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Your Next Chapter

A PERSONAL INVENTORY

by Erin Conlon



If you downloaded this, something in your life is not sitting right. It may not be catastrophic, and it may not even be visible to the outside world, but it is persistent. You are clearly competent, successful, and well-regarded, but something or many things are no longer working for you.

Here is the both/and: you may genuinely be stuck, and you are also participating in maintaining the conditions that keep you there. This isn't because you are incapable or confused, but because the current structure of your life serves something. It protects income, identity, predictability, or how you want others to experience you. The question is whether it still protects you.

This workbook is not designed to diagnose what is wrong with you. It is designed to help you examine where misalignment rules the day. Most people do not wake up one day dramatically off course. Sometimes misalignment is caused by tiny incremental adjustments. Other times it's because you set off on a course that wasn't yours. However you found yourself here, your soul knows.

HOW THIS WORKS

We will examine three areas: well-being, relationships, and career. The order is intentional. Many people assume their dissatisfaction is primarily professional. Often, our careers are where we see and feel it most, because that's where we spend a lot of our time.

Well-being, relationships, and career all feed into and take from each other. We start with well-being because that's your foundation. If you're not well, you can't be great. Relationships are next. When our relationships are thriving, our well-being and career accelerate. The inverse is true when they're suffering. By the time we reach career, you will be better positioned to see what alignment would look and feel like.

Throughout this workbook, you will rate each area using two scores:

Performance Score: How well does this area appear to be functioning from the outside?

Alignment Score: How true does this area feel to who you are becoming?

It is common for performance to outpace alignment. That gap is not a personal flaw. It is data. In many cases, competence is how you sustain misalignment. You get good at something, and instead of asking yourself "is this me?", you ask performance questions like, "how can I do more of this?"

You will also encounter questions that are intentionally confrontational. This is not to make you wrong or point out where you need to be fixed. It's to create awareness about what you tolerate and avoid, and the costs therein.

Before you begin, give yourself space. No one will see your answers. There is nothing to defend and nothing to perform. If you are willing to be specific, you will likely find some clarity. If you are willing to be honest, you might also feel discomfort. Either way, the goal is not to fix your life in twenty pages. The goal is to make it difficult to unknow what you already sense.

THE RATING SCALE

Performance Score: How well does this area appear to be functioning from the outside?

Alignment Score: How true does this area feel to who you are becoming?

Use this scale for every section. Read it carefully before you begin.

-
- 5** Genuinely thriving here, and I have receipts. I'm not grading on a curve.
-
- 4** Good, probably. I grade myself generously when I'd rather not look closely.
-
- 3** Functional, which I've decided to call fine. It isn't.
-
- 2** There's a real problem here. I know what it is. I haven't fixed it.
-
- 1** Not going there.

WELL-BEING

Most people in the middle of a demanding career have learned to function at a high level regardless of how they actually feel, and they have mistaken that capacity for resilience. This is not resilience. This is acclimation, and there is often a cost to you that compounds quietly over time.

This section is not asking whether you are healthy by clinical standards. Instead we are asking whether you are well by your own standards. In other words, what is the quality of the energy in your life? Are you replenishing and renewing as fast as you're depleting? Is your foundation enough for you to be great? These are the kinds of questions you might feel percolating, but also ignore.

Rate yourself in each area below using your Performance and Alignment scores.

	Performance	Alignment
Overall well-being		
Physical: sleep, movement, energy		
Emotional: regulation, range, honesty		
Mental: clarity, focus, stimulation		
Spiritual: meaning, purpose, connection to something larger		
Financial: security, agency, relationship to money		
Social: genuine connection, not obligation		
Rest & recovery: not just sleep, but actual restoration		

Look at where Performance and Alignment diverge most. That gap is not a personal failing. It is information. It is telling you where you have been most willing to perform wellness rather than inhabit it.

Where are you currently producing results in this area that you no longer believe in?

What have you normalized that you would not advise someone you love to normalize?

If this area stayed exactly as it is for the next three years, what would that cost you?

Is the version of you that maintains this area the person you want to be known as?

NOTES & NEXT STEPS FOR MY WELL-BEING:

RELATIONSHIPS & NETWORK

Strong relationships are measured by quality, not quantity. What many people experience is a shortage of generative and supportive relationships, while also experiencing a surplus of exhausting and depleting requests from those close to you. Often you are too busy, too loyal, or too uncomfortable to reckon with that distinction. Who you spend time with, who you call when something goes wrong, who challenges you, and who you are performing for are not peripheral questions. They are structural ones.

This section examines both the personal and the professional. This is because all of our relationships feed each other in ways that are easy to underestimate. A depleting personal relationship will show up in your leadership. An insular professional network will limit your next chapter before you ever start planning it. You probably already know which relationships in your life are costing you more than they are returning. This section is an invitation to stop pretending otherwise.

Rate yourself in each area below using your Performance and Alignment scores.

	Performance	Alignment
Overall relationship satisfaction		
Romantic or primary partnership		
Family: the relationships you were born into		
Friendships: genuine ones, not maintained ones		
Professional relationships & colleagues		
Mentors, sponsors, and advocates		
Your network: does it reflect who you are becoming?		
Your relationship with yourself		

Look at where Performance and Alignment diverge most. Those are likely the relationships you have been managing rather than inhabiting.

Who in your life currently knows the version of you that you are trying to become, not just the version you have already been?

Which relationships are you maintaining out of history rather than genuine value?

Where are you the least honest, and with whom?

If your network stayed exactly as it is for the next three years, where would that leave you?

Is the way you show up in your relationships the way you want to be remembered?

NOTES & NEXT STEPS FOR MY RELATIONSHIPS & NETWORK:

★ YOUR LEADERSHIP PATH ★

Where you are today is likely close to or exactly where you wanted to be at one point in your life. Congratulations! Also, it might not be where you want to spend the rest of your life. It is hard to say out loud that what you want and who you are is changing. Maybe you want more responsibility or a greater impact. Maybe you would like less pressure and more community interaction. Maybe you need a whole new professional identity.

This section is not intended to help you rate whether you are promotion-ready. It is a place where you can see what is and is not aligned in your professional life. The things that brought you success and accolades probably do not bring you the fulfillment you yearn for. Achievement alone is not sufficient for you. You are ready to fulfill on your life's purpose, and to get there you need to know where you are.

Rate yourself in each area below using your Performance and Alignment scores.

	Performance	Alignment
Overall satisfaction with your leadership path		
Clarity of direction: do you know where you are going?		
Energy at work: do you arrive or do you endure?		
Sense of purpose: does the work feel like it matters?		
Use of your strongest abilities		
Your visibility and influence		
Do your risks align with your ambitions?		
Alignment between your values and how you lead		

Look at where Performance and Alignment diverge most. That gap is where your career has been running on inertia rather than intention.

Where are you leading from obligation rather than conviction?

What have you achieved that you are proud of, and what have you achieved that you are simply done with?

What would you be doing differently if you were assured your financial goals would be met?

If your career stayed exactly as it is for the next three years, what would that cost you financially and spiritually?

Is the leader you are today the one you want to be remembered as?

NOTES & NEXT STEPS FOR MY LEADERSHIP PATH:

WHAT NOW?

You have just done something that most people avoid. Great work! You have looked directly at your life, rated it honestly, and sat with the gap between how things look on the outside, and how you actually feel. These are not small issues, and if you're willing to close the gap this can be a launching point for intentional and complete transformation.

Now's the time to take yourself seriously. Otherwise, your awareness without action is just sophisticated suffering. You can know exactly where you are misaligned and still do nothing about it, because knowing is not the same thing as changing. The gap between insight and action is where most people live indefinitely. You are not most people.

Before you close this workbook, answer these three questions as specifically as you can:

What do you now know that you cannot unknow?

What are you currently tolerating that you would not advise someone you respect to tolerate?

Is the life you are living the one you want to be remembered for?

The gap between insight and action is where most people live indefinitely. You are not most people.

You have already done the hard part of telling yourself the truth. What happens next is the real test. You can read your answers, feel the weight of what you wrote, and return to your life largely unchanged. This is rarely a question of desire or intelligence. Insight alone does not produce transformation. It produces awareness, and awareness without a structure for change will eventually be absorbed back into the pace and pressure of the life you are already living.

Coaching works because it creates the conditions that make change inevitable rather than aspirational. It gives your insight somewhere to go. It holds you accountable, not to a standard someone else set, but to the version of yourself you just described in these pages. It also accelerates what would otherwise take years of trial, error, and incremental adjustment to figure out on your own.

The next step is deciding whether you are willing to do something about it, or whether this becomes another thing you know and don't act on.

If you are ready to close the gap, let's talk.

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