believing in our individual leadership and influence
- Collaboration and community.** Prizing collaboration and community, as humans evolved to do
- Compassion and Equity.** Humanizing everyone, not just those similar to us. Recognizing that equity does not come as a loss of what we have. Taking care and proactive consideration for all in our communities
- Anti-racism.** Actively, vocally rejecting both overt and subtle racism, proactively working to dismantle structural racism in our society and workplaces, examining and understanding our privilege and personal role to play, prioritizing BIPOC leadership and voices
- Respect and dignity.** Seeing authority, capability, and competence in everyone, not just those similar to us
- Insight and objectivity.** Embracing nuance, expertise and complexity over simplistic viewpoints. Questioning and dismantling gendered, racialized, privileged, and class-based norms
- Courage.** Speaking truth to power, and truth to our spheres of influence
- Humanity and The Greater Good.** Questioning me-and-mine, resource hoarding and turf mindset. Prizing human experiences beyond work, power and status
- Success.** Redefining what success even is, on your own terms
- \_\_\_\_\_

**What do your higher ideals call you to be? What do they let you envision?**

## Step 4. Make a Live-Out List

Brainstorm ways you'd like to live out your values and higher ideals in your work, family, and community.

- Focus on action verbs.
- Small ideas and big are equally valuable.
- List things like strategic approaches, practical actions, communication, thought patterns, parenting choices, decision-making, boundary setting.
- Take note of the obstacles you might encounter: how might you overcome them? Add those actions to the list too.

**Brainstorm ideas in the space below.**

**When done, circle three to five from your brainstorm that most appeal to you.**

## Step 5. Prioritize What You'll Commit to Doing

Pick from your Live-Out List:

<b>1 Big Thing</b> over the next 12 months
<b>4 Quarterly Things</b> , one every three months, to support your Big Thing 1. 2. 3. 4.
<b>1 Small Thing</b> in the next 30 days, to serve your Quarterly Things
The tiniest, most specific <b>Next Action</b> over the next week, to support your Small Thing

**Identify how you want to be accountable to your Next Action**

**How about to your Small, Quarterly and Big Things?**

## **Step 6. Let Your Story Begin**

These values and ideals, these big and small actions, are the start of your new normal, the story you've begun to choose and develop yourself.

They're not a set of norms and priorities chosen by others and imposed upon you; they're not someone else's agenda. They're *your* vision for what is important, what is possible, and what serves the highest good.

This story cements your power and authority to change what needs to change and to bring forth not just a new normal, but a better normal.

### **Take some time here to round out your story further.**

**What is your new story about?**

**What is your role in the narrative?**

**Do you have a special name or persona in this story?**



# Design Your New Story



**What does your new story say about who you are as an individual and human?**

**What is now possible in your new story? What limits disappear or appear?**

**Where does conflict show up in the story? How does it get resolved?**

**In your new story, what does a happy ending look like?**

**Do you think there will be a sequel? What will that be about?**