

* REFLECT * RECEIVE * RESET *



THE YEAR-END POWER PAUSE

A reflection process for
emerging & established leaders

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“The Wisdom is in the Pause” - Alice Walker

Consider this ... over the course of a year, you give so much to people and projects. You do much to manage your daily demands, while also striving for your dreams and desires. Yet you forget how much you actually accomplish. This is what we call “Achievers Amnesia.” It’s easier to see what you *have not done* vs seeing all you have. So you keep driving, striving, working, and care-giving until you drop from exhaustion or melt because of overwhelm. Or you just keep persevering and pushing forward, focused on too many things vs on what brings the greatest returns and fulfillment. Living this way isn’t sustainable, and it robs you of receiving the success & wellbeing you work so hard for. So what do you do instead?

First, we admit that we fear slowing down, even though we really want to downshift our pace. We crave having space for ourselves yet feel guilty when we take it. We get anxious and antsy when our pace slows down, and judge ‘I should be doing something more productive.’ We sacrifice our wellbeing when time seems slim, and then push ourselves hard. We don’t trust that if we slow down, just for a time, like the ocean that both ebbs & flows, we’ll gain perspective & momentum, and accomplish more of what matters.

Second, we need structures we can put into our lives - daily, weekly, monthly and yearly - that support us to take the space we need to reflect, restore, and refocus, consistently. Just as we value leadership offsites with our teams to make sure our organizations run great and we meet our team & individual goals, we also need ‘personal offsites’ to press pause, step back, see the bigger picture, and make adjustments that improve our lives, performance, relationships, and overall wellbeing.

Taking a “Power Pause” to complete your year is one such structure that can make a significant difference in how replenished and ready you are in the new year. One of the greatest gifts you can give yourself at the end of the year is to reflect on your achievements and accomplishments, personally and professionally, in both what you have *DONE* and who you have *BECOME*. Acknowledge your successes, honor the stretches, release the shortcomings, and harvest the wisdom gained.

When you pause to reflect on all you have done & become, you FEEL & SEE the results of the energy & time you’ve given. Your mind and body registers reality in a way that doesn’t occur if you don’t pause to reflect & receive. When you feel grateful and successful on the inside, you are more likely to focus your life force, time and resources going forward in the coming year on what really matters.



The 4-step process is based on timeless wisdom modified for our modern times. We use tools such as visual thinking & intentional inquiry, which give us access to insights and perspectives easy to miss in the day-to-day, but are so valuable to how we view success, experience wellbeing, and make choices in big and small ways. We’ve taught this reflection process for over a decade; we also do it every year ourselves and with our teams. This Year-End Power Pause guidebook was created for leaders such as yourself to reflect on your life as a whole – professional, personal, and relational. The process is designed to support the human you - all parts. Then clear within, able to see progress & opportunity, you lead and live from your centered leadership presence in the coming year.

1. **REFLECT** – review your accomplishments, progress, successes, wins, personally and professionally
2. **RECEIVE** - pause to acknowledge, savor and honor what you have created, caused, and achieved
3. **RELEASE** – transform the shorts, disappointments, and unexpected challenges
4. **RESET** – gather wisdom learned from 2023 and apply it forward in 2024, reset focus for your year-end & year-start, and create space to restore and replenish so you start the new year fresh.

May the reflection provide you with wisdom for the year ahead, permission to take the space you desire to restore, and a sense that you have achieved much and made a difference this year in many ways.



ONE: REFLECT

Illuminate the Successes & Progress and How You Made a Difference & Grew

We start the Power Pause by shining light on the successes you've achieved this year – there are more than you are likely giving yourself credit for!

As you go through this process, consider expanding your definition of success to include:

- both what you have **done** + who have **become** – both what you have achieved, experienced or created, and the ways you have grown, shown up and become a stronger, wiser, more fully expressed, compassionate and conscious version of you.
- both the things you have **completed** + things you have made **progress on** - when you honor the progress, you start to enjoy the process instead of pushing through to the final product only to feel like you have to do it all over again.
- both your **productivity** + **presence** – the goals you met are just as important as the way you did it, and who you showed up as in the process in your interactions with others.
- both what you **achieved at work professionally** + **the work you did personally and relationally** – the effort you gave to how you showed up in roles as a care-giver, mentor, parent or partner and the energy you gave to your personal growth are work. The definition of work is “effort directed to produce or accomplish something.” Consider where you gave effort, for what purpose or need, and how embracing that as work may expand your feeling of success.
- both the **visible tangible markers easier to measure and see** + **the invisible intangibles that make a significant difference but are often overlooked** - consider and count the many invisible acts you gave energy too -- care given, relationships invested in, processes that made things work, non-sexy operational foundations at home or work. Notice how these supported the tangible (numbers, physical manifestations of goals) to exist.
- both **material wealth** + **wellbeing wealth** – expand your definition of wellbeing and wealth to include both financial flow, reserves and assets as well as your physical, mental and emotional health and your relational health. All are needed to provide a sustainable foundation of security, stability, vitality and wellbeing.
- both **small every-day choices** + **big-life or business/team/family choices** – acknowledge the ways in which you did things differently and made choices because they supported your wellbeing and the wellbeing of the people around you.

DIRECTIONS:

Approach this process like a gift you are choosing to give to yourself – like taking all the toys out of a toy box to see all that you have created and given your energy, time, resources and care to. You get to put pen to paper and see all the ways you’ve made progress, made a difference, made supportive choices, experienced new things, and received a lot of goodness in your reality, even in challenging times and years.

How the reflecting process works:

1. **Start to spark your memory about what occurred since January 2023** – it’s been a full 11+ months. Jan, Feb, March → April, May, June → July, Aug, Sept → Oct, Nov, Dec.
2. **Use the two templates – Professional and Personal – on the following two pages like lenses to see, write out and give language to 2023 successes, growth, and experiences within your whole life.**
3. **Each template includes four sections that bring focus to a specific realm of your life.** Use the section headers as sparks to remembering. Write out what you can remember now and you can keep coming back to and adding more to.

You Personally	You Professionally
Personal Growth & Self-Expression	Career Path & Leadership Presence
Relationships, Care-Giving & Making A Difference	Impact on People & Purpose
Wellbeing Foundation – Home, Health, Wealth & Practices	Impact on Business & Organization
Choices that Supported & Delighted Me	Project Progress & Completions

Tips:

- **Stoke your memory by looking back through photos or calendar. Think back by month or area of life. For ex:** Career, Projects, Team Leadership/Mentoring, Care-giving/Parenting, Family/Friends, Colleagues/Peers, Community, Home, Mental/Emotional/Physical Health, Financial Flow & Reserves, Presence, Creative/Self Expression.
- **Don’t get too hung up on what goes in the personal and the professional – it is all you.**
- **Don’t focus on what wasn’t perfect or up to high expectations.** Give yourself credit for the way you showed up, what you did that mattered to you, how you stretched yourself, and what you are proud of.
- **Have fun, lighten up, allow yourself to feel success and progress.**

PERSONAL GROWTH & SELF-EXPRESSION

CHOICES THAT SUPPORTED & DELIGHTED ME

RELATIONSHIPS, CARE-GIVING & MAKING A DIFFERENCE



WELLBEING FOUNDATION
HOME, HEALTH, WEALTH, PRACTICES

CAREER PATH & LEADERSHIP PRESENCE

IMPACT ON PEOPLE & PURPOSE

IMPACT ON BUSINESS & ORGANIZATION



PROJECTS - PROGRESS & COMPLETIONS



TWO: RECEIVE

Acknowledge the Impact of your Choices, Care & Effort, the Progress Made & The Growth You've Achieved

This next step is essential, do not skip it. Two reasons we feel so much pressure to keep moving, doing, and making stuff happen are that we judge we should have accomplished & done more, and we rarely pause to acknowledge & feel proud of what we've done & become this past year.

Your mind + body + heart all need to register that the events of the past actually happened, at a visceral, felt level or it's like they never occurred. Poof! All your effort, care, and progress vaporizes, like a meal or dessert you eat too fast, fail to savor, and are left still hungry for more. In this case, when your internal system doesn't receive an embodied acknowledgement of what you've done, who you've become and the difference you've made in your life and others, you don't savor your efforts and impact, and you end the year and start the next, empty, feeling like you have not done enough.

This is why we take a Power Pause at the end of the year at the very least, and in the best circumstances quarterly. When you pause and let the reality sink in that progress has been made, that change has happened, and that you showed up for life in many ways, the result is you FEEL more successful, so you pressure and criticize yourself (and others) less. You gain the power to motivate yourself by inspiration, gratitude and possibility vs. scarcity, judgment and fear. And you gain clarity on how to best focus your time, energy and resources in 2024.

Use the 3 sentence starters below to tap into the energy of healthy self- pride, acknowledgment, celebration/joy, and honor. Write them out. For extra power do this exercise with another person. You both share, and then reflect what you witness about each other's progress, growth and impact.

IN THIS PAST YEAR...

a. "I am PROUD that I have....

b. "I CELEBRATE I ...

c. "I HONOR that I...

Note: Every time you write it down or say it out loud, it registers more deeply, and your internal wellbeing and resilience strengthen.



THREE: RELEASE

Release & Transform this Year's "Shorts" into Self-Supportive, Empowering Action

No one likes to fall short or fail, but we all do. We start out the year wishing for the best, and unexpected challenges and situations happen out of our control. We have ideas and desires and expectations/goals set by ourselves & others. We set out to meet these. Sometimes we hit the mark, others we miss. This is the nature of life. So what do we "do" with the challenging realities and the uncomfortable feelings they bring up?

Don't: Ignore, Gloss Over, Bypass or Beat Yourself Up for the Failures & Shortfalls.

Do: Illuminate The Expectations & Challenges. Liberate the Feels. Elevate to Find the Wisdom.

Consider this: If you don't make the space to be with the disappointments, shortfalls & challenges, and release the emotional charge & resulting mindset, you carry the critical self-talk, self-imposed pressure and unconscious judgments with you into next year. Then the distorted energy unconsciously drives your perspective, expectations, and choices – not in a good or healthy way. Much of the burnout, overwhelm, anxiety, and dissatisfaction we experience is rooted in our past shorts and the pressure-creating situations that were out of our control. So now we pause to release.

When you release the self-criticism & disappointment tied to the shortcomings that occurred in the past year, you stop repeating the same self-sabotaging habits & choices. When you acknowledge the impact of the unexpected challenges that arose this past year that were out of your control, the stress and invisible pressure releases, and you can walk into next year lighter.

What follows is a 3-step process to provide insight, relief and a supportive, empowering way to move forward. Use the two visual templates to take you through. Here's the step by step:

1. **ILLUMINATE the Invisible Pressures from 2023, focusing on these four categories:** challenges outside your control, missed goals, unmet expectations and ways you didn't show up as your best self. Write 1-3 for each in the space allotted.
2. **LIBERATE Yourself from One Short:** Robert Frost wisely observed, "The best way out is through." Here that means in order to shake off the short to get to an elevated level of wisdom, presence and possibility next year, you've got to feel the feels, or at least see and touch into them. Choose one short from Step 1 and write it in the center circle. Then respond to the 4 sentence starters to get to the heart of what you are mentally and emotionally experiencing.
3. **ELEVATE Your Perspective & Experience Forward.** Like looking through a kaleidoscope, shift the viewpoint through which you experienced the short. You acknowledged the impact. Now, move through it, by tuning into deeper truth and wisdom. Write the same 'short' in the center of the lens. Start in the upper left side with, "The Loving Truth is..." and complete the sentence starters. Note: To tap into your internal wisdom use this process: "Take a Beat. Take a Breath. Tune In.": Before each inquiry, slow down, take a breath, close your eyes, place your hands on your body. Tune in: Say to yourself or speak the sentence starter. Write down what emerges. **Last Step:** Pull back, look at the full picture, and ask "What do I notice? Can I acknowledge?"

Transforming 'SHORTS'

① I illuminate the INVISIBLE PRESSURES:



☹️ I'm disappointed that...

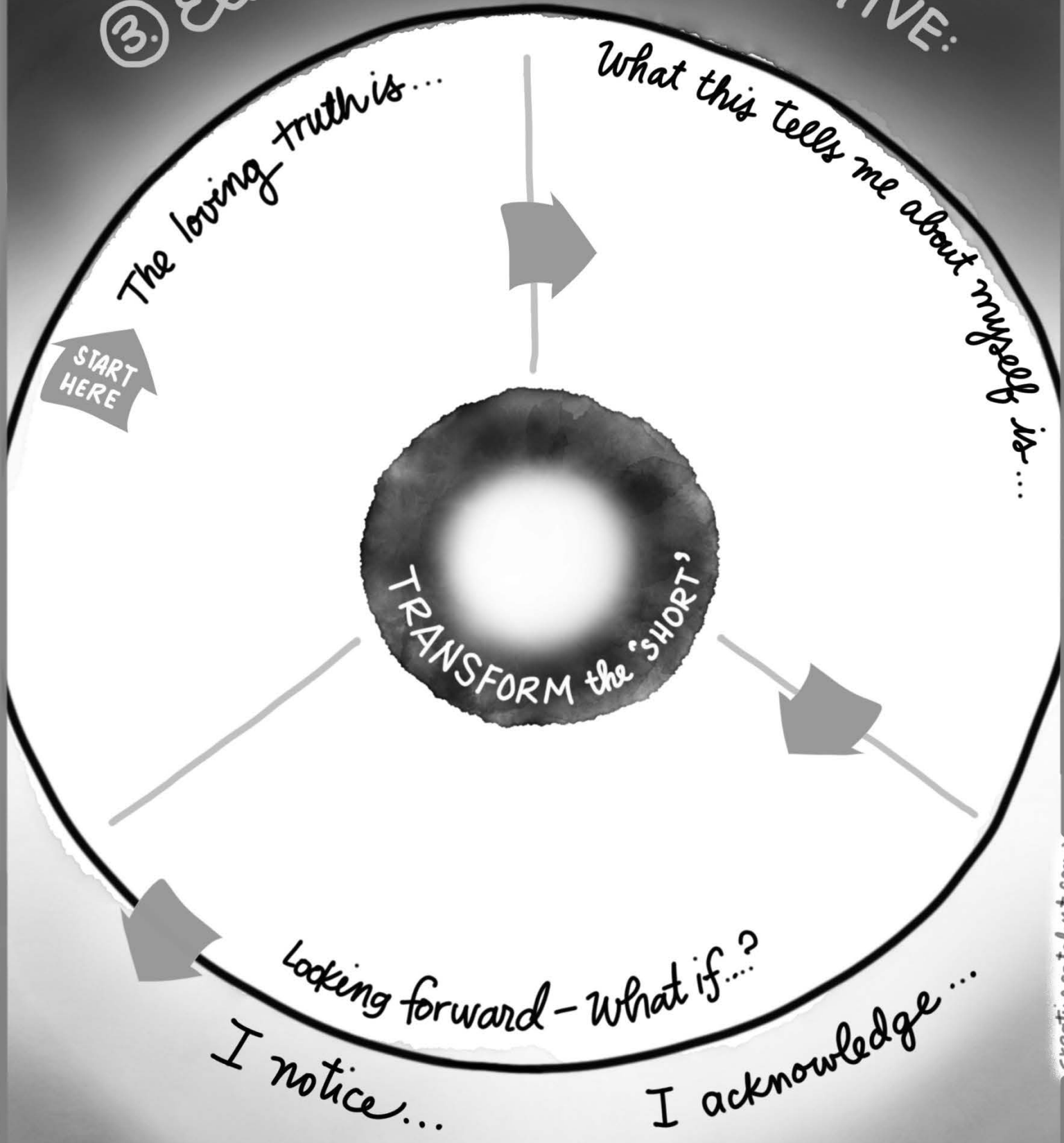
It really SUCKS that... ☹️



I make this MEAN that...

I wish...

③ Elevate your PERSPECTIVE:





Four: RESET

Harvest the Wisdom So How & What You Do in 2024 Happens with More Ease, Grace & Clarity

What you are looking for here are what we call “pearls of wisdom” that were likely earned through yours and others effort, resiliency and capacity to rise to meet challenges and opportunities this past year.

Like the grit that created the pearl, we want to make sure that the pearl goes with you so that you can apply that wisdom to the path ahead. So next year, when grit shows up, you have some threads of wisdom to tug on and hold onto as you make your way through all that happens in the year to come. Both the stuff that feels great and lifts you up, and the challenges that stretch you.

The visual thinking template on the next page is like a compass that can guide you into and through next year – we call it the **Wisdom & Wellbeing Wheel**. Like harvesting a field that you tended all year, this is where all the gold to take into next year is. Here are the steps:

1. **Harvest the Wisdom You Want to Take into 2024:** Look back at steps one, two and three – Reflect, Receive and Release. What did you learn? What do you want to remember? What would you do differently? From where you are standing now, what would you tell your earlier-year self that would have made things more easeful?

There are three sections in the Wisdom Wheel with suggested focuses for the pearls of wisdom to capture. Use our suggested focus areas or make up your own. Consider: What wisdom gained will support me to work wiser, stay focused on what matters, create a supportive reality for myself and others, and reach goals that have a strong return – materially, emotionally & relationally?

- Wisdom gained about Relationships & My Leadership/Personal Presence
- Wisdom gained about Setting & Achieving Goals and Expectations
- Wisdom gained about What Matters Most to Me

2. **What Support & Structure Do I Need to Be My Best Self – Professionally, Personally & Relationally?** Write these in the hands at the bottom of the template.

- Support:** Consider emotional, physical, mental, relational, intellectual & material support
- Structure:** Consider the practices, routines, rhythms, experiences, groups, people that provide structure for you to lean into

3. **How Do I Desire to Feel as I Walk Through 2024?** Choose 1-3 “harmonizing” words that describe how you want to feel or the energy you want to experience this next year. This is your compass center point, “I desire to feel...” The words act as re-centering and decision-making words to come back throughout the year or in times of more intensity and pressure.

Wisdom & Wellbeing Wheel

The WISDOM I'm taking into the next cycle...

RELATIONSHIPS & Leadership PRESENCE

GOALS & EXPECTATIONS

I desire to FEEL:

What MATTERS MOST to me...

What I need to be my best self:

SUPPORT

STRUCTURE

About Your Facilitators & The Power Pause System



Christine Arylo, MBA, is a transformational leadership advisor, teacher, and author who works with emerging & established leaders to create new ways of working and making an impact that lead to sustainable success & wellbeing for people, teams, organizations and the planet. Marrying 25 years of business & entrepreneurial experience with 20 years of extensive human-consciousness & leadership training, she's known for bringing new perspectives, profound insight, and practical tools that empower people to lead within their lives, organizations, communities, and relationships differently. Arylo is a best-selling author of 4 books, a TEDx speaker, and an expert at developing transformational experiences & innovative learning curriculum. Connect at www.ChristineArylo.com or www.linkedin.com/in/christinearylo/



Katherine Torrini is a graphic recorder, facilitator and strategic illustrator who has brought her visual magic to the likes of NASA, Dell, Coca-Cola, Chevron, AT&T, Southwest Airlines and The Institute for the Future. The common thread through all of Katherine's work is her passion for reconnecting people to their innate creativity and empowering them to use it to live their most fulfilling lives—personally and professionally. Connect at www.CreativeCatalyst.com or <https://www.linkedin.com/in/katherine-torrini/>



THE POWER PAUSE

Power Pauses are visually facilitated, cyclical planning sessions that provide a more creative and collaborative process to prioritizing, focusing, setting expectations and making progress on goals based on how humans and teams naturally work best.

These strategic sessions usually happen at quarterly or twice-yearly intervals and work great for teams or for leader/managers, and include:

- **The Year-Start or Year-End Power Pause: Creating From Momentum** – occurs in mid-late January for teams, giving teams a place to land post-holiday, or in early December to create a path for downshifting. The focus is on reflecting on the team successes, shorts, and impact, and create a path and focused priorities to sustainable success and wellbeing in the next year, from the wisdom gained and lessons learned.
- **The Team Prioritizing & Synergy Power Pause** – occurs at the start of the business calendar year or in March or September for teams to get clear on how best to focus, prioritize and work together for a specific time span – year, half year, or quarter. Can include workshops focused on working wiser vs. harder, stress personalities & wellbeing strategies, and creating greater synergy & connection among team members.
- **The Mid-Year Power Pause: Review. Re-align. Refocus.** – occurs in July/August for teams or managers & leaders to pause at half-year, review goals & priorities, and re-set focus for the second half of year.

This whole-brain approach, centered around sustainable success for individuals, teams, and organizations, alleviates burnout and overwhelm, reduces fragmentation of resources and unnecessary work, and leads to an overall greater impact to business success and employee wellbeing. Individuals and teams become more innovative, flexible and resilient, and people feel more engaged, connected and empowered.

The Power Pause methodology is a propriety system that can be customized and licensed for teams and organizations through the Expanding Possibility Consulting Group. We love working with teams, training leaders & managers, and creating experiences for people that support both individual & organizational wellbeing and success. We ask that these materials and processes are not reproduced or shared. Thank you.

To learn more or explore bringing this to your team, group or organization: Reach out to Christine Arylo at Christine@ExpandingPossibility.org