



CHAPTER ONE

YOU ARE AWESOME!

*"The more you praise and celebrate your
life, the more there is in life to celebrate."*

— Louise Hay

The journey you are embarking on through this book requires curiosity, courage, commitment, and an umbrella. By dedicating reflective time to the practices in each chapter, you will unlock wisdom within yourself, new sources of confidence and influence, and a foundation for self-empowerment. Approach these moments as a transformational process.

To read this chapter, you only need one tool: *Your Breath*. You will need to breathe deeply, and even more deeply, whenever thoughts and emotions strike a chord. When we are upset, we tend to breathe shallowly to conserve energy. However, shallow breathing reduces the amount of oxygen to the brain, reducing our ability to think clearly. Your breath will help you remember who you truly are. Remember, your breath is a superpower. It will help reduce stress and see things clearly. Use it freely.

This chapter will guide you to reflect on your talents, strengths, growth areas, and passions so that you can lead authentically from a place of self-knowledge.

Know Yourself

The legendary philosopher Socrates said, “Know thyself.” This simple but profound advice underpins all growth and fulfillment.

As a leader, understanding your natural strengths, weaknesses, motivations, and values allows you to operate from a place of authenticity and power. Lead from who you are, not who others think you should be.

Women, through no fault of their own, have created a persona they believed would better their lives. In business and personal life, behaving in a certain way would improve the odds of a woman getting her way. Pleasing the people around them and constantly assessing the environment to gauge reactions have resulted in too many women lacking self-awareness. They need to learn who they are, what they like, and what to do. Of course, not every woman falls into this category, but it won’t hurt to investigate what percentage could be true for you.

Assess Your Strengths

During a coaching call, I asked a woman who planned to go back to work after raising children and caring for an elderly parent why anyone would hire her. What would she bring to the table? She didn’t know. I have asked the same question of other women looking to be promoted, and they, too, struggle to answer. Regardless of your level in your career today, or lack thereof, start by making a list of your talents, skills, accomplishments, values, and passions. Pause now, get a journal, find twenty qualities about yourself, and write them down. Do not complete this work in your head. Do not wait until later. Use the margins of the book if needed. This is a foundation for a very important work.

THE UMBRELLA EFFECT

Write down only your best qualities. Do not stop until you have twenty “gifts to the world” on the page. If negative qualities come to mind, toss them out. You have had generations of “putting women down” already. If you struggle to find your brilliance, let me suggest two items for your list. You have a heart that is capable of amazing things. It’s beating now and inviting you to stay invested in your life. You have a brilliant mind that picked up this book to improve your life. You are supported by the talent of other women who came behind you so you can travel a unique path that no one else can take.

Once you have twenty (not nineteen!) qualities down, answer the following questions. It helps to play quiet music as you answer these questions. You can go to YouTube to find Theta Music.

- What comes naturally to you?
- What energizes you?
- When do you feel in flow?
- What are you proud of?
- How do others describe you?
- What makes people want to be in your company?
- What upsets you?
- When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?
- Are you happy where you are in life today?
- What would you rather be doing?
- Write your heart out.

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Once your fingers are done writing and your heart stops bleeding, stop and take three long breaths. Read the next three sentences slowly.

You are exactly where you should be.

You are exactly where you need to be.

This is a pause in your life to evaluate the destination, so when you arrive, you don’t leave your true self behind.

If negative thoughts find their way into your head, don't let them rent space or squat. With each cleansing breath, you kick them out. In Chapter Four, you will learn how to remove such negative thinking.

Embrace Your Whole Self: Discovering Your Unique Gifts Through MBTI©

We each possess natural strengths and beautiful quirks that make us who we are. Gaining clarity on those abilities allows us to wield them more intentionally as leaders.

The first step in leadership is to understand who your natural self is. I like to use the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI©) with my teams, which offers a framework for identifying personality preferences to understand and embrace your one-of-a-kind self.

First introduced by Carl Jung and then developed by mother-daughter duo; Isabel Myers and Katharine Briggs, MBTI© is a personality assessment tool that empowers self-discovery. It illuminates patterns in how you focus your attention, take in information, make decisions, and structure your life.

Every Leader's path starts with this kind of self-assessment. No ifs or buts. It's a non-negotiable to become a great leader and preclude the risk of being just a poor manager with a fancy title.

I like MBTI© because it's easy to access, with an online assessment that gives you great insights. You learn about your leadership style, decision-making, career path, communication, and how you manage change.

Chances are you may have taken MBTI© or other personality tests before. Often, when these tests are taken in a working setting, individuals tend to answer questions based on what they believe their employer wants them to be. This is a pity because all personalities bring something to the table.

There are no better or worse personality types, just different and equally valuable perspectives. Learning about personality through

MBTI© allows you to nurture your nature without judgment or comparison. You can lead with confidence by being your true self.

The Four Dichotomies of MBTI

MBTI© uses four dichotomies to classify personality into sixteen types. Each dichotomy reflects preferences between two poles:

Extroversion (E) – Introversion (I)

This scale measures whether you draw energy from the outer world of people and activity or the inner world of ideas and contemplation.

Extroverts are invigorated by social interaction and lose energy when isolated for too long. Introverts need solitary time to recharge before turning outward again. Based on the description above, do you find yourself more extroverted or introverted? Mark where you belong on the scale in the picture below. Neither pole is superior to the other, and the degree of introversion and extroversion fluctuates from time to time. At this time, where do you think you belong?



The balance between community and reflection serves everyone. Make space for what nourishes you.

Sensing (S) – INtuition (N)

This dichotomy indicates whether you tend to perceive tangible *details* or abstract *patterns* and meanings.

Sensors notice concrete facts and realities happening in the present moment. INtuitives focus on interpreting interconnections, symbolic

meanings, and future possibilities. People who use the sensors as a preference tend to focus on details, facts, and proofs. People who focus on intuition tend to rely on insights with little additional information. Again, neither pole is superior to the other, and people tend to jump from one side of the scale to the other, but their preference defaults them to one side of the scale. Which side of the line do you spend more time on?



These modes of perceiving information are complementary. You can be open to fresh insights and novel imaginings without sacrificing pragmatism.

Thinking (T) – Feeling (F)

This scale reflects how you typically make decisions—through logical analysis, or based on values and social impact.

Thinkers excel at objectively assessing pros and cons to determine the most reasonable choice. Feelers shine at empathetically weighing how decisions affect others. Thinkers tend to follow one rule for all, while Feelers tend to adjust the rules to consider the impact level on different people.

Using the graph below, mark where you believe you default to it the most.



Logic and compassion together foster wise decisions. Blend reason with care, rather than suppressing feelings or avoiding softness.