

Foundation and Safety

Before we dive into the deep work of "Becoming on Purpose," we need to establish the ground rules for this journey. Personal growth in midlife is a beautiful, transformative process, but it requires a sturdy container. This section ensures you are approaching this guide with the right expectations and the necessary safeguards for your emotional and physical well-being.

The Educational Intent

This resource, *Becoming on Purpose*, is designed as an educational and personal-development guide. My goal is to provide you with a framework—the Power Reset Path—to help you navigate the transitions of perimenopause and midlife with more intention.

Important

Disclaimer: This guide is for educational purposes only. It does not replace individualized medical, mental health, legal, or financial advice. I am an educator and coach, not your doctor or therapist.

Knowing When to Seek Professional Support

Midlife often brings a "perfect storm" of hormonal shifts and life stressors. While the exercises in this blueprint are designed to help you **NOTICE, WIDEN, and CHOOSE**, they are not a substitute for clinical intervention.

Growth requires a baseline of stability. If you are experiencing any of the following, please prioritize reaching out to a qualified healthcare provider or mental health professional:

- **Clinical Depression or Anxiety:** If you feel a persistent sense of hopelessness, inability to function, or intrusive thoughts.
- **Severe Physical Symptoms:** If your perimenopausal symptoms (like heart palpitations, extreme insomnia, or heavy bleeding) are impacting your safety or daily life.
- **Trauma Processing:** If the reflection exercises trigger intense, unmanageable emotional responses related to past trauma.

Pro Tip

Pro Tip: Think of this guide as the "interior design" for your life. You can't hang the curtains or paint the walls if the foundation is cracking. If you're in crisis, address the foundation first with a professional.

The PRP Philosophy of Self-Compassion

In the Power Reset Path, we do not view you as a "problem to be fixed." You are a woman who has navigated decades of life, built relationships, and survived challenges.

We use a specific cycle to ensure growth is sustainable:

1. **Learn:** Absorb the evidence-informed information about your changing body and mind.
2. **Notice:** Observe your patterns without the heavy weight of judgment.
3. **Experiment:** Try small, low-stakes changes.
4. **Adjust:** Tweak the plan based on what actually happened, not what "should" have happened.

A Note on Agency and Constraints

While we focus heavily on your power to choose, we must acknowledge that choice does not happen in a vacuum. Your agency exists within real-world constraints—financial realities, caregiving responsibilities, health limitations, and systemic factors.

"Growth is not about having unlimited options; it is about finding the choices that actually belong to you within the life you are living." - Megan

We will not engage in "toxic positivity" or suggest that you can simply "manifest" a new reality without effort or acknowledgment of your hurdles. Instead, we will look for the small pockets of intentionality where you can reclaim your sense of self.

The Woman You Are Now

Midlife is often framed as a crisis, a fading, or a "winding down." But if you look closer, it is actually the first time in your life that you have enough data to truly know who you are. Up until this point, you've been operating on a mix of instinct, education, and the scripts handed to you

by the world. Now, the fog of "shoulds" is beginning to lift, even if it's being replaced by the literal fog of perimenopause.

Growth in this season doesn't start with a makeover or a radical life overhaul. It starts with a quiet, honest recognition: **The person making today's decisions is not the same person who made them ten, twenty, or thirty years ago.**

The Evolution of the Self

Think back to the woman you were at twenty-five. She likely had different priorities, different fears, and a different level of energy. She made choices—about her career, her relationships, her living situation, and her habits—based on what she knew then. She was doing her best with the tools she had.

But you have different tools now. You have decades of evidence regarding what works for you and what doesn't. You have survived things she hadn't even encountered yet. To expect yourself to want the exact same things, or to function in the exact same way, is not only unrealistic—it's a dismissal of everything you've learned.

Note

You are allowed to know more now than you knew then. You are allowed to change your mind because you have more information. This isn't inconsistency; it's growth.

The Midlife Audit: What Matters Now?

When we talk about "Becoming on Purpose," we have to start by identifying the current landscape of your heart and mind. We often carry around old values like heavy luggage, not realizing we haven't opened those bags in years.

Take a moment to reflect on these questions. Don't rush. Let the answers sit.

1. What matters to me now?

In your 20s, maybe "status" or "adventure" topped the list. Now, it might be "peace," "vitality," or "legacy." Notice the shift without judging it.

2. What doesn't matter as much?

Perhaps you no longer care about being the "coolest" person in the room or having a perfectly curated home. Maybe the opinions of distant acquaintances have lost their sting. What have you stopped trying to win at?

3. What am I less willing to tolerate?

This is often where perimenopause lends us a strange sort of "superpower." As our hormones shift, our patience for nonsense often thins. What used to be a minor annoyance

that you'd swallow is now a hard "no." This isn't you becoming "difficult"; it's you becoming discerning.

4. What am I more willing to risk?

Ironically, as we age, we often become braver. We realize that the "worst-case scenario" is rarely as fatal as we once feared. Are you more willing to speak up? To try a new career? To admit you're a beginner?

5. What have I outgrown?

Like a favorite pair of jeans that no longer zips, some parts of your life—friendships, roles, habits—might simply be too small for the woman you are becoming.

The "Then vs. Now" Reflection Fold a piece of paper in half. On the left side, write "Who I Was (Age 25-30)." On the right side, write "Who I Am (Now)." List three things for each side regarding:

- My biggest daily worry
- What I did for fun
- My definition of a "successful day"

Notice the distance traveled. That distance is your wisdom.

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Normalizing the Shift

It is common to feel a sense of grief or confusion during this transition. You might look at your life—a life you worked hard to build—and feel a strange sense of detachment. This doesn't mean you are ungrateful, and it doesn't mean your life is "wrong."

It simply means the container is being resized.

We often mistake the discomfort of growth for the presence of a problem. If you feel restless, it might not be because you need to blow up your life; it might be because the "you" inside is expanding and needs a bit more room to breathe.

The Power of Noticing

In the Power Reset Path, our first step is always to **NOTICE**.

Before you try to fix your fatigue, your weight, or your career, you must notice the woman who is experiencing them.

- **Notice** when you are acting out of habit rather than desire.
- **Notice** when you say "I've always been this way" and ask if that's still true.

- **Notice** the small sparks of curiosity that you usually dismiss because you're "too busy."

"The privilege of a lifetime is to become who you truly are." — Carl Jung

You are not a project to be finished. You are a person in a new season. The rules of the previous season—the ones about how much you should work, how you should exercise, and how you should show up for everyone else—might not apply here.

A Script for Self-Compassion

When you feel the friction between who you *were* and who you *are*, try using this internal script:

"I am grateful for the woman I was. She got me here. She worked hard, she cared deeply, and she survived. But I am not her anymore. I am allowed to have new needs. I am allowed to set new boundaries. I am allowed to be a beginner in this new stage of my life."

Important

Growth is not a betrayal of your past self. It is the fulfillment of her efforts. You are the version of you that she was working so hard to create.

As we move through this guide, keep this version of yourself—the one who is here *now*—at the center. We aren't looking for a "New You." We are looking for the *Current You*, finally living on purpose.

Growth vs. Fixing: The Intentionality Shift

In our culture, we are bombarded with the message that we are a "work in progress," which sounds nice until you realize it often implies we are currently "broken" or "unfinished." For women in midlife, this message becomes even more aggressive. We are told to fix our necks, fix our metabolisms, fix our moods, and fix our careers. We are treated like a house that has fallen into disrepair, requiring a total gut renovation just to be considered habitable again.

I want to offer you a different perspective. **Growth is not the same as fixing yourself.**

When you approach your life with the mindset that you need to be "fixed," you are starting from a place of deficit. You are looking for flaws. When you approach your life with the mindset of "growth," you are starting from a place of possibility. You are looking for room to expand.

Important

Not every part of you needs improvement. Some parts need understanding. Some need practice. Some need rest.

The Difference Between Fixing and Growing

Fixing is reactive. It is driven by shame, comparison, or the fear that you aren't enough as you are. Growth is proactive. It is driven by curiosity, values, and the desire to see what else you are capable of.

Consider these shifts in perspective:

- **Fixing says:** "I am lazy and need to force myself to exercise so I don't get old and frail."
- **Growth says:** "I value my independence, so I am going to experiment with strength training to see how powerful my body can feel."
- **Fixing says:** "I'm too reactive and emotional; I need to learn to shut up."
- **Growth says:** "I notice I get overwhelmed in loud environments. I want to practice setting boundaries so I can stay calm and present."

The Many Faces of Growth

We often think growth only looks like *more*—more money, more muscle, more skills, more activity. But in the Power Reset Path, we recognize that growth is multidimensional. Sometimes, the most profound growth happens when we do less.

1. Growth through Adding

This is the traditional view. It involves **learning** a new language, **practicing** a new sport, or **beginning** a new business venture. It is the expansion of your toolkit.

2. Growth through Removing

This is often the most necessary form of growth in midlife. It involves **letting go** of an old identity that no longer fits, **stopping** a habit that drains your energy, or **apologizing** and releasing a long-held grudge. Sometimes you grow simply by clearing the clutter that was blocking your view.

3. Growth through Staying Put

Sometimes growth looks like **accepting** a current limitation without bitterness. It looks like **resting** when the world demands you hustle. It looks like **finally leaving something alone**—like that one "flaw" you've spent twenty years trying to change—and deciding to live your life anyway.

Note

Growth is not a linear climb up a mountain. It is more like a tide. Sometimes it pulls back so it can surge forward with more power later.

The "Notice 'Widen 'Choose" Application

Let's apply our core philosophy to this shift from fixing to growing.

NOTICE: Think about a goal you currently have. Ask yourself: "Am I trying to fix a perceived flaw, or am I trying to grow a strength?" Notice the feeling in your body when you think about this goal. Does it feel like a heavy "should" (fixing) or a spark of "could" (growth)?

WIDEN: What else might be true about this struggle? If you feel you need to "fix" your lack of productivity, widen the lens. Are you actually "lazy," or are you navigating the brain fog and fatigue of perimenopause? Is the problem your character, or is it your current physiological season? What would this look like if you weren't "broken," but simply "adapting"?

CHOOSE: Given this wider view, what is one choice you want to make? Perhaps instead of "fixing" your productivity with a new planner, you "choose" to grow your self-compassion by scheduling a 20-minute nap.

Exercise: The Growth Audit

Take a piece of paper and draw three columns. Label them: **Practice, Rest, and Understanding.**

List the areas of your life where you currently feel "not enough." Now, instead of putting them on a "To-Fix" list, categorize them:

- **Needs Practice:** These are skills. (e.g., "I want to be better at public speaking" or "I want to improve my balance.")
- **Needs Rest:** These are areas where you are burnt out. (e.g., "I am tired of being the only one who cleans the kitchen" or "My brain feels fried by 4 PM.")
- **Needs Understanding:** These are areas that require curiosity, not hammers. (e.g., "Why do I feel so anxious when my kids leave the house?" or "Why does my body feel different this month?")

Exercise**Reflective Prompt:**

Write down one thing about yourself that you have been trying to "fix" for years. Now, write a sentence about that same thing using the word "understand" or "support" instead.

Example: "I need to fix my weight" becomes "I want to understand how to support my metabolic health in this new season."

By shifting from a "fixing" mindset to an "intentional growth" mindset, you stop being your own project and start being your own partner. You are allowed to be a masterpiece and a work in progress at the exact same time.

Unpacking the Life You Built

If you are reading this, there is a good chance you've recently had a "looking in the mirror" moment. Not the kind where you check for new gray hairs or wonder where that specific wrinkle came from, but the kind where you look at the entire landscape of your life—your schedule, your commitments, your habits, and your environment—and think, *"How did I get here?"*

For many women in their 40s, 50s, and beyond, there is a strange realization that we have spent decades becoming very good at living a life we did not consciously design. It isn't necessarily a bad life. It might even be a life that others envy. But it often feels like a suit that was tailored for someone else, or perhaps for a version of you that no longer exists.

The Architecture of "Reasonable Decisions"

We often imagine that a life is built through grand, sweeping gestures—dramatic career changes, moving across the world, or sudden epiphanies. But for most of us, life is built through the accumulation of thousands of individually reasonable decisions.

Think back to your 20s or 30s. You took a job because it was practical and paid the bills. You stayed in that job because you became the "reliable one," and the benefits were good for the family. You said yes to the PTA or the neighborhood committee because you wanted to be helpful. You put your painting or your hiking or your quiet mornings aside because the kids needed you, or your aging parents needed you, or your partner's career was in a high-pressure phase.

Each of these choices, on its own, made perfect sense at the time. They were responsible. They were kind. They were logical. But like bricks in a wall, these reasonable decisions eventually formed a structure.

Note

Maybe you didn't choose this life all at once. Maybe you built it one reasonable decision at a time. The hopeful part? If you participated in building your way here, you can participate in what gets built next.

The Invisible Scripts of Midlife

As we navigate perimenopause and the shifts of midlife, the "rules" we've lived by often start to feel restrictive. We begin to notice the patterns we've been repeating. These patterns are often driven by roles we've played for so long we forgot they were roles.

- **The Caregiver:** You are the one who anticipates everyone's needs before they even voice them.
- **The Problem Solver:** You are the one everyone calls when things go wrong because you "handle it."
- **The High Achiever:** You've tied your worth to your output, and slowing down feels like failing.

When you **NOTICE** these patterns, you can begin to **WIDEN** your perspective. You might ask: *Is this role still serving me? Or am I just doing it because I've always done it?*

Exercise: The Life Audit

To understand the life you've built, we have to look at the "bricks." Use the following prompts to reflect on the different areas of your current reality. Remember, we are not looking for flaws to fix; we are looking for patterns to understand.

1. The "Yes" Inventory

Think about your current weekly commitments. Which of these did you choose with excitement, and which did you inherit through a sense of obligation?

- **Automatic Yes:** (e.g., "I always host the holiday dinner because I've done it for 15 years.")
- **Conscious Yes:** (e.g., "I choose to spend my Tuesday nights at my pottery class because it feeds my soul.")

2. The Professional Path

Look at your career or your daily work. Did you choose this path because it aligns with who you are now, or are you continuing a trajectory set by a 25-year-old version of yourself who had different priorities?

3. The Physical Environment

Look around your home. Does it reflect your current tastes and needs, or is it a museum of the people you've taken care of?

Where Will These Choices Build You Next?

The most important question isn't "Why did I do this?" but rather: **"If I keep making the same kinds of choices, where will they build me next?"**

If you continue to prioritize everyone else's comfort over your own health, where will you be in five years? If you continue to stay in a role that drains your energy, what will be left for the things you actually care about?

Important

Agency exists within real constraints. You may have aging parents who truly need care, or financial realities that require you to stay in a specific job. The goal of this process is not to blow up your life, but to find the choices that actually belong to you within those constraints.

The Power of the Pivot

Growth in midlife doesn't have to look like a total overhaul. It often looks like a series of small, intentional pivots. It's about moving from **Automatic Pilot** to **Intentional Participation**.

> "You are allowed to know more now than you knew then. You are allowed to change your mind about what a 'good life' looks like." - Megan

As you move through this guide, keep the PRP philosophy in mind:

1. **NOTICE:** I am exhausted every Friday night because I take on everyone else's stress.
2. **WIDEN:** I do this because I was taught that being "good" means being "selfless," but my health is starting to suffer.
3. **CHOOSE:** This week, I will choose to say no to one extra request so I can rest.

Moving Forward

You are the architect of the next chapter. The foundation is already laid—some of it is solid and beautiful, and some of it might need a little renovation. That's okay. You aren't starting from scratch; you are starting from experience.

Reflective Prompt: Write down three things in your life right now that you "built" through reasonable decisions but no longer feel like a fit. Don't judge them. Just name them.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

...

By acknowledging the life you've built, you reclaim the power to decide what stays, what goes, and what gets added to the blueprint of your future.

Identity Beyond the Roles

If I asked you, "Who are you?" right now, what would your first three answers be?

For most of us in midlife, those answers are roles. "I'm a mother." "I'm a nurse." "I'm a wife." "I'm the one who takes care of my aging parents." We define ourselves by our relationship to other people or our contribution to an organization. These roles aren't "bad"—in fact, they are often the source of our greatest pride and deepest love. But midlife has a way of shifting the ground beneath these roles.

Children leave home. Careers plateau or pivot. Parents pass away. Our bodies change, shifting how we see ourselves as "athletes" or even "partners." When these roles change, it can feel like a crisis of identity. If I am no longer a "full-time hands-on mom," then who am I? If I am no longer the "high-achieving executive," what is left?

Note

Identity is not a fixed destination. It is a living, breathing thing. You are allowed to evolve beyond the definitions you accepted in your twenties.

The Invisible Architecture of Roles

We often build our identities around what we *do* rather than who we *are*. Think of your roles as the furniture in a house. You might have a beautiful sofa (your career) and a sturdy dining table (your role as a provider). But if you move the furniture out, the house—the structure, the foundation, the view from the windows—remains.

In perimenopause and menopause, the "hormonal scaffolding" that helped us maintain these roles for decades begins to shift. We might find we have less patience for roles that require us to be "the helper" at the expense of our own needs. We might feel a sudden, urgent curiosity about parts of ourselves we tucked away in a drawer twenty years ago to make room for a career or a family.

Noticing the Shift

The first step in the Power Reset Path is to **NOTICE**. We need to look at the roles we inhabit and see which ones still fit, which ones are pinching, and which ones are simply empty shells we are still carrying around.

Reflection: The Role Audit

Take a moment to list your primary roles. Beside each one, ask yourself:

- **The Mother:** Is this role changing from "manager" to "consultant"? How does that feel?
- **The Professional:** Am I doing this because I love the work, or because I'm afraid of who I am without the title?
- **The Reliable One:** Am I the "fixer" in every friendship? Does that role still serve me, or am I exhausted by it?
- **The Partner:** How much of my identity is merged with my partner's needs and preferences?

Pro Tip

If a role feels heavy or creates resentment, it doesn't mean you have to quit the role. It might just mean the *version* of the role you are playing no longer fits the woman you are becoming.

Widening the Perspective: Who is Underneath?

Once we notice the roles, we must **WIDEN** our view. We need to look for the "Core Self"—the parts of you that exist regardless of your job title or your family status. These are your innate qualities, your curiosities, and your temperament.

Think back to when you were ten or twelve years old, before the world told you who you were "supposed" to be.

- Were you the girl who loved to organize things just for the satisfaction of order? (That's a core quality: *Structure*).
- Were you the one always wandering off to look at bugs or rocks? (That's *Curiosity*).
- Were you the one who made sure the kid left out of the game got a turn? (That's *Justice* or *Compassion*).

These qualities are still there. They have just been dressed up in "adult" clothes for a long time. When the roles shift in midlife, it's an invitation to rediscover these core elements.

Choosing the Next Version of You

Finally, we **CHOOSE**. You get to decide which parts of yourself deserve more room in this next chapter. This isn't about a "New You"—I actually dislike that phrase because it implies the "Old You" was a failure. The woman who got you to this point is a hero. She survived, she built, she cared.

Choosing is about *integration*. It's saying, "I am still a mother, but I am also a woman who values adventure. I am still a professional, but I am choosing to be a beginner at pottery because I miss the feeling of creating something with my hands."

Exercise**The "I Am" Expansion**

Write down three "I am [Role]" statements.

Example: I am a manager.

Now, rewrite them to reflect the quality underneath the role.

Example: I am a person who enjoys solving complex problems and helping others grow.

Finally, add one "I am" statement that has nothing to do with anyone else.

Example: I am a woman who feels most alive when I am near the ocean.

The Freedom of Being "Unnecessary"

One of the hardest but most transformative shifts in midlife identity is moving from being *needed* to being *wanted*. When your children need you less, or your workplace can function without you for a week, it can feel like a loss of value.

But widen the lens: This is actually the birth of freedom. When you are no longer defined solely by your utility to others, you are free to define yourself by your own values. You are not a problem to be solved or a machine to be maintained. You are a woman in a powerful transition, standing at the threshold of a life that is finally, beautifully, *on purpose*.

"The second half of life is not like the first. In the first half, we are building the container. In the second half, we are finding the contents." — Adapted from Richard Rohr

Small Experiments in Identity

If you feel lost underneath your roles, don't try to find yourself all at once. Try a "Identity Experiment":

1. **The Solo Afternoon:** Go somewhere where nobody knows your name or your roles. Notice how you behave when you aren't "Mom" or "Boss."
2. **The "No" Test:** Say no to one request that relies on you being "The Reliable One." Notice the space it clears.
3. **The Curiosity Follow:** Buy one book or take one class on a subject you liked when you were younger, even if it feels "useless" to your current roles.

You are still becoming. The roles were just the training ground. Now, the real work—and the real joy—of being *you* begins.

Values as Your Compass

As we navigate the shifting terrain of midlife, it is incredibly common to feel like the GPS we've been using for the last twenty years has suddenly lost its signal. You might find yourself standing in the middle of a life you worked hard to build, yet feeling a strange sense of disconnection. This isn't necessarily because you've made "wrong" choices; it's often because the internal compass you were following was calibrated to a different season of life.

To move forward with intention—to become "on purpose"—we have to distinguish between where we are going (our goals) and how we are traveling (our values).

The Difference Between Values and Goals

In our culture, we are obsessed with goals. We are taught to be "goal-oriented" from the time we enter primary school. While goals are useful, they are insufficient for navigating a meaningful midlife transition.

A goal is a destination. It is something you want to accomplish, check off a list, or acquire. Goals have an end point. Once you reach them, they are over.

- *Example:* "I want to lose 10 pounds."
- *Example:* "I want to get a promotion to Director."
- *Example:* "I want to run a 5k."

A value is a direction. It describes *how* you want to live and the qualities you want to embody as you move through the world. Values do not have an end point. You don't "achieve" a value; you practice it.

- *Example:* "I value physical Vitality." (This guides how you eat, move, and rest, regardless of the number on the scale.)
- *Example:* "I value Contribution." (This guides how you lead, mentor, and work, regardless of your job title.)
- *Example:* "I value Courage." (This guides how you show up when things are hard, whether you win or lose.)

Pro Tip

Think of a goal like a mountain you want to climb. Think of a value like the North Star. You can reach the top of the mountain and be done, but you can never "reach" the North Star—it simply keeps you headed in the right direction while you climb.

When we focus only on goals, we often feel empty once they are achieved, or devastated if we fail. When we focus on values, every day offers an opportunity for success because we can choose to act in alignment with those values right now, regardless of our circumstances.

Why Values Shift in Midlife

In our 20s and 30s, many of our "values" are actually inherited expectations. We value *Security* because we are building a home. We value *Competence* because we are establishing a career. We value *Belonging* because we are finding our tribe.

But as we enter perimenopause and the midlife transition, the hormonal and psychological shifts often trigger a "values audit." Things that used to feel life-or-death (like what the neighbors think or climbing the corporate ladder) might start to feel less important. Meanwhile, things we ignored (like *Creativity*, *Peace*, or *Authenticity*) might start screaming for attention.

This isn't a crisis; it's a recalibration. You are allowed to change what matters to you.

The Values Identification Exercise

To begin "Becoming on Purpose," you need to identify the specific words that resonate with your soul *in this current season*. Not the woman you were at 25, and not the woman your mother wants you to be.

Exercise

Step 1: The Master List

Read through the following list of values. Circle every word that feels even slightly important to you right now. Don't overthink it—go with your gut.

Connection | Courage | Curiosity | Stability | Health | Creativity
Service | Honesty | Freedom | Family | Learning | Adventure
Community | Competence | Joy | Faith | Generosity | Independence
Peace | Vitality | Authenticity | Wisdom | Play | Order | Growth

Step 2: The Narrowing

Look at your circled words. Now, narrow that list down to **six**. This is hard, but it forces you to prioritize what is truly essential.

Step 3: The Core Three

Finally, look at your six words and choose the **three** that feel most vital for the next year of your life. These are your "Compass Values."

Defining Your Compass

Once you have your Core Three, you must define them in your own words. "Freedom" to one woman might mean financial independence; to another, it might mean the freedom to say "no" to social obligations without guilt.

Use this template for each of your Core Three:

"To me, [Value Name] means [Your Definition]. I know I am living this value when I [Specific Action]."

Example: "To me, **Curiosity** means being more interested in learning than in being right. I know I am living this value when I ask a question instead of making a judgment."

Does Your Life Match What You Say Matters?

This is where we move from theory to practice. We use the **Notice 'Widen 'Choose** framework to look at the gap between our stated values and our daily reality.

NOTICE: Look at your calendar and your bank statement from the last month. If a stranger looked at them, what would they say you value? If you say you value *Health*, but your calendar shows zero minutes for rest or movement, notice that gap without shame. It is simply data.

WIDEN: Ask yourself, "What else is true?" Perhaps you value *Health*, but you also value *Service*, and you've let Service grow so large it's crowding out everything else. Or perhaps you've been following an old habit of "being the reliable one" that no longer fits.

CHOOSE: Given what you know now, what is one small choice you can make this week to bring your life 1% closer to your values?

Important

Personal growth is not a pass/fail project. If you find a gap between your values and your actions, you haven't failed. You've just found the place where your next experiment begins.

By identifying these values, you stop reacting to the demands of the world and start responding from your own center. You aren't just drifting through midlife; you are becoming on purpose.

Navigating the Edge: Comfort, Fear, and Action

In midlife, we often hear the aggressive rallying cry to "get out of your comfort zone!" It's usually accompanied by images of people jumping out of airplanes or quitting their stable jobs to move to a tropical island. But for the woman navigating perimenopause, managing a career, and perhaps caring for aging parents, that advice feels less like an invitation and more like a threat.

At Power Reset Path, we look at growth differently. We don't believe you have to set your life on fire to evolve. Instead, we look at the "Edge"—that thin, vibrating line between what you know you can do and what you aren't quite sure of yet. Understanding how to navigate this edge is the difference between sustainable growth and total burnout.

The Three Zones of Growth

To become intentional, we must first map out where we are spending our emotional energy. Not all discomfort is productive, and not all comfort is "stagnation." We categorize our experiences into three distinct zones:

1. The Comfort Zone

This is the space of the familiar. It's your morning coffee routine, the way you handle your recurring Tuesday meetings, and the route you drive to the grocery store.

- **The Benefit:** It provides safety, recovery, and efficiency. You need this zone to regulate your nervous system, especially when hormones are fluctuating.
- **The Risk:** If you never leave, the walls can start to feel like they are closing in. You might feel bored, "stuck," or like you're living on autopilot.

2. The Stretch Zone

This is the "Edge." It's where you are doing something that feels a bit clunky or uncertain, but it doesn't feel impossible. It's taking a new fitness class where you don't know the moves, or finally speaking up in a meeting about an idea you've been sitting on.

- **The Benefit:** This is where neuroplasticity happens. You are building new skills and expanding your sense of self.
- **The Risk:** It requires focus and energy, which can be in short supply during perimenopause.

3. The Overload Zone

This is the "Panic Zone." It's when you take on too much, too fast, without enough support. It's trying to overhaul your entire diet, start a marathon training plan, and launch a new business all in the same month while your sleep is disrupted.

- **The Result:** Your brain perceives a threat. You freeze, quit, or experience high levels of cortisol and anxiety. This is not growth; it's trauma.

Pro Tip

The Midlife Reality Check: If you are currently experiencing high levels of perimenopausal symptoms like anxiety or extreme fatigue, your "Stretch Zone" might be smaller than it was five years ago. That is okay. Growth is not about the size of the step; it's about the direction.

Fear Does Not Always Mean Stop

When we move toward the Stretch Zone, fear is almost always the first guest to arrive. In our younger years, we were often told that fear is a sign to turn back, or conversely, something to "crush." Neither is particularly helpful.

In the Power Reset Path, we treat fear as **data**. It is information from your brain trying to keep you safe. When you feel that tightening in your chest or that voice saying, "*Who do you think you are?*", try to **Widen** your perspective.

Ask yourself:

- **Is this fear of danger?** (Physical, financial, or relational safety is at risk.)
- **Is this fear of the unfamiliar?** (I just haven't done this before.)
- **Is this fear of judgment?** (I'm worried about what my sister/boss/neighbor will think.)

If the fear is about the unfamiliar or judgment, it's usually a sign that you are standing right on the edge of your Stretch Zone. It doesn't mean you are doing something wrong; it means you are doing something new.

"Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the assessment that something else is more important than fear." — Franklin D. Roosevelt (Adapted)

And Sometimes Fear is Trying to Protect You

We must be careful not to fall into the "toxic positivity" trap of thinking all fear is just a "limiting belief." Sometimes, fear is a very rational response to real constraints.

If you are afraid to leave a job because you provide the health insurance your family depends on, that isn't a "mindset block." That is a logistical reality. If you are afraid to start a high-intensity workout because your joints have been aching, that is your body giving you vital feedback.

NOTICE the fear. **WIDEN** the lens to see the context. Then **CHOOSE** a path that respects your safety while still allowing for movement. Maybe you don't quit the job today, but you start a small side-project. Maybe you don't do the HIIT workout, but you start a strength training program designed for joint health.

Confidence Often Comes After Action

One of the biggest myths we believe is: "*I'll do it when I feel confident.*"

If you wait to feel confident before you try something new, you might be waiting forever. Confidence is not a personality trait; it is a byproduct of **competence** and **evidence**.

Think back to when you first learned to drive. You weren't confident. You were likely gripped with tension, checking every mirror five times, and sweating. You didn't get confident by reading a book about driving; you got confident by driving the car, making mistakes, correcting them, and realizing you didn't die.

Exercise

The Evidence File

Take five minutes to write down three things you are currently confident in (e.g., your professional expertise, your gardening skills, your ability to navigate a specific city).

Now, look back: Was there a time when you were a "beginner" at these things? What were the specific actions you took that eventually built that confidence?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The Power of Small Experiments

To move from the Comfort Zone to the Stretch Zone without hitting Overload, we use **Small Experiments**. An experiment isn't a commitment; it's a way to gather information.

Instead of saying, "I am going to become a person who meditates for 30 minutes every morning," try an experiment: "For the next three days, I will sit in silence for two minutes while my coffee brews. I want to notice how my brain reacts."

The Experiment Framework:

1. **Learn:** What is the one thing I'm curious about?
2. **Notice:** What is the smallest possible version of this I can try?
3. **Experiment:** Do the thing.
4. **Adjust:** Based on how that felt, what is my next choice?

Important

The Goal is Information, Not Perfection. If your experiment "fails" (e.g., you hated the pottery class, or the new boundary you set felt awkward), the experiment was actually a success. You now have data you didn't have before. You can now **CHOOSE** a different direction with more clarity.

By focusing on sustainable stretches and small experiments, you bypass the brain's "panic" response. You begin to build a life that is intentional, not because you are fearless, but because you have learned how to dance with your fear on the edge of what is possible.

The Art of the Small Experiment

When we reach midlife, we often feel a heavy pressure to "get it right." We feel like the clock is ticking, and if we are going to make a change, it has to be a big, sweeping, permanent one. We think we have to decide what we want for the rest of our lives before we take a single step.

But here is the truth: you don't have to marry every idea you date.

In the Power Reset Path, we move away from the "Grand Life Overhaul" and toward the **Small Experiment**. An experiment is a low-stakes way to gather data. It isn't a commitment to a new identity; it's a way to see how a new identity *feels* before you sign the contract.

Why Experiments Work Better Than Resolutions

Traditional goal setting often feels like a pass/fail test. If you say, "I am going to be a person who runs 5 miles every morning," and you hit snooze on Tuesday, you've "failed."

An experiment shifts the perspective. If your experiment is "I will try moving my body for 15 minutes before work for three days," and you only do it once, you haven't failed. You've gathered data. You might notice that you were too tired, or that you actually preferred the 15 minutes of movement you *did* do.

Pro Tip

The goal of an experiment is not perfection. The goal is **information**. Every outcome—even the ones that feel like a "flop"—tells you something valuable about what fits your life right now.

The Anatomy of a Power Reset Experiment

A good experiment has four specific qualities. It is:

1. **Small:** It should take very little "startup capital" (time, money, or emotional energy).
2. **Time-Bound:** It has a clear start and end date (usually 1 to 7 days).
3. **Specific:** You know exactly what you are testing.
4. **Observed:** You commit to noticing how it feels without judging it.

Examples of Midlife Experiments:

- **The Social Experiment:** Instead of joining a new club, attend *one* meeting of a local gardening group or book club just to see the "vibe."
- **The Boundary Experiment:** For one weekend, decide you will not check your work email. Notice the itch to check it. Notice the anxiety. Notice if the world actually ends (spoiler: it usually doesn't).

- **The Creative Experiment:** Buy one cheap watercolor set and paint for 20 minutes on a Sunday afternoon. Don't try to make "art." Just see if you like the feeling of the brush on the paper.
- **The Physical Experiment:** Try one 10-minute strength training video on YouTube to see how your joints feel, rather than committing to a 6-month gym membership.

The "Notice 'Widen 'Choose" Framework in Action

When you run an experiment, you are using the core PRP philosophy in real-time.

1. NOTICE: During the experiment, pay attention to your internal weather.

- *Does this feel like a "should" or a "want"?*
- *Where do I feel tension in my body when I do this?*
- *Am I having fun, or am I just trying to be "productive"?*

2. WIDEN: If the experiment feels hard or uncomfortable, widen your perspective.

- *Is it hard because I'm a beginner, or is it hard because I actually dislike it?*
- *What expectations am I bringing to this? Am I trying to be "good" at it immediately?*
- *What would this look like if it were easy?*

3. CHOOSE: Based on what you noticed, make the next choice.

- *Choice A: I liked this! I'll try it for another 3 days.*
- *Choice B: I hated this. I am checking it off the list and never doing it again (this is a successful experiment!).*
- *Choice C: I liked the idea, but the timing was wrong. I'll try it again next month in a different way.*

Dealing with the "Beginner Blues"

One of the hardest parts of experimenting in midlife is that we are used to being *competent*. We are experts in our jobs, our families, and our routines. Being a beginner feels like a loss of status. It can feel undignified to be a 50-year-old woman who can't figure out how to post a Reel, or who feels wobbly in a yoga class.

Note

Being bad at something new is not evidence that you shouldn't be doing it. It is only evidence that you are learning. Give yourself permission to be "cringe" for a little while. It's where the growth lives.

Your Experiment Script

If you find yourself overthinking a new path, use this script to lower the stakes:

"I am not changing my life today. I am simply running a 72-hour experiment to see what happens if I [insert action]. At the end of the 72 hours, I will look at the data and decide if I want to run the experiment again. I cannot fail, because I am just the scientist collecting notes."

The Power of "Good Enough"

Sometimes we use "research" as a way to avoid starting. We buy five books on nutrition instead of just trying one new vegetable. We look at 50 pairs of hiking boots instead of just walking around the block in our sneakers.

Exercise

The "Good Enough" Challenge:

Pick one thing you've been over-researching. Commit to taking the "B-minus" version of action today. Don't wait for the perfect weather, the perfect outfit, or the perfect mood. Just start the experiment with what you have.

Remember: Experiments create information. Information creates clarity. Clarity allows you to participate in what gets built next. You don't need a map of the whole forest; you just need to see the next three feet of the trail.

Releasing and Becoming

Midlife is often framed as a time of loss—loss of youth, loss of certain roles, or even the loss of a specific version of our physical selves. But in the Power Reset Path, we look at this transition through a different lens. To become the woman you are meant to be in this next season, you must first identify what you are still carrying that no longer serves the journey.

Growth in perimenopause and beyond isn't just about adding new habits like strength training or better sleep hygiene; it is deeply tied to the psychological act of **releasing**. Think of it like a hot air balloon: you can add all the fuel (energy) you want, but if you don't drop the sandbags (outdated identities and expectations), you aren't going anywhere.

The Art of Letting Go

Letting go is not a passive act. It is an active, intentional choice to stop giving your limited energy to things that have reached their expiration date. In our 20s and 30s, we are in a "gathering" phase of life. We gather degrees, relationships, furniture, habits, and identities. By the time we hit our 40s and 50s, the closet is full. If we want to bring in something new—something that reflects who we are **now**—we have to clear some space.

Note

Releasing something doesn't mean it was a mistake. It means it has finished its purpose in your story. You can honor a past version of yourself while acknowledging she no longer lives here.

What are you carrying?

We often carry "ghost obligations"—things we feel we *should* do simply because we've always done them.

- **Old Expectations:** The need to be the "perfect" hostess, the "relentless" worker, or the "fixer" for everyone in the family.
- **Outdated Goals:** That marathon you wanted to run ten years ago that now feels like a punishment rather than a joy.
- **Identities that Choke:** Being the "reliable one" who never says no, even when her own health is suffering.

You Can Love Who You Were Without Staying Her

One of the most profound shifts I experienced in my own journey was realizing that I was fighting to maintain a version of Megan that didn't exist anymore. I wanted the 30-year-old Megan's metabolism and her ability to run on five hours of sleep. I was grieving her, and in that grief, I was missing the strength and wisdom of the woman standing in the mirror today.

We must learn to look back at our younger selves with deep compassion. That woman made the best decisions she could with the tools she had. She survived the stressors of early career building, the intensity of young children, or the uncertainty of her 20s. She was a warrior. But you don't need to wear her armor anymore if the battle has changed.

Exercise

The Gratitude Release

1. Identify one role or habit you are ready to let go of (e.g., "The woman who stays up until midnight cleaning").
2. Write down: "I thank this version of me for [how it protected/served you]. I am grateful for what she taught me."
3. Write down: "I am now releasing her so I can become the woman who [your new intention, e.g., values her rest]."

The Woman You Are Becoming

As we move through the **NOTICE 'WIDEN 'CHOOSE** framework, we eventually land on the most exciting question: *Who is the woman emerging?*

This isn't about a "New You" makeover. We aren't interested in fixing you because you aren't broken. We are interested in **unfolding**. The woman you are becoming is likely more honest, less concerned with the opinions of strangers, and more protective of her peace.

Defining the Future Self

When you think about the next decade, avoid the trap of "hustle culture" goals. Instead of "I want to lose 20 pounds," widen the perspective to "I want to be a woman who moves with ease and feels strong in her bones."

Ask yourself:

- **What does she protect?** (Her mornings? Her energy? Her boundaries?)
- **What does she no longer apologize for?** (Her needs? Her changing body? Her "no"?)
- **How does she speak to herself?** (Is the inner critic finally being demoted to a background singer?)

The Next Decade: A New Design

Midlife is the first time many of us have the agency to consciously design our days. The first half of life is often designed by biology, culture, and necessity. The second half can be designed by **purpose**.

Maybe you didn't choose the hormonal shifts of perimenopause. Maybe you didn't choose the way your joints feel some mornings. But you **can** choose how you participate in the next part. You can choose to be a beginner again. You can choose to prioritize muscle over aesthetics. You can choose to trade "busy" for "meaningful."

Important

Your story is useful, but it is not a sentence. Just because you have "always been" a certain way doesn't mean you are required to remain that way for the next forty years.

Practice: The "Becoming" Script

When you feel the pull of the old self—the one who over-commits or ignores her own fatigue—use this internal script:

"I notice I am falling into an old pattern. I widen my view to see that I have more choices now than I did before. I choose to act as the woman I am becoming, not the woman I used to be."

Final Reflection: Still Becoming

You are a work in progress, and that is the most hopeful thing about being human. Growth doesn't have an expiration date. Whether you are 38, 52, or 65, you are still building.

Pay attention to the whispers of curiosity. Notice the things that make you feel alive versus the things that make you feel diminished. Widening your perspective allows you to see that the "rules" you thought were set in stone are actually just suggestions.

Your transformation begins with your next choice. Not a giant leap, but one small, intentional choice to give the woman you are becoming a little more room to breathe.

The 7-Day Growth Experiment

We have talked a lot about the theory of becoming. We've looked at your past, your values, and the roles you play. But in the Power Reset Path, we believe that insight without action is just a nice thought. To truly understand who you are becoming, you have to get your hands a little dirty in the soil of your actual life.

This isn't about a "New Year, New You" overhaul. We aren't trying to flip your world upside down in a week. Instead, we are going to run a **Small Experiment**.

The beauty of an experiment is that it cannot fail; it can only produce data. If you try a new morning routine and you hate it, the experiment was a success because you now know that specific routine doesn't serve you. You didn't "fail" at the routine; you succeeded at gathering information.

Choosing Your Experiment

For the next seven days, I want you to choose **one** small area of focus. Don't pick five. Pick one. We are looking for a "sustainable stretch"—something that feels a little different but doesn't send you into overload.

Here are some examples of what a 7-day experiment might look like:

- **The Curiosity Experiment:** Research one topic you've been "meaning to look into" for 15 minutes a day (e.g., a local pottery class, how to start a podcast, or Mediterranean cooking).

-

The Boundary Experiment: Practice saying "Let me check my calendar and get back to you" before agreeing to any new request this week.

- **The Movement Experiment:** Try a 10-minute walk or stretch every morning, not to lose weight, but to notice how your joints feel.
- **The Connection Experiment:** Reach out to one person who makes you feel like "yourself" and have a real conversation.
- **The Imperfection Experiment:** Do one task "well enough" instead of perfectly (like leaving the laundry unfolded or sending an email without proofreading it four times).

Pro Tip

Pick the experiment that makes you feel a tiny bit of "good" nervous—the kind of feeling you get when you're about to open a gift you're excited about.

Your 7-Day Roadmap

Phase 1: The Setup

Before you start, write down your intention.

THIS WEEK, I NOTICE: (Example: I notice I feel very rushed and irritable by 4:00 PM.)

ONE THING I WANT TO EXPERIMENT WITH: (Example: Taking a 5-minute "quiet break" at 3:30 PM.)

FOR THE NEXT 7 DAYS, I WILL: (Example: Set a timer for 3:30 PM, sit on the porch, and just breathe.)

Phase 2: The Daily Check-In

Each evening, take sixty seconds to answer these two questions in a notebook or on your phone:

1. Did I do my experiment today?
2. What did I notice? (Not "How did I do," but "What did I observe?")

Phase 3: The Mid-Week Pivot

Around Day 4, you might feel the urge to quit or you might realize your experiment was too big. **Adjust.** If you committed to 30 minutes of reading but can only find 5, change the experiment to 5 minutes. Remember: **Learn 'Notice 'Experiment 'Adjust.**

The Post-Experiment Reflection

Once your seven days are up, it's time to look at the data. This is where the "Widen" part of our philosophy comes in. We look at the whole picture.

Exercise

Final Reflection Questions:

What felt energizing? Did any part of this make you feel more like "you"?

What felt uncomfortable? Was it the "stretch" kind of discomfort or the "this doesn't fit me" kind?

What surprised you? Did you notice a habit or a thought pattern you didn't know was there?

What did I learn about myself?

*What experiment might come next?** Do you want to keep doing this one, or try something totally different?

"You do not have to marry every idea you date. Sometimes the most important thing you learn from an experiment is that you are ready to move on to the next one." - Megan

Why This Matters

By doing this, you are proving to yourself that you still have **agency**. You are practicing the art of choosing. Even if the experiment was just choosing a different brand of coffee or taking a different route to work, you are reminding your brain that the "rules" of your life are more flexible than you thought. You are participating in what gets built next, one small, intentional choice at a time.

Still Becoming: A Final Reflection

As we reach the conclusion of this guide, I want to invite you to take a deep breath and look at how far you've come. Not just in the pages you've read, but in the decades you've lived. If there is one thing I want you to carry with you from the Power Reset Path, it is this: **Growth does not have an expiration date.**

In our culture, we are often sold the lie that midlife is the beginning of the "fading out" process. We are told that our best years are behind us, our identities are fixed, and our bodies are simply problems to be managed. But what if the opposite is true? What if midlife is actually the moment where you finally have enough data, enough experience, and enough self-awareness to truly begin *becoming on purpose*?

The Myth of the Finished Product

We often treat personal growth like a home renovation project—something with a start date, a messy middle, and a final "reveal" where everything is perfect and finished. But humans aren't houses. You are a living, breathing, evolving ecosystem.

Important

You do not have to become a completely different woman. You may simply need to give more room to the woman who has been emerging all along.

Growth in this season isn't about fixing a broken version of yourself. It's about recognizing that the "rules" you followed in your 20s and 30s were perhaps necessary for that season, but they are optional now. You are allowed to be a work in progress. You are allowed to be "under construction" even as you hold positions of high responsibility and authority.

Pay Attention: You're Still Building

Every time you notice a recurring thought, every time you widen your perspective to see a new possibility, and every time you choose a path that aligns with your current values, you are building.

Maybe you didn't choose every part of the life that brought you here. You didn't choose the hormonal shifts of perimenopause, the global events that shaped your career, or the specific family dynamics you inherited. But you still get to participate in what gets built next.

The Power Reset Practice: A Daily Reminder

To keep this momentum going, I encourage you to return to our central philosophy whenever you feel stuck, overwhelmed, or "lost" in the transition:

1. **NOTICE:** What is happening right now? (e.g., "I notice I am saying 'yes' to this committee out of guilt, not desire.")
2. **WIDEN:** What else is true? (e.g., "I have served this community for ten years. My energy is lower this month due to poor sleep. I am allowed to prioritize my rest without losing my status as a helpful person.")
3. **CHOOSE:** What is my next step? (e.g., "I will send a polite email declining the invitation and suggesting someone else who might benefit from the opportunity.")

Your Transformation Begins with Your Next Choice

Transformation doesn't usually happen in a lightning bolt of inspiration. It happens in the quiet, mundane moments where you decide to do things slightly differently. It happens when you choose curiosity over judgment, and experiments over perfection.

"Maybe you didn't choose every part of this life. But you can choose how you participate in the next part." - Megan, Power Reset Path

You are intelligent, capable, and full of untapped vitality. The world needs the version of you that is intentional, grounded, and awake to her own needs. Don't rush the process. Don't demand immediate results. Just stay curious.

Keep learning. Keep noticing. Keep experimenting. Keep adjusting.

You are still becoming, and that is a beautiful thing to be.