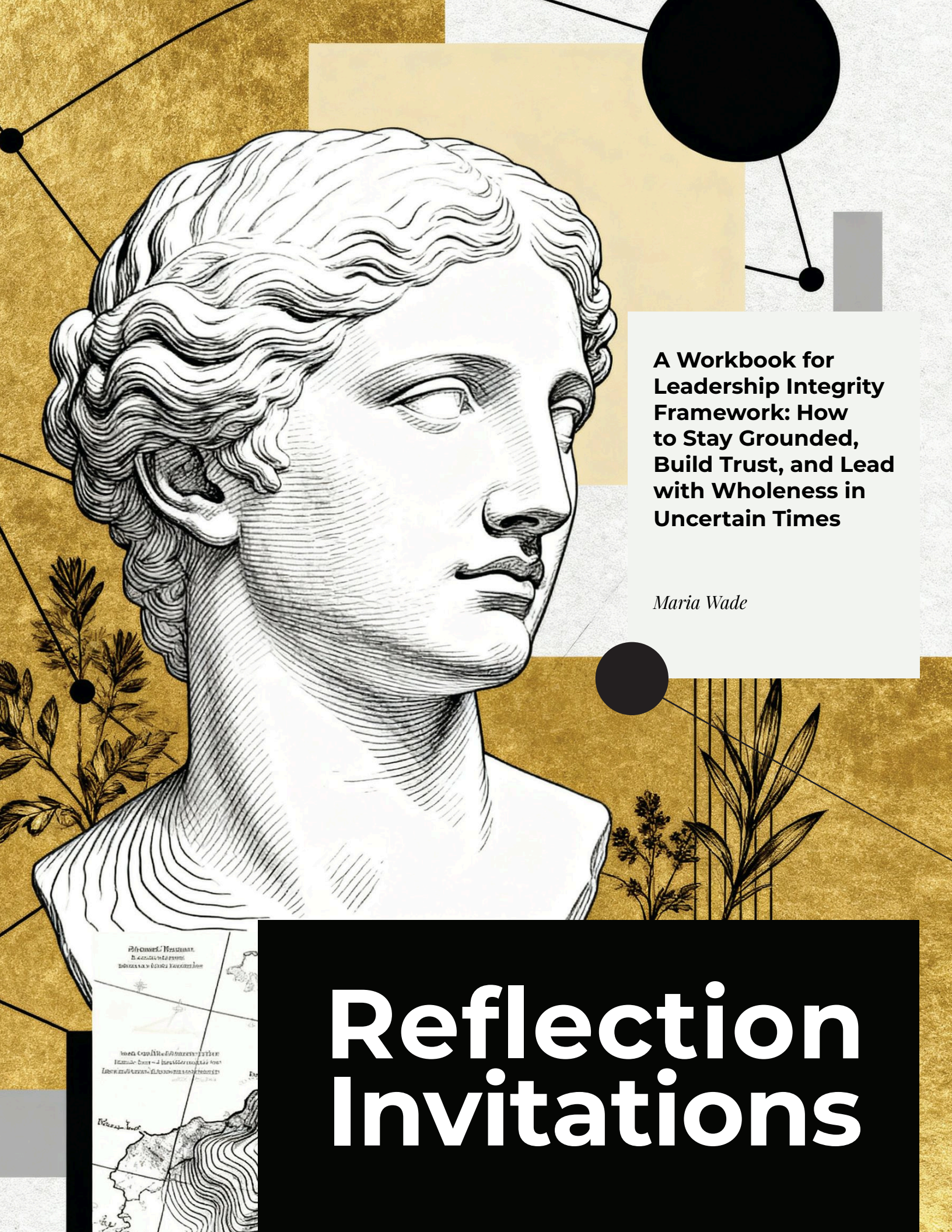
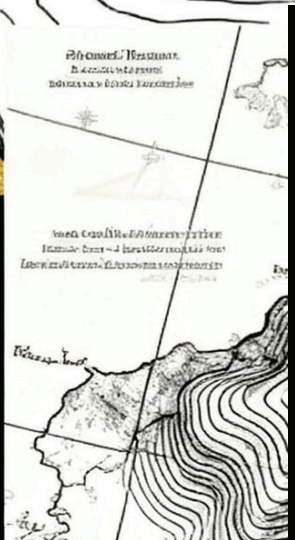




**A Workbook for
Leadership Integrity
Framework: How
to Stay Grounded,
Build Trust, and Lead
with Wholeness in
Uncertain Times**

Maria Wade



Reflection Invitations

Before You Begin

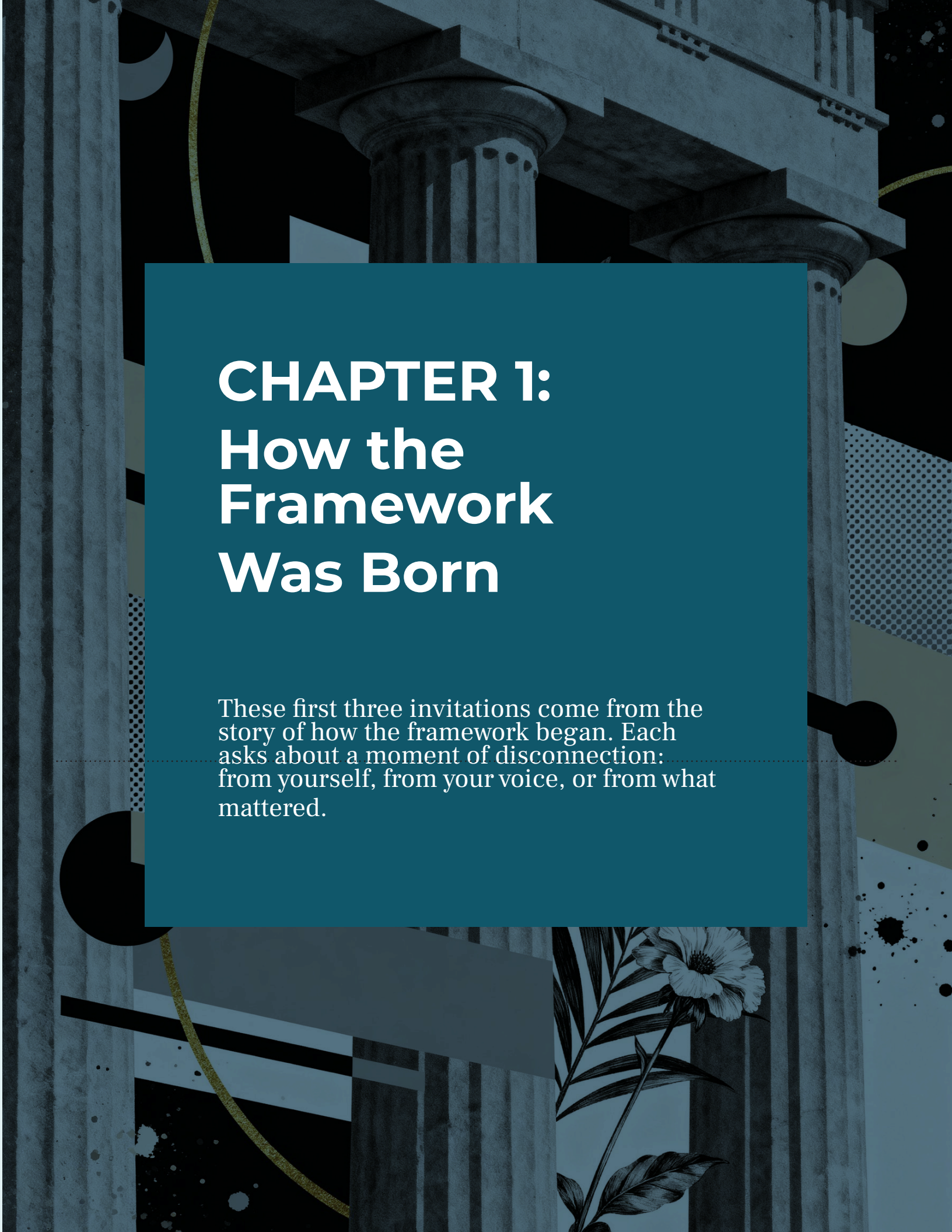
This workbook holds every reflection invitation from the book and audiobook, in the order they appear and numbered the same way. There are none in Chapter 2, so the numbers move from 1.3 to 3.1.

You don't need to answer every question. Read through an invitation, notice which question catches you, and stay with that one. The others will still be here.

Write by hand if you can. It slows the thinking down enough to notice what you would otherwise skip.

Date what you write. Coming back to the same invitation months later, and finding a different answer, shows you what has moved.

There is nothing to score and no right answer. What you write is for you.

The background is a complex collage. It features classical columns, possibly from a Greek temple, rendered in a dark, textured style. Overlaid on these are various geometric elements: a large teal rectangle containing the title, a black circle, a white circle, and a yellow curved line. There are also splatters of black ink and a pattern of small white dots. In the bottom right corner, there is a detailed illustration of a plant with long, narrow leaves and a single white flower with a dark center.

CHAPTER 1: How the Framework Was Born

These first three invitations come from the story of how the framework began. Each asks about a moment of disconnection: from yourself, from your voice, or from what mattered.

Reflection Invitation 1.1

When have you felt most disconnected from yourself as a leader? Perhaps you seemed competent on the surface but somehow absent from your own leadership. What was happening beneath that polished performance?

What surfaced:

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Reflection Invitation 1.2

When has your leadership identity felt erased by forces beyond your control? What did you discover about yourself when the systems that once amplified your voice suddenly made you invisible?

What surfaced:

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Reflection Invitation 1.3

When have you felt the weight of being the only voice that could speak to what really mattered but found yourself calculating the cost of speaking rather than the cost of staying silent?

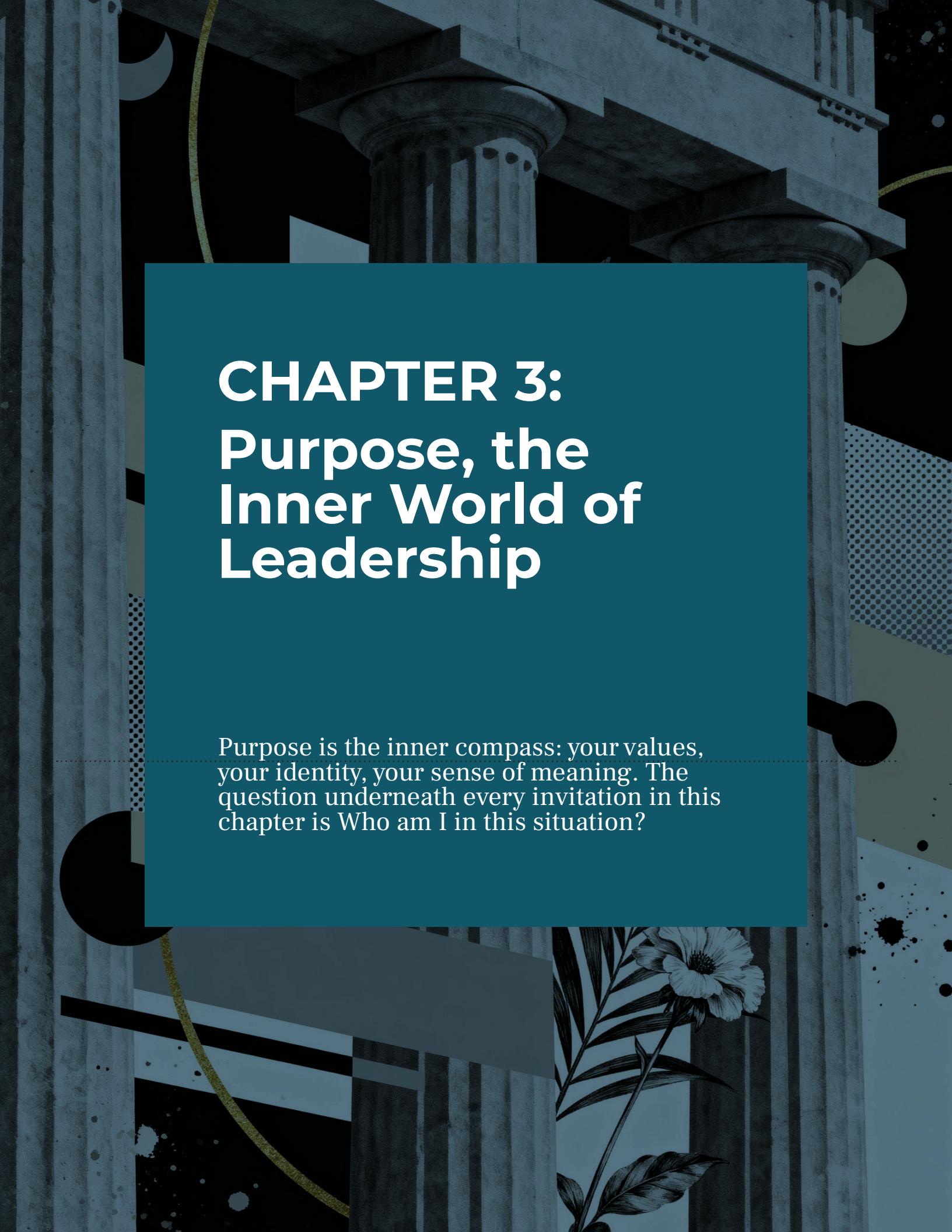
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CHAPTER 3:

Purpose, the Inner World of Leadership

Purpose is the inner compass: your values, your identity, your sense of meaning. The question underneath every invitation in this chapter is Who am I in this situation?

Reflection Invitation 3.1

Sofia’s quiet drift from conviction to performance offers a mirror for those moments when we sense something essential slipping away from our leadership, even when everything appears to be going well.

Think about your current leadership context.

When do you feel most alive and energized in your role? What activities, conversations, or decisions connect you to a sense of meaning rather than just accomplishment? Notice the difference between moments when you’re leading from genuine conviction versus when you’re going through well-practiced motions.

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Consider the gap between your public leadership and your private sense of purpose. Where might you be borrowing clarity from external sources—organizational expectations, industry norms, others’ definitions of success—rather than drawing from your own inner compass? What would it feel like to reclaim one important value that has perhaps gotten buried under the pace of daily demands?

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Who are you when no one is watching, and no one is evaluating your performance? What aspects of that authentic self have been waiting for permission to show up in your leadership?

Take time to write down what surfaced. Sometimes the act of naming what has gone quiet is the first step toward reclaiming it. The goal isn't to make dramatic changes, but to notice where your leadership might be longing for greater alignment with who you are.

What surfaced:

One small experiment I'll try:

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Reflection Invitation 3.2

Sofia's quiet drift and Daniel's diminished voice illuminate two ways that Purpose can fade. Sometimes it happens gradually through the accumulation of small compromises, and sometimes it takes place suddenly when familiar ground shifts beneath us.

Consider your own relationship with purpose in leadership. When do you feel most connected to what drives you? What activities or conversations remind you why you chose to lead in the first place? Notice the difference between moments when you're leading from genuine conviction versus when you're simply managing responsibilities.

Think about times when your context has changed—new roles, organizational shifts, different stakeholders. How do you typically respond when the structures around you evolve? Do you tend to adapt by dimming your voice or by finding new ways to express your values? What helps you distinguish between healthy adaptation and self-protective withdrawal?

Reflect on your current mindset and resilience. When pressure builds or uncertainty increases, do you tend to brace for impact or lean into learning? What practices help you stay connected to your inner compass when external circumstances feel chaotic or constraining?

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Consider the gap between your internal convictions and your external expression: Where might you be operating with borrowed clarity—using others’ definitions of success, industry expectations, or organizational norms—rather than drawing from your own sense of what matters? What would it feel like to reclaim one important aspect of your authentic leadership voice?

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Take time to write down what emerges. Sometimes putting these observations on paper reveals patterns of disconnection we haven't fully acknowledged and possibilities for realignment we haven't yet explored. The goal isn't to achieve perfect clarity about your purpose, but to strengthen your relationship with the inner compass that makes leadership feel meaningful rather than merely functional.

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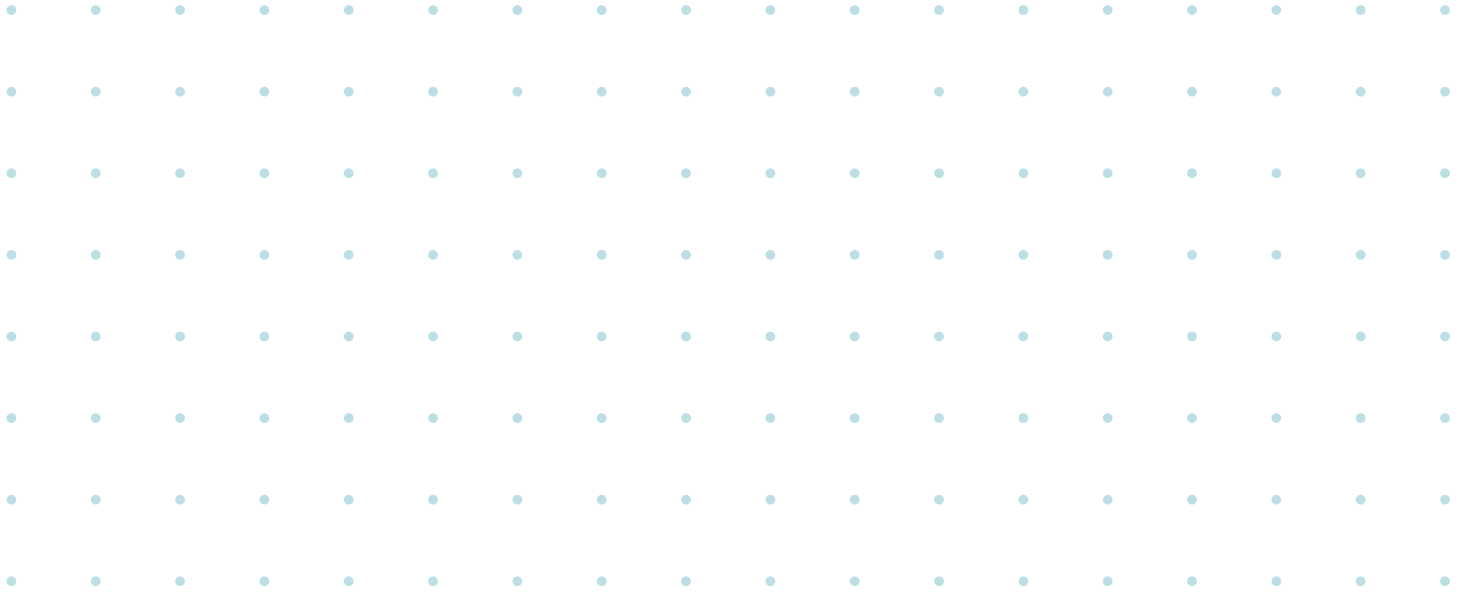
Reflection Invitation 3.3

In the crisis meeting, Lena was physically present but emotionally absent from herself. This experience reveals how easily we can disconnect from our inner compass precisely when we need it most.

Consider a recent high-stakes situation where you felt the pressure to perform rather than to simply be present. What was happening in your body? Were there sensations or emotions you worked to set aside or manage? Notice the difference between moments when you're leading from your authentic center versus when you're operating from learned scripts or professional personas.

Think about your relationship with inner awareness during challenging times. When pressure builds, do you tend to tune into your internal signals or tune them out? What helps you stay connected to what you're actually feeling and thinking, especially when the stakes make it tempting to default to autopilot?

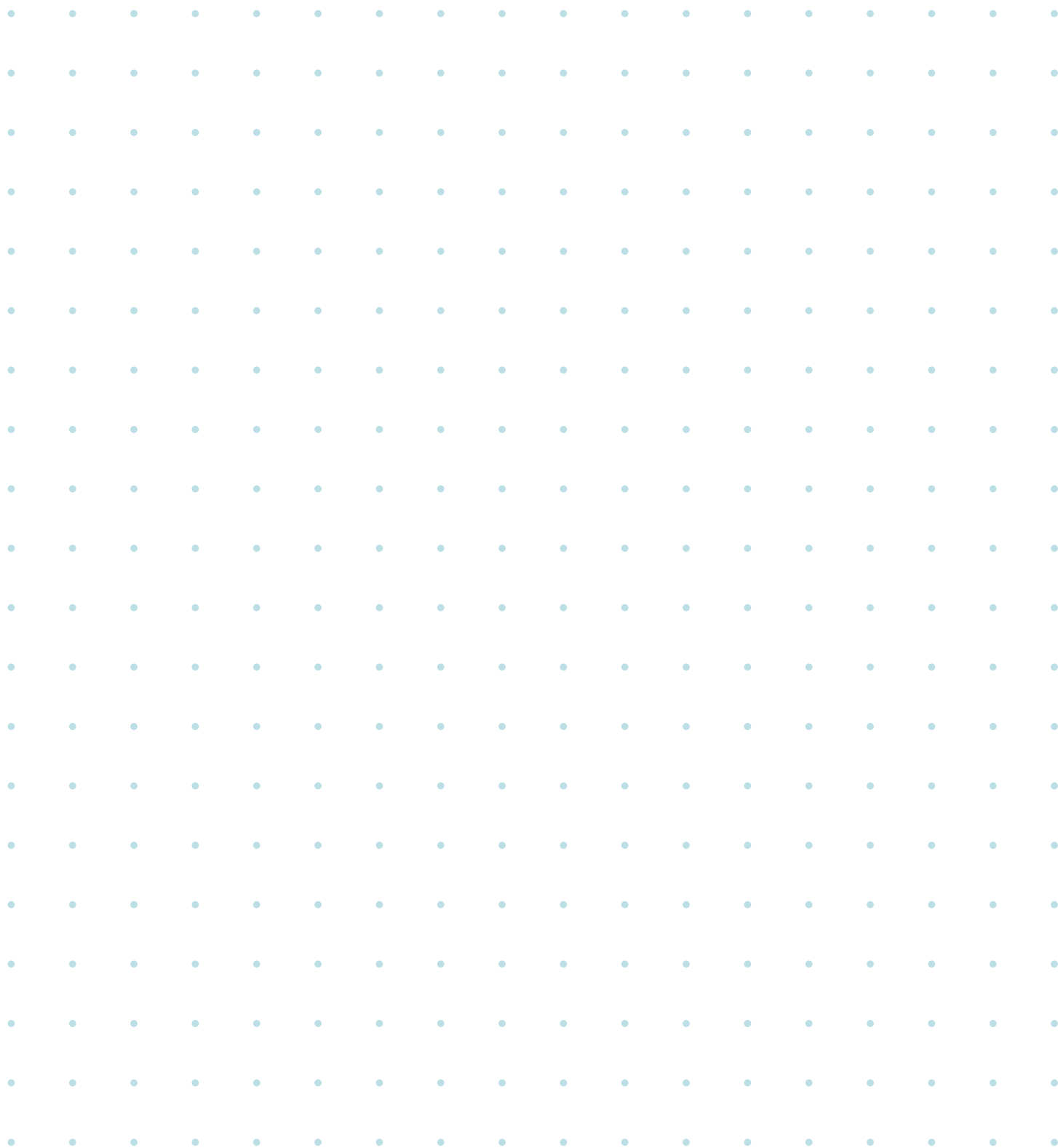
Reflect on the stories you tell yourself during difficult moments. When facing complex situations, what narratives arise about what's expected of you, what's appropriate to express, or how you should respond? Which of these stories serve your authentic leadership, and which might be keeping you from accessing your deeper wisdom?



Consider the quality of your self-relationship. How do you typically treat yourself when you notice you've been disconnected or operating on the surface? Do you approach these moments with curiosity and compassion or with judgment and pressure to do better next time?



What would it feel like to create a practice of checking in with yourself?
What would it feel like to notice what's alive in you during the moments
that matter most without the intention of fixing or changing anything?



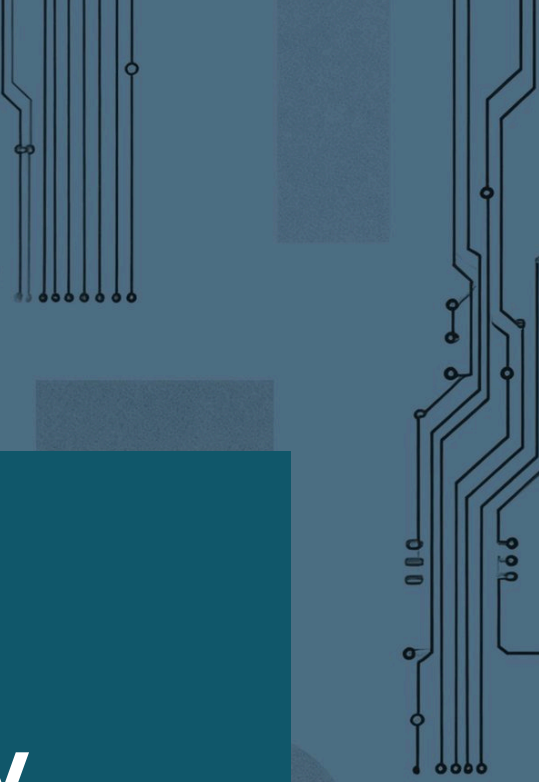
Take time to sit with these questions without rushing toward solutions. Sometimes the most profound shift happens when we simply begin paying attention to patterns we've been unconsciously repeating. The goal isn't to achieve perfect self-awareness, but to strengthen your capacity to stay present with yourself, especially when external pressures make it tempting to abandon your inner ground.

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CHAPTER 4: Presence, How You Show Up When It Matters

Presence is how your leadership is felt in the room: composure, regulation, the impact others can observe. The question underneath this chapter is How am I showing up?



Reflection Invitation 4.1

Sofia’s journey from unconscious stress transmission to intentional presence offers a mirror for your own leadership moments. As you consider how stress and composure show up in your world, pause with these questions:

When you’re under pressure, what signals might your body be sending that you’re not fully aware of? Perhaps it’s the speed of your speech, the tension in your shoulders, or the way you hold your breath during difficult conversations. Notice without judgment.

Think of a recent interaction that felt “off” despite your good intentions. What was happening in your inner world at that moment? What stress or pressure were you carrying that might have traveled through your words or presence?

How do you currently work with stress when it arises? Do you push through it, ignore it, or have you found ways to acknowledge it while choosing your response?

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Consider how you might create space between feeling and action. What would it feel like to implement a “micro-pause” practice before your most important conversations?

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Who in your life can offer honest feedback about how your presence lands when you're under pressure? What specific questions might help you see yourself through their eyes?

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Take a moment to write down what surfaces for you. Sometimes the act of putting these observations on paper reveals patterns we haven't yet named and possibilities we haven't yet explored. The goal isn't perfection in managing your emotional states. It's awareness that creates choice, and choice that creates the kind of presence others can feel and trust.

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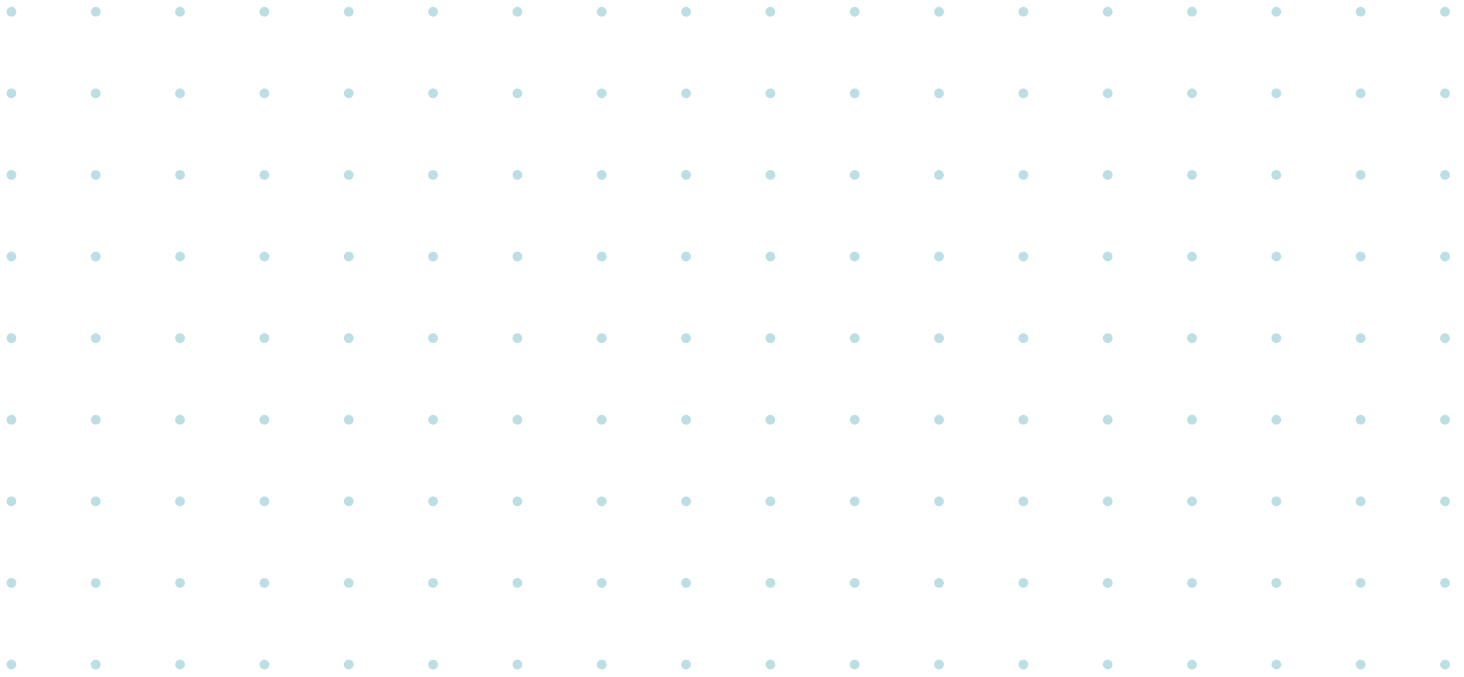
Reflection Invitation 4.2

Daniel’s experience of feeling like he was “disappearing” while trying to navigate new cultural terrain offers a mirror for moments when we find ourselves retreating from our own principles in the name of adaptation or safety.

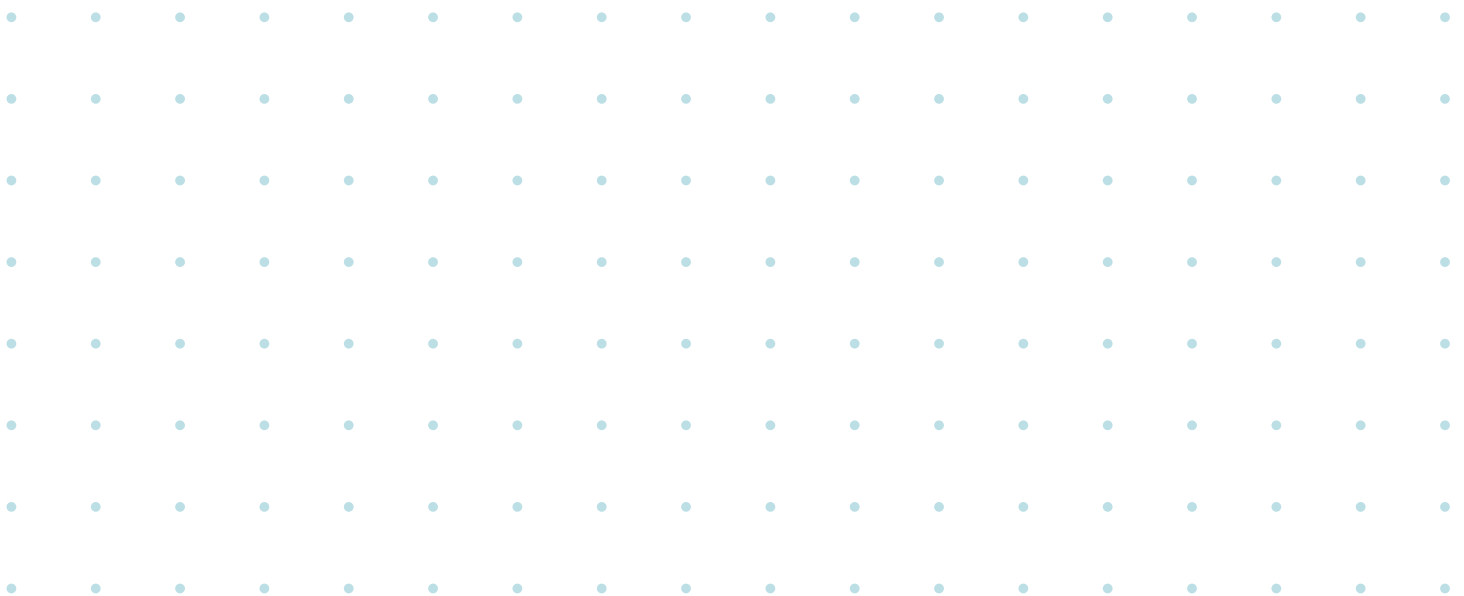
Think about a time when you felt caught between being true to your values and fitting into a new or changing environment. What did that tension feel like in your body? What story did you tell yourself about why staying quiet or neutral was the safer choice?

Consider your current leadership context. Where might your values be staying internal when they could be guiding external choices? Are there small moments, like Daniel’s “micro-advocacy,” where you could let your principles inform your words or actions without creating unnecessary conflict?

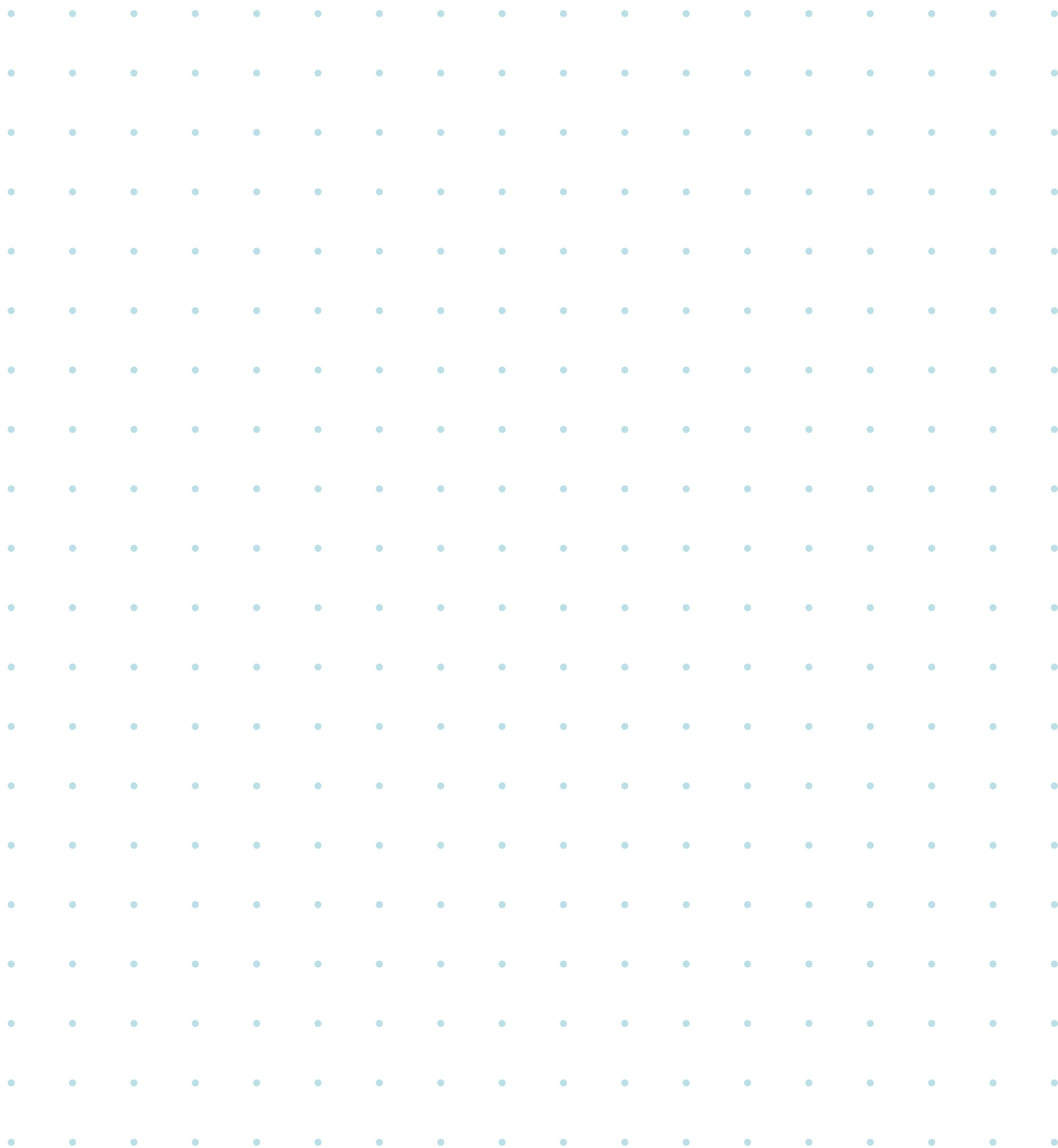
How do others experience your reliability? Your consistency of character? If someone were to describe what they can count on about your leadership, what would they say? What would you want them to say?



When circumstances around you shift, what helps you remain recognizable as yourself while still adapting? What practices or touchstones keep you connected to who you are when everything else feels uncertain?



Who in your world has been waiting for you to be more fully yourself?
What conversation or action might you take if you trusted that your
authentic presence would be more valuable than your careful neutrality?



A grid of 20 rows and 18 columns of small blue dots, intended for a writing exercise.

Notice what emerges as you sit with these questions. Sometimes the gap between our internal convictions and external expressions is smaller than we think. It may only require the courage to close it, one choice at a time. The goal isn't to become more assertive or dramatic in your leadership. It's to become more recognizable as yourself, so others can trust not just what you'll do, but who you'll be when the stakes are high.

What surfaced:

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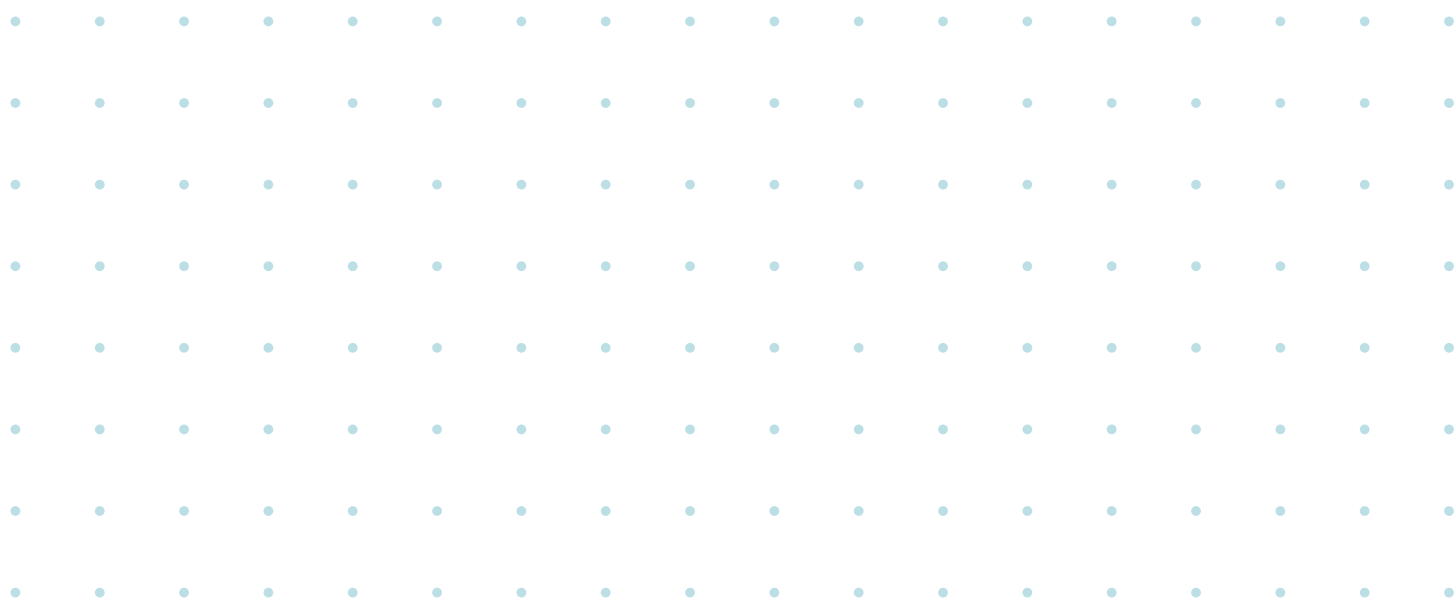
Reflection Invitation 4.3

Lena’s journey from protective silence to courageous authenticity illuminates the delicate balance between being true to yourself and being effective in complex systems.

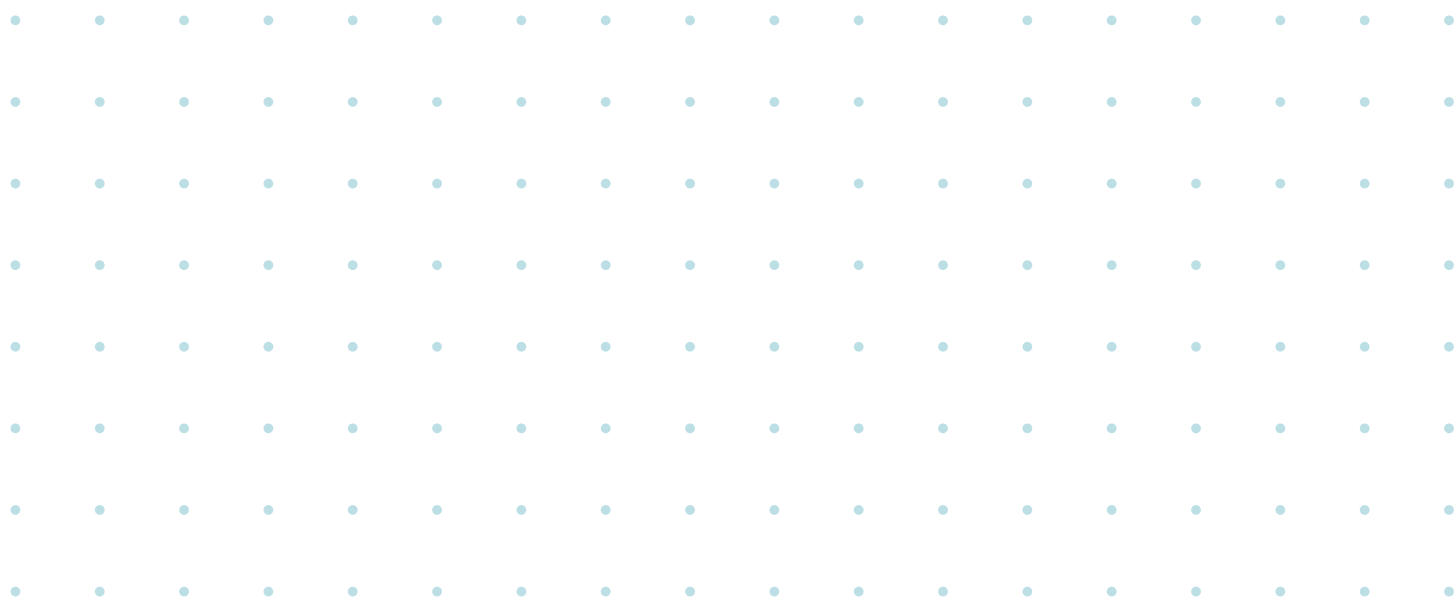
Think about a recent moment when you held back your authentic voice, perhaps in a meeting, a difficult conversation, or a decision-making process. What were the calculations you made about speaking versus staying silent? What did you tell yourself about timing, appropriateness, or potential consequences?

Consider the gap between your private convictions and your public expression. Where do your values feel most alive and visible in your leadership? Where might they be staying safely internal when they could guide external choices?

How do others experience your authenticity? Do they sense what you stand for, or do you sometimes feel invisible despite being present? What would shift if you trusted that your authentic perspective has value, even when—especially when—it challenges the status quo?



When you think about “courageous authenticity,” what comes up for you? What would it mean to show up as yourself while taking responsibility for how you show up? What small experiment in authentic expression might be worth trying?



Who needs to hear your voice right now? What conversation are you avoiding that could create positive change if approached with both truth and wisdom?

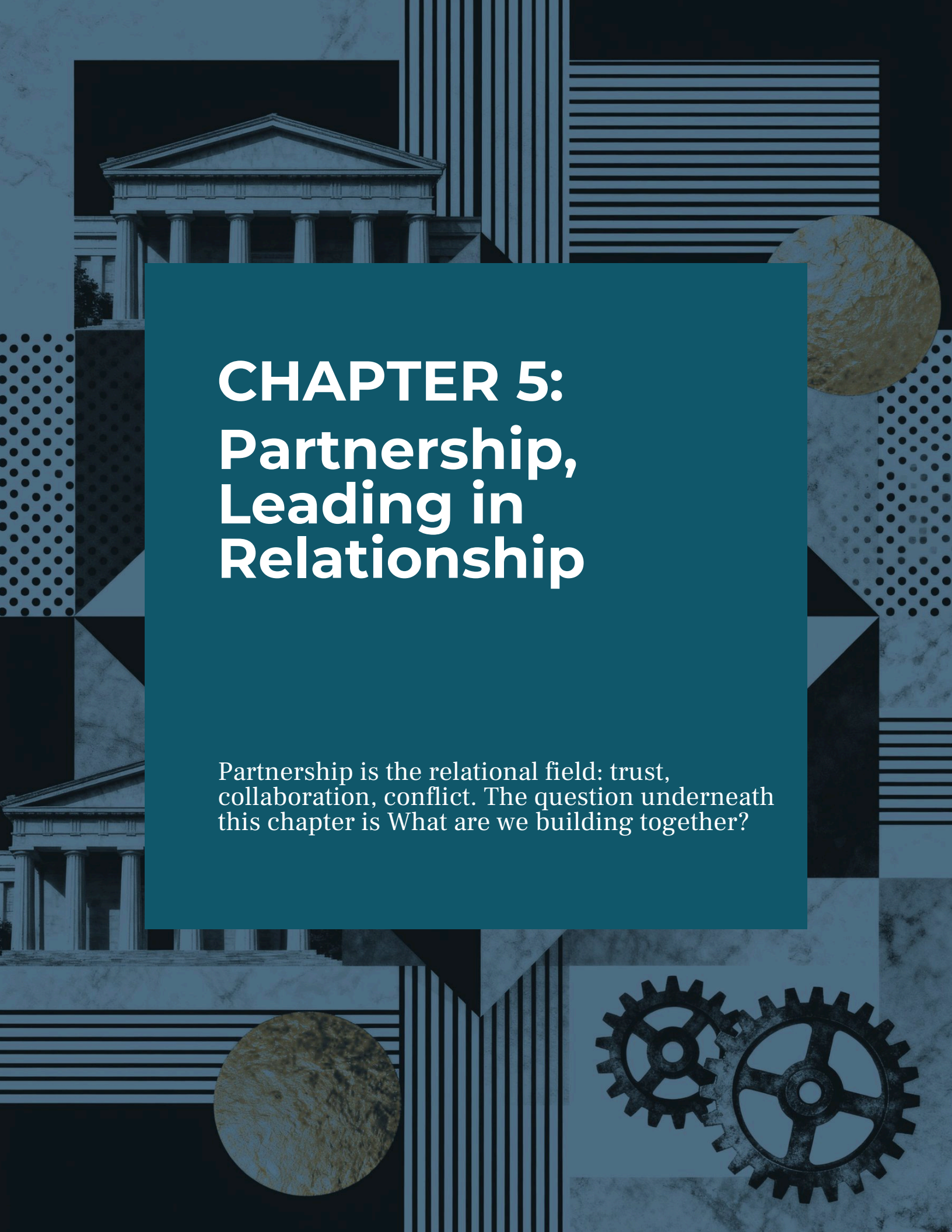
Notice what emerges without rushing to action. Sometimes the most powerful shift begins with simply acknowledging where we've been hiding our truth and considering what becomes possible when we choose courage over comfort.

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CHAPTER 5: Partnership, Leading in Relationship

Partnership is the relational field: trust, collaboration, conflict. The question underneath this chapter is What are we building together?



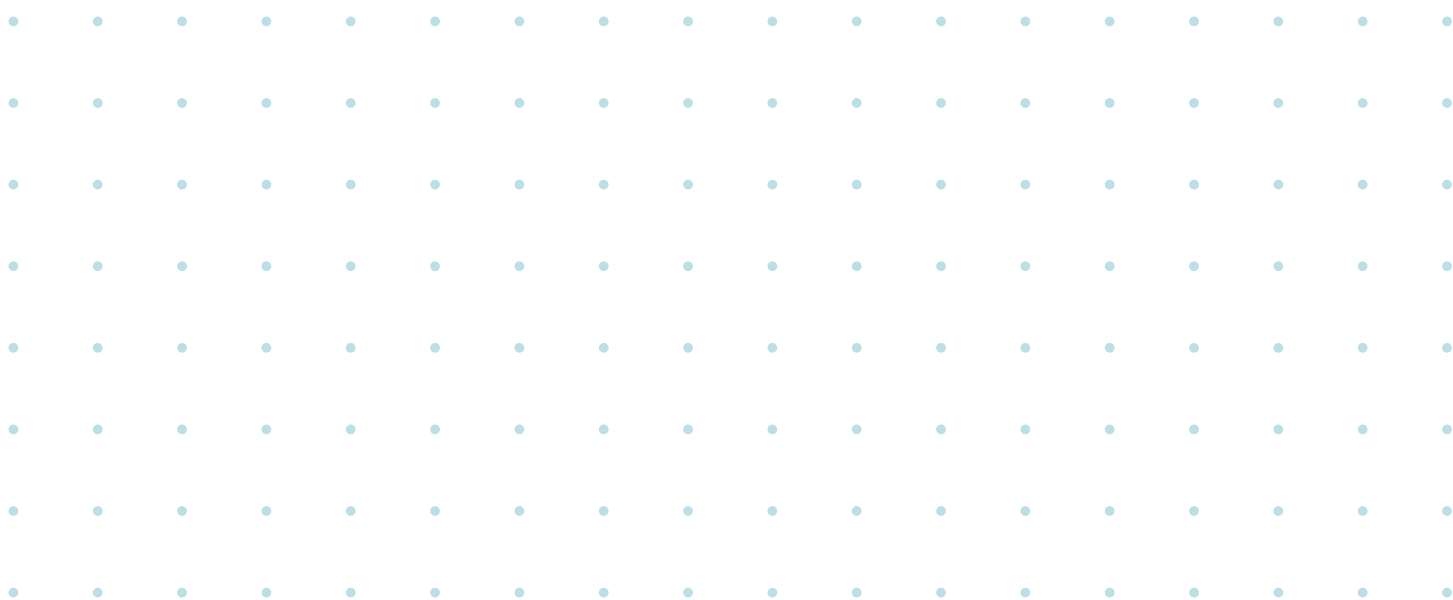
Reflection Invitation 5.1

Daniel’s story of pausing and the profound difference between noticing an emotional signal and acting on it—reveals how trust begins in the smallest moments of attention we give to what’s happening beneath the surface.

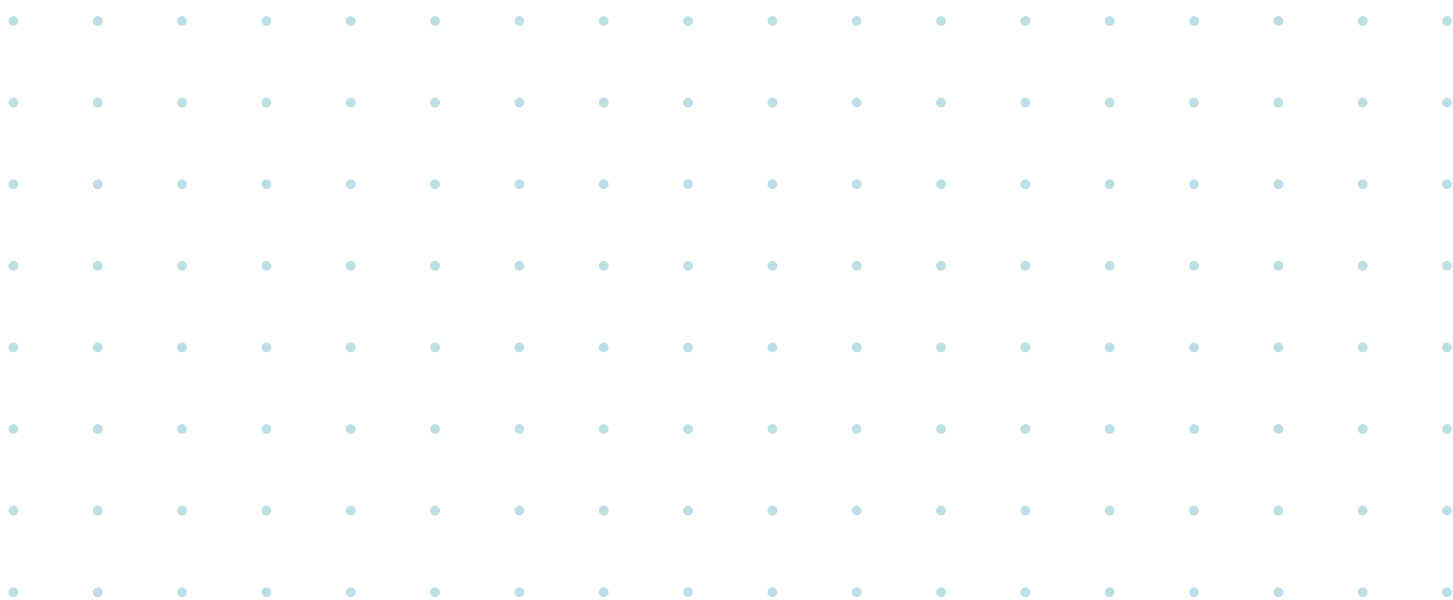
Think about a recent interaction where you sensed something shift in someone’s energy but chose to move past it. What was your calculation in that moment? Did you tell yourself it wasn’t the right time, that you might be misreading the situation, or that addressing it would slow things down? What cost might that efficiency have carried?

Consider your relationship with emotional data in leadership. Which emotions do you trust as valuable information, and which do you tend to dismiss or override? When someone’s tone changes, their engagement drops, or tension enters a room, what’s your instinct? Do you wish to name it, explore it, or keep moving?

Reflect on the spaces you create for others. Do people in your orbit feel safe to let their guard down, to share what's not working and to bring their whole selves to the conversation? How might your own comfort with emotional nuance be shaping what others feel permission to express?



When you think about the “pause” Daniel could have taken—that one breath longer—what comes up for you? What would it feel like to slow down enough to track the emotional current of a room before deciding how to respond? What small experiment in emotional presence might be worth trying?



Where in your current leadership context is trust asking to be tended?
What relationship might be waiting for you to notice what's beneath the professional surface and create space for a more authentic conversation?

Notice what surfaces without immediately rushing to action. Sometimes the most powerful shift in partnership begins with simply acknowledging the emotional signals we've been unconsciously bypassing and considering what becomes possible when we choose curiosity over efficiency.

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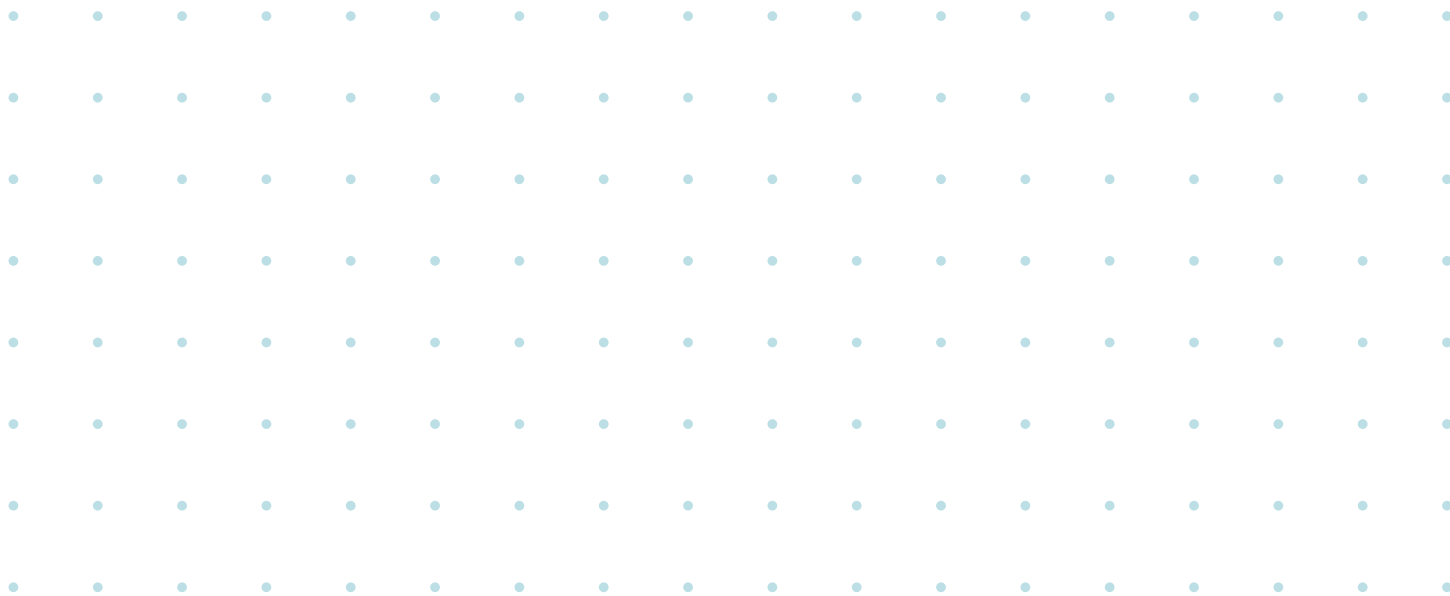
Reflection Invitation 5.2

Daniel learned through his experience with Tina that emotional intelligence without courage becomes complicity. This painful realization reveals how the space between sensing and acting can become the space where relationships are lost and trust erodes.

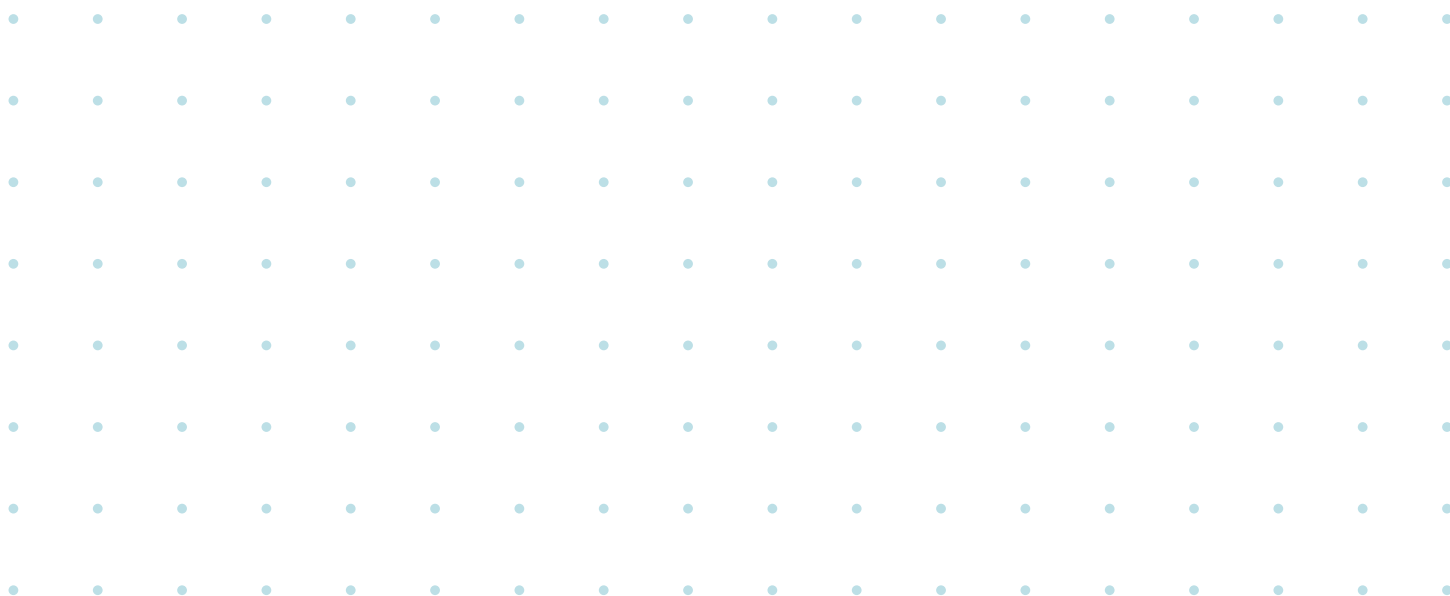
Think about a recent situation where you noticed tension but chose not to address it. What story did you tell yourself about why staying silent was the wiser choice? Were you protecting the other person, yourself, or the apparent harmony of the situation? What was the actual cost of that protection over time?

Consider your relationship with conflict in leadership. Do you see disagreement as something to resolve quickly, avoid entirely, or explore with curiosity? When emotions run high in your presence, what's your instinct? Do you tend to calm things down, redirect the conversation, or lean into what's trying to emerge?

Reflect on moments when you've sensed someone pulling away but convinced yourself it wasn't your place to intervene. How do you distinguish between healthy professional boundaries and avoidance that serves your comfort more than others' growth? What would it look like to offer care without intrusion?



When you think about “courageous conversations,” what comes up for you? Is it excitement, dread, uncertainty? What would it mean to approach tension as “a living field into which care and presence can be placed” rather than a problem to be solved or avoided?



Where in your current leadership context might someone be waiting for you to notice their withdrawal and create space for honest dialogue?
What simple opening question could you ask that comes from genuine curiosity rather than an agenda to fix or resolve?

A large grid of 20 rows and 18 columns of light blue dots, intended for handwritten notes.

Notice what emerges without rushing to difficult conversations. Sometimes the most powerful shift happens when we simply acknowledge our own patterns of avoidance and begin to see conflict not as rupture, but as an invitation to deepen trust through authentic engagement.

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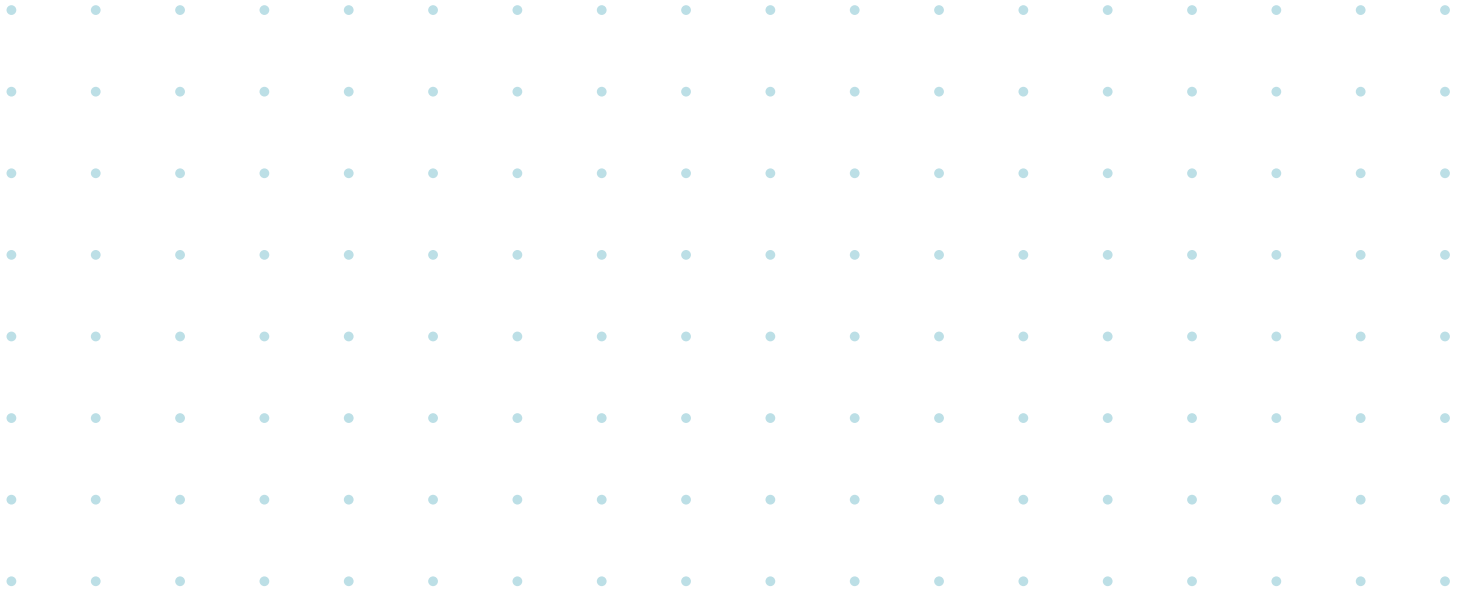
Reflection Invitation 5.3

Sofia’s journey from anxious control to collaborative coherence reveals how the stories we tell ourselves about responsibility can either isolate us in exhausting over-functioning or invite others into genuine shared ownership.

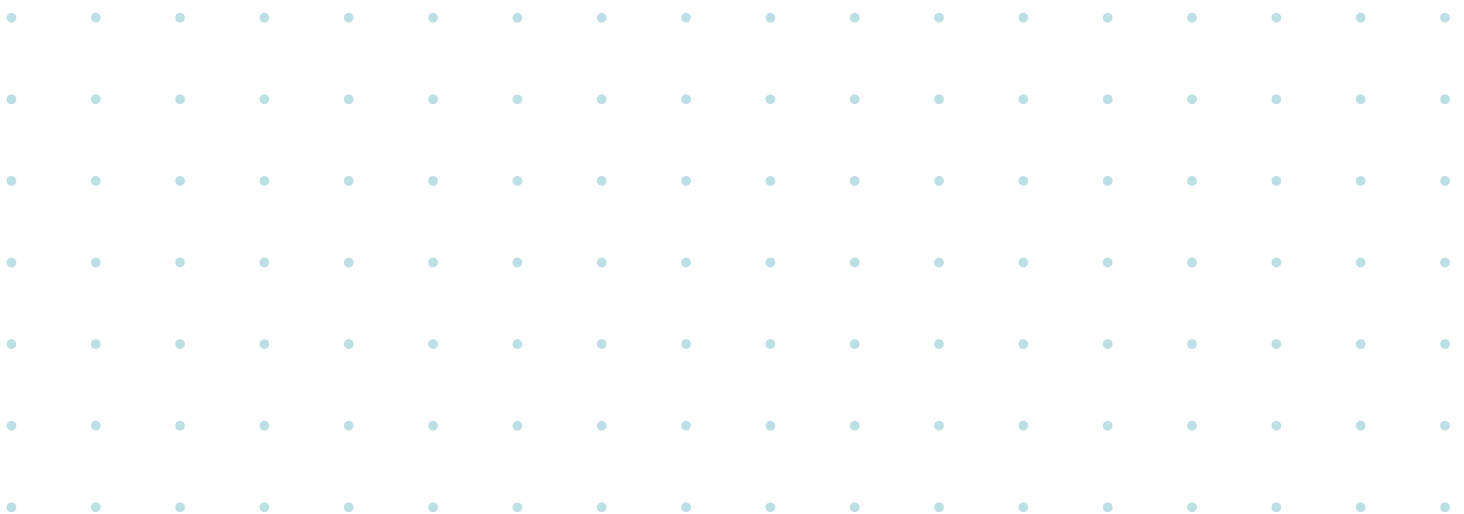
Think about your current relationship with delegation and letting go. When you hesitate to hand something off, what fears arise? Are you protecting against failure, loss of control, or being seen as less essential? What story do you tell yourself about what will happen if you’re not directly involved in every detail?

Consider the cultural signals you might be unconsciously sending: How does your team experience your relationship with mistakes, missed details, or imperfect execution? Do they feel permission to take risks and learn from outcomes, or have they absorbed a message that everything must be flawless before it reaches you?

Reflect on the difference between visibility and proximity in your leadership. Where might you be chasing clarity through hovering rather than through systems and structures? What would it look like to create shared accountability that gives you the information you need while giving your team the space they need to truly own their work?



When you imagine your team looking at each other instead of just at you—as Sofia experienced—what comes up? Excitement about distributed leadership, or anxiety about losing centrality? What would need to shift internally for you to find satisfaction in being the person who creates conditions for others to shine?



Where in your current context could you experiment with moving from “Where do we stand?” to “How can I support you?” What small shift in systems, tools, or team design might help transform individual accountability into collective momentum?

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Notice what emerges without rushing to restructure everything. Sometimes the most powerful transformation begins with simply acknowledging where we've been carrying weight that others are ready to share and considering what becomes possible when we design for trust rather than control.

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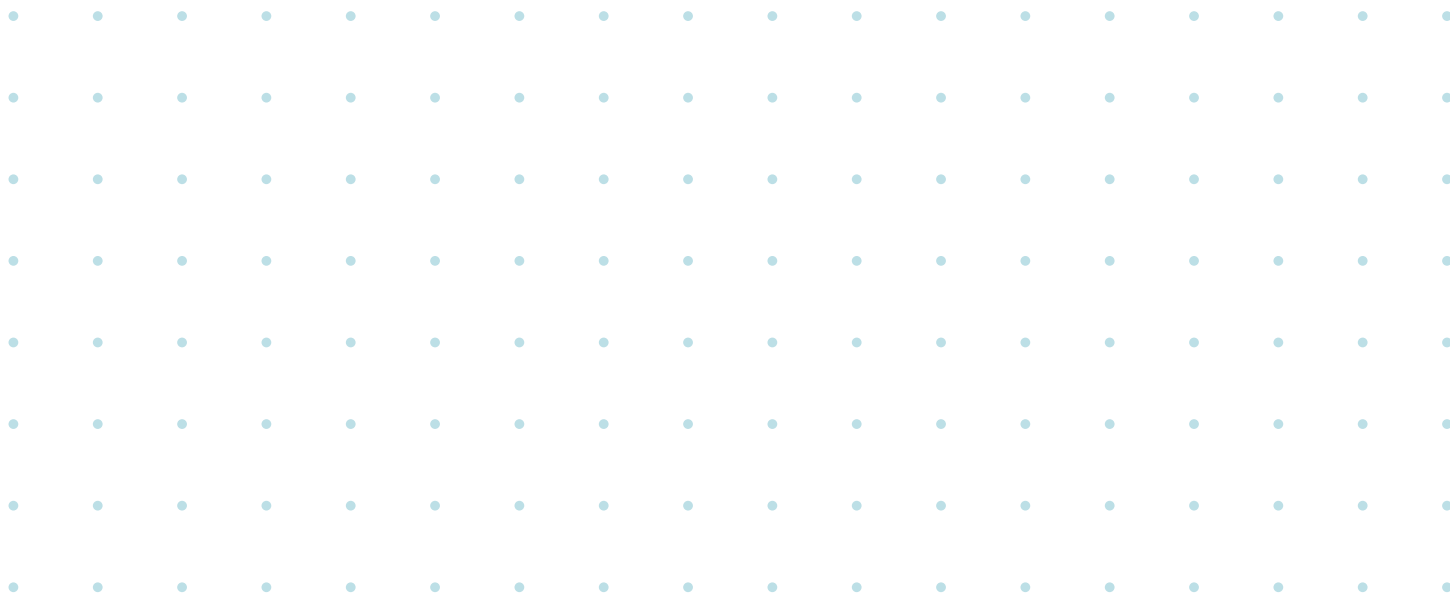
Reflection Invitation 5.4

Lena’s discovery that effective communication requires leading the relationship, not just the conversation, illuminates how our rush toward clarity can sometimes close down the very connections we’re trying to build.

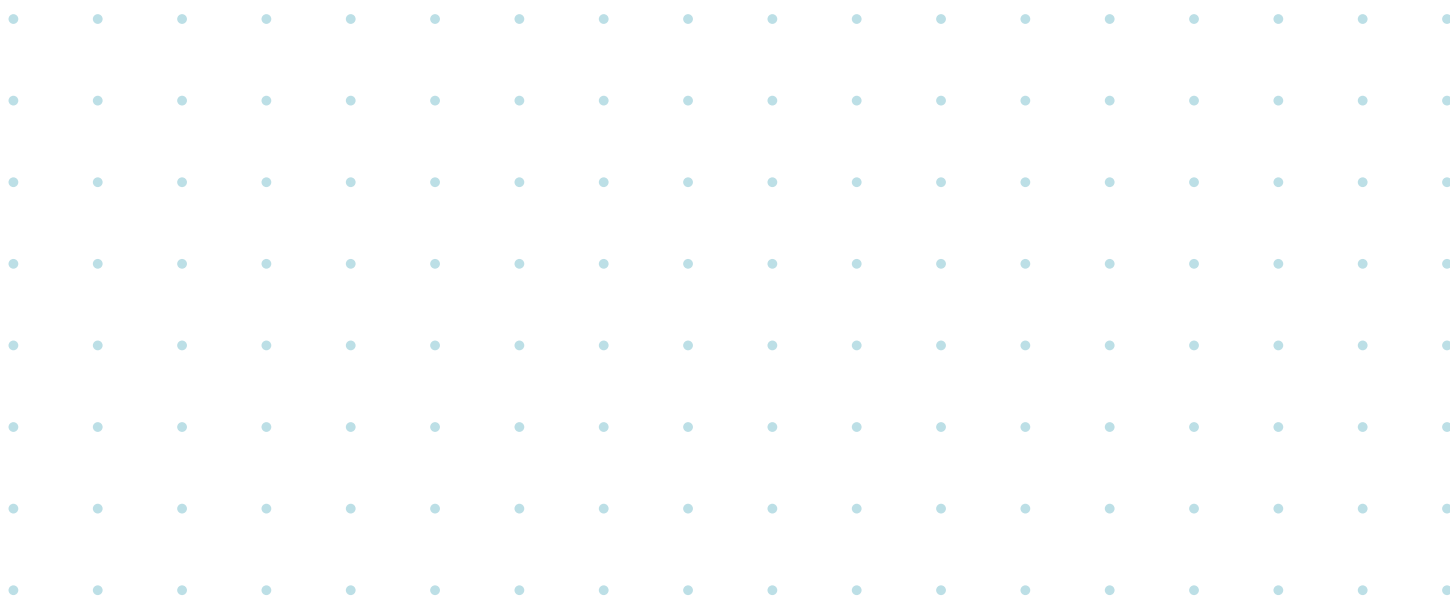
Think about a recent interaction where your intent didn’t match your impact. What were you focused on achieving, and what might you have missed about how your words, tone, or timing affected the relationship itself? When you’re pushing for clarity or direction, what happens to your awareness of the emotional and relational context?

Consider the voices and perspectives in your current leadership environment. Who speaks easily in your presence, and who might be holding back? What patterns do you notice about whose ideas get heard, built upon, or dismissed? How might your own communication style be inadvertently creating more space for some voices than others?

Reflect on your adaptability across different relationships and contexts. When do you naturally adjust your approach to meet others where they are, and when do you expect others to adapt to your preferred style? What would it look like to see this flexibility not as compromising your authenticity, but as expanding your capacity to connect?



When you think about “relational leadership”—leading the relationship alongside the work—what comes up for you? What would it mean to pay equal attention to whether people feel valued and included, and whether they understand the strategy or complete the tasks?



Where in your current context might someone be waiting for you to slow down, check in, or create space for their perspective to emerge? What small relational gesture (a personal conversation, a different meeting format, a request for feedback) could signal that you care about how you move forward together, not just where you're going?

A large grid of light blue dots arranged in 20 rows and 18 columns, providing a space for handwritten notes or answers to the questions above.

Notice what surfaces without immediately trying to fix strained relationships. Sometimes the most powerful shift happens when we simply acknowledge where we've been prioritizing efficiency over connection and begin to see every interaction as an opportunity to strengthen the trust that makes all other work possible.

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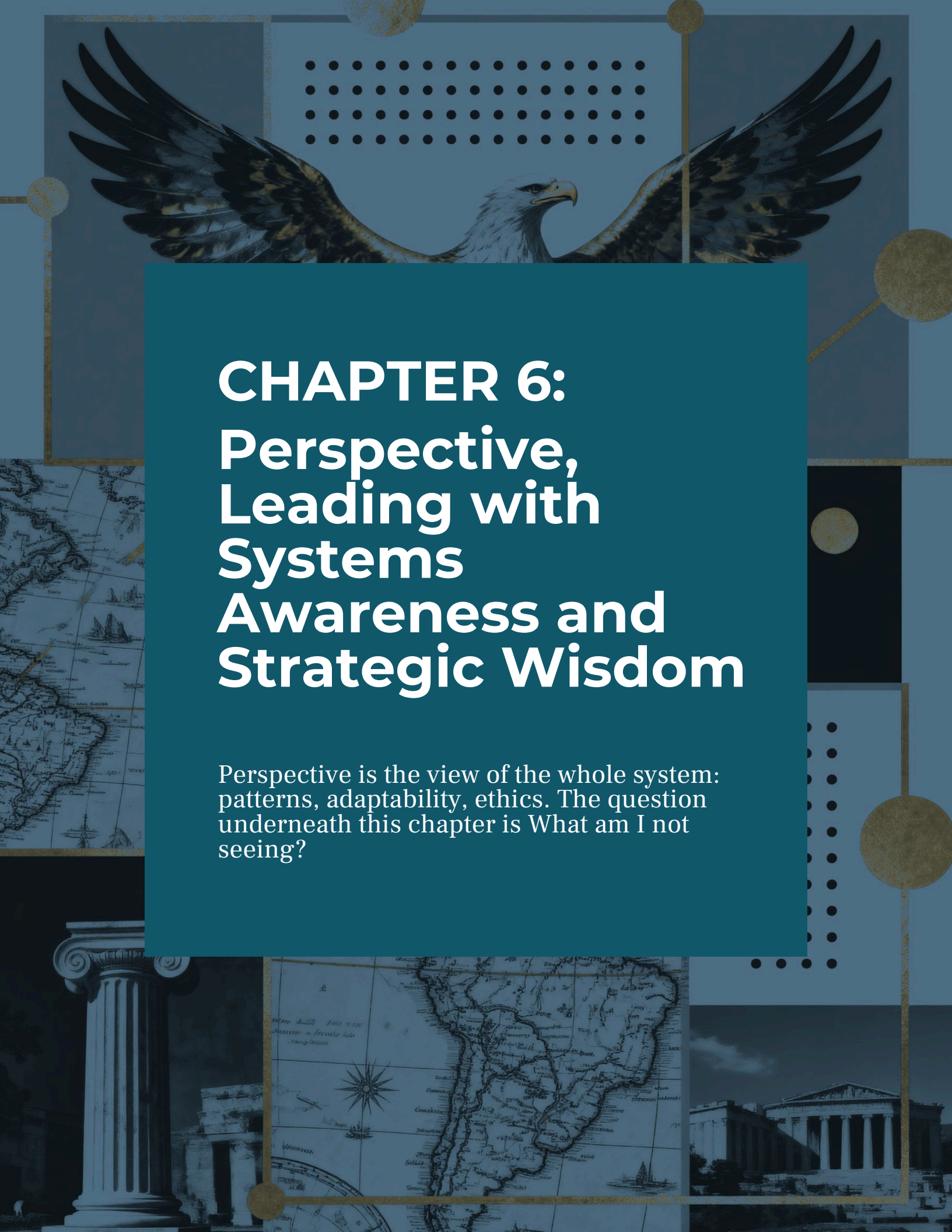
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CHAPTER 6:

Perspective, Leading with Systems Awareness and Strategic Wisdom

Perspective is the view of the whole system: patterns, adaptability, ethics. The question underneath this chapter is What am I not seeing?

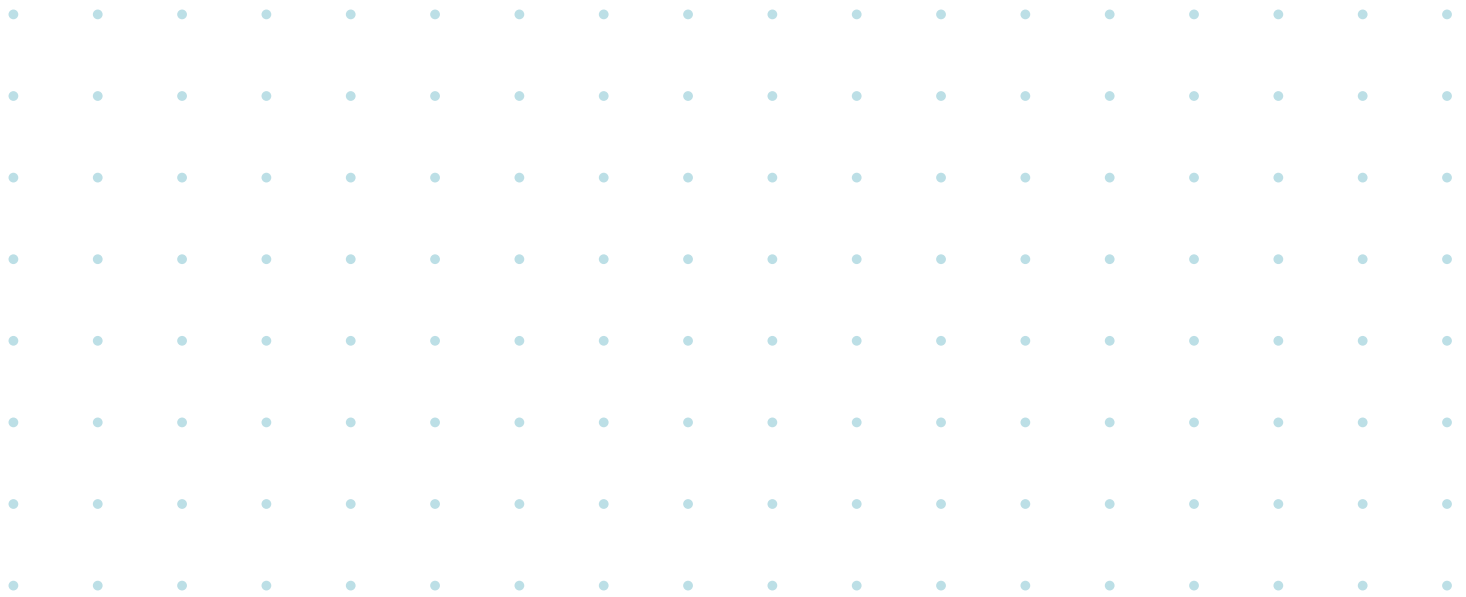
Reflection Invitation 6.1

Sofia’s transformation from trying to craft vision in isolation to creating shared sight lines with her team reveals how true influence emerges from your ability to help others see themselves in what’s possible.

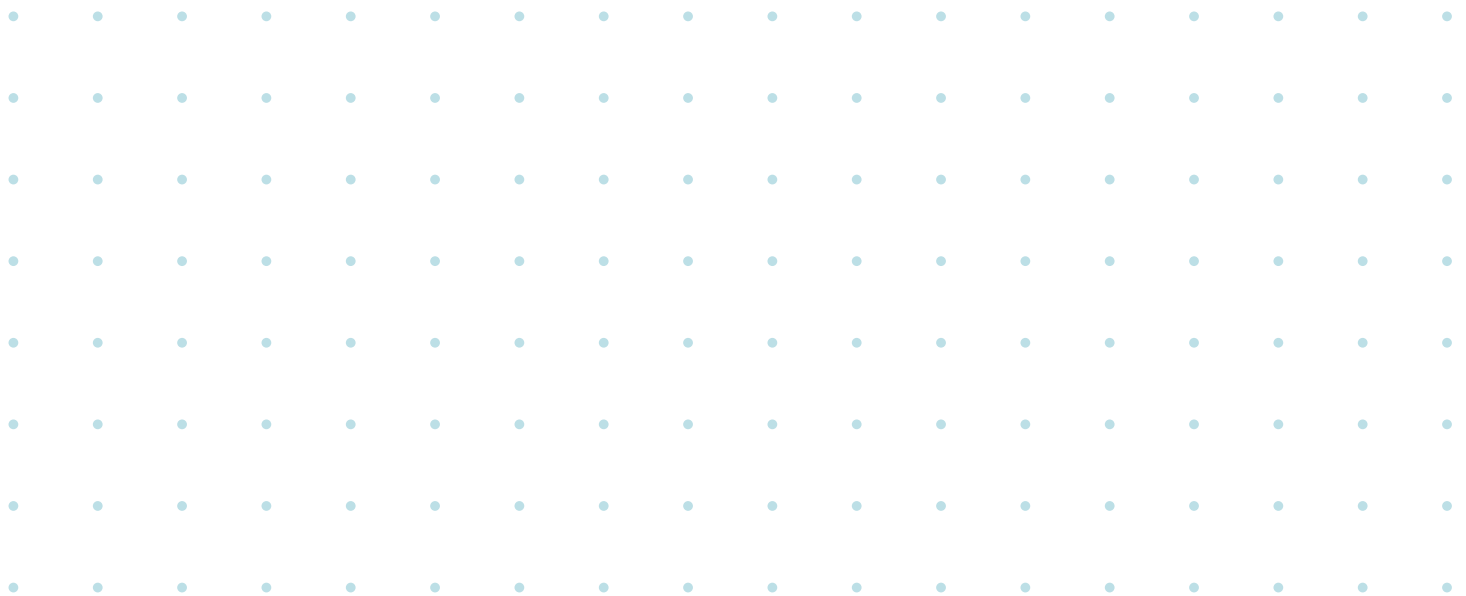
Think about your current approach to vision and direction-setting. Do you tend to develop your strategic thinking privately and then present it, or do you invite others into the process of imagining what could be? When you have a clear sense of where things should go, what’s your instinct—to convince others of your perspective or to discover what they see that you might be missing?

Consider how others experience your attempts to influence. When you’re passionate about a direction or change, do people feel invited into possibility or pressured toward compliance? What’s the difference between moments when your influence feels like clarity and when it might feel like agenda-pushing?

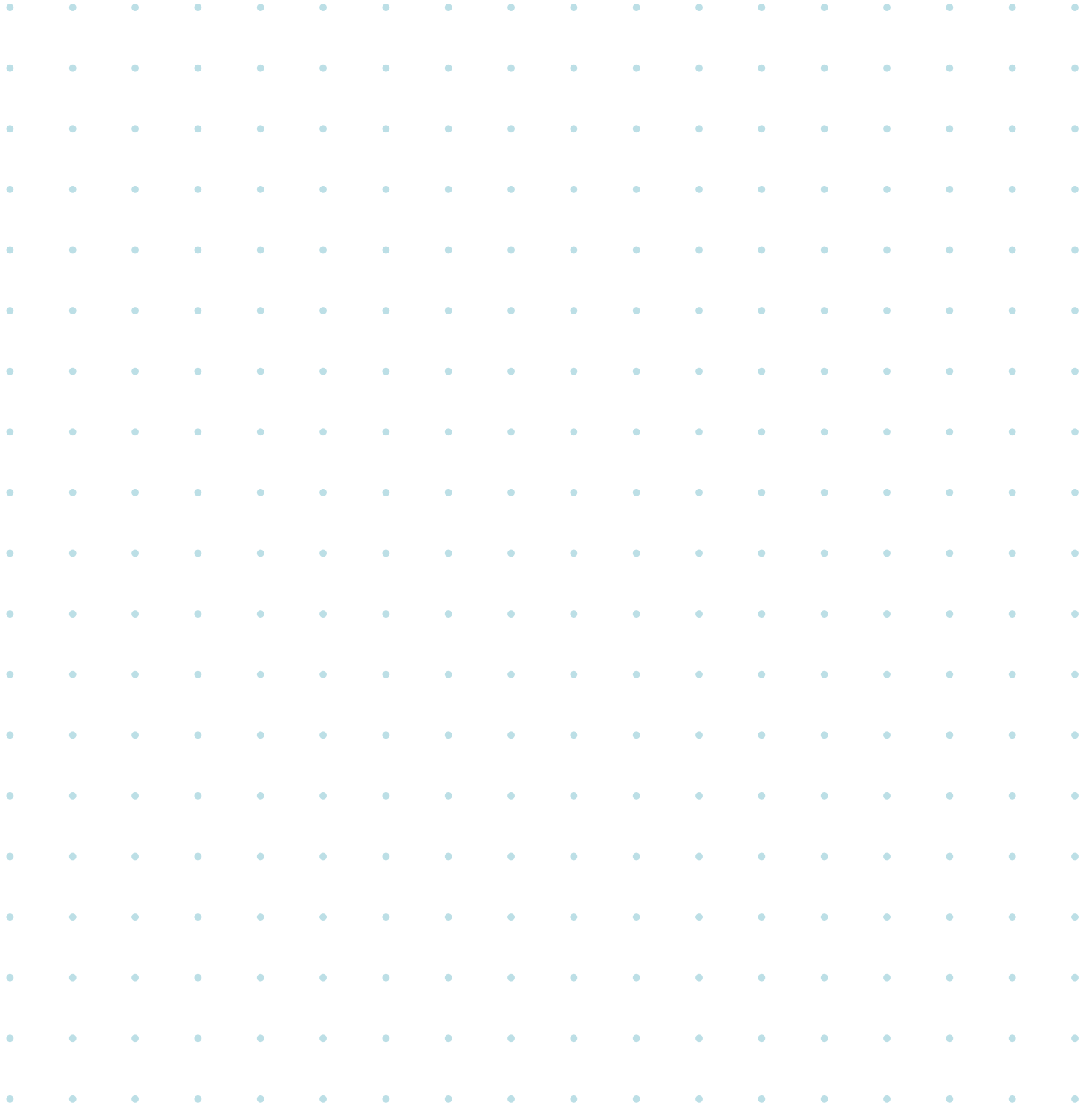
Reflect on the stories and aspirations already alive in your organization or team. Where might you be overlooking existing vision and energy that could be amplified rather than replaced? What would it look like to listen your way into leadership rather than talking your way into it?



When you think about “shared sight lines toward a future worth building together,” what comes up for you? What would need to shift for you to move from being the person with the vision to being the person who helps others discover and articulate their collective vision?



Where in your current context might people be waiting for someone to ask the questions Sofia learned to ask? “What are you proud of? What’s in the way? What do you wish others understood?” What small listening experiment could help you understand what wants to emerge before you decide what needs to be built?



A grid of 20 columns and 18 rows of small blue dots, intended for a listening experiment or journaling activity.

Notice what surfaces without rushing to create grand vision statements. Sometimes the most powerful leadership happens when we trust that the future wants to be discovered together rather than declared from above, and that our role is to create the conditions where collective wisdom can emerge.

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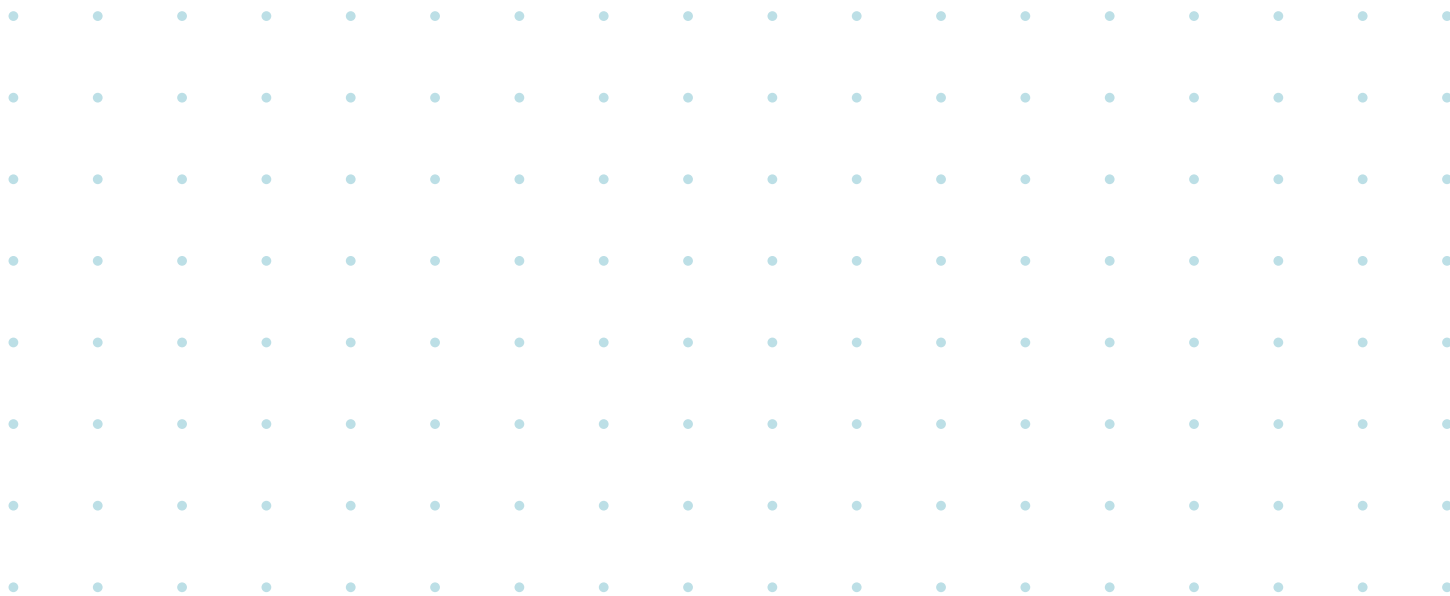
Reflection Invitation 6.2

Daniel's shift from "plugging holes in a dam" to "designing forward" reveals how stepping back to see the whole system can transform frustration into clarity and reactive firefighting into intentional stewardship.

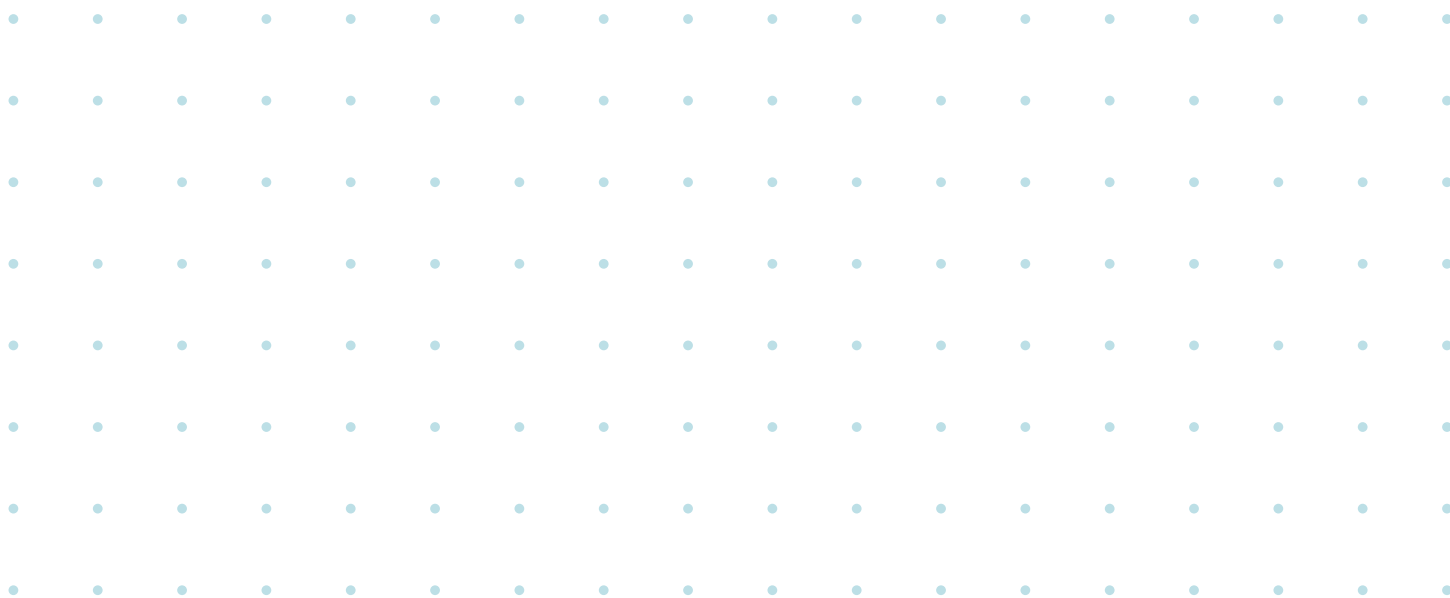
Think about a persistent challenge in your current leadership context. Where might you be treating symptoms rather than examining the underlying patterns that create them? What would it look like to map the flows of energy, influence, and decision-making in your system rather than focusing only on the immediate problems?

Consider your relationship with quick fixes versus sustainable solutions. When pressure builds, what's your instinct—to solve the urgent issue in front of you or to pause and ask what systemic forces keep creating similar issues? How might your well-intentioned problem-solving actually be reinforcing the patterns you're trying to change?

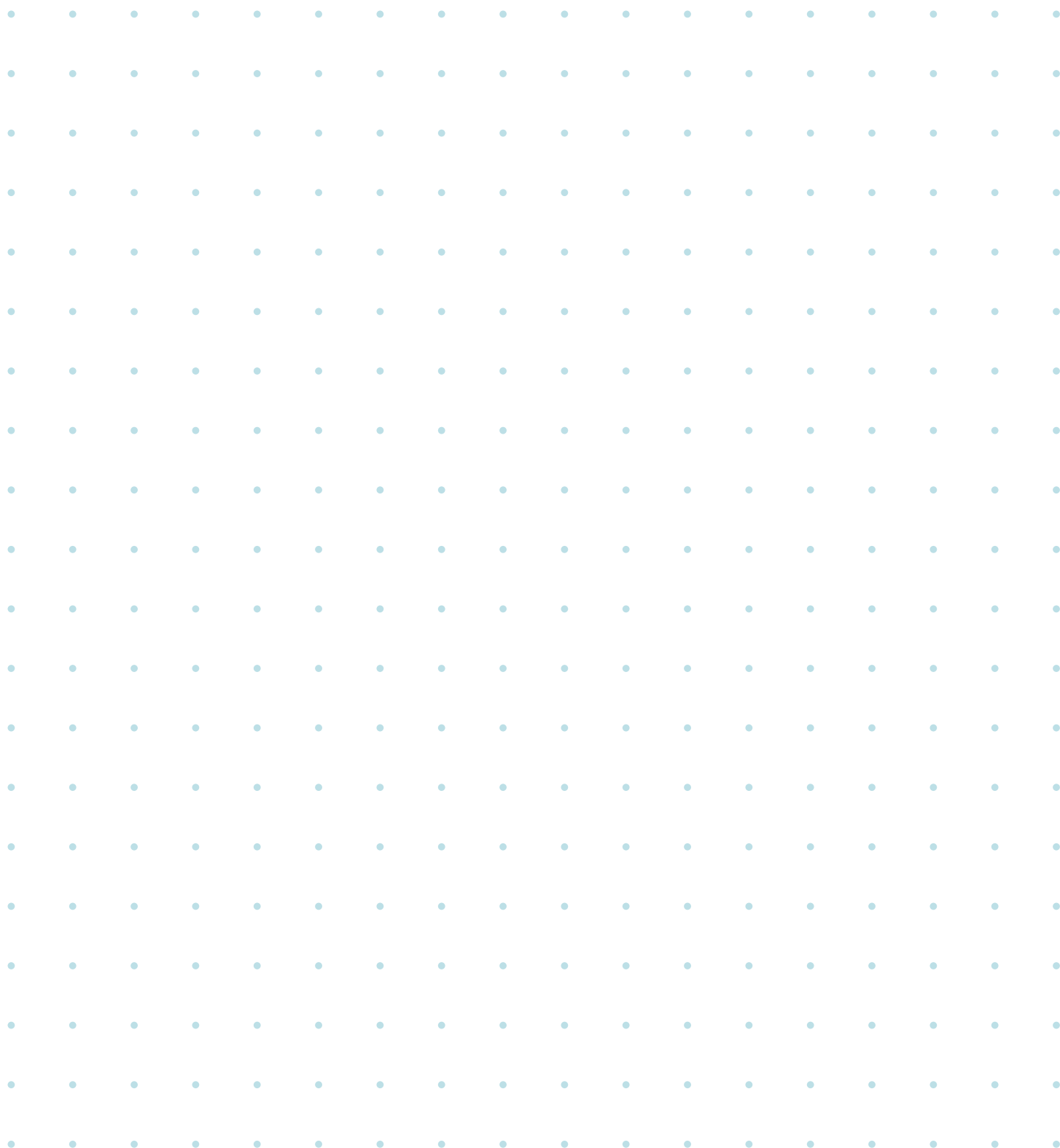
Reflect on your approach to organizational or team design. Are you designing out of habit, nostalgia, or reaction to what's broken, or are you designing intentionally for resilience and adaptability? What would it mean to ask, "What would sustainable success look like?" before deciding how to structure work, relationships, or processes?



When you think about “stewarding energy, trust, and clarity” as Daniel learned to do, what comes up for you? Where in your leadership might you be trying to hold everything together yourself rather than asking what needs to evolve and who else could help carry it forward?



What conversations could you convene that would help others see the system differently and imagine better ways of working together? What would it look like to move from defending what was to co-creating what could be?



Notice what emerges without rushing to redesign everything immediately. Sometimes the most powerful shift happens when we simply acknowledge where we've been caught in symptom-chasing and begin to see our role as architects of sustainable systems rather than just managers of daily crises.

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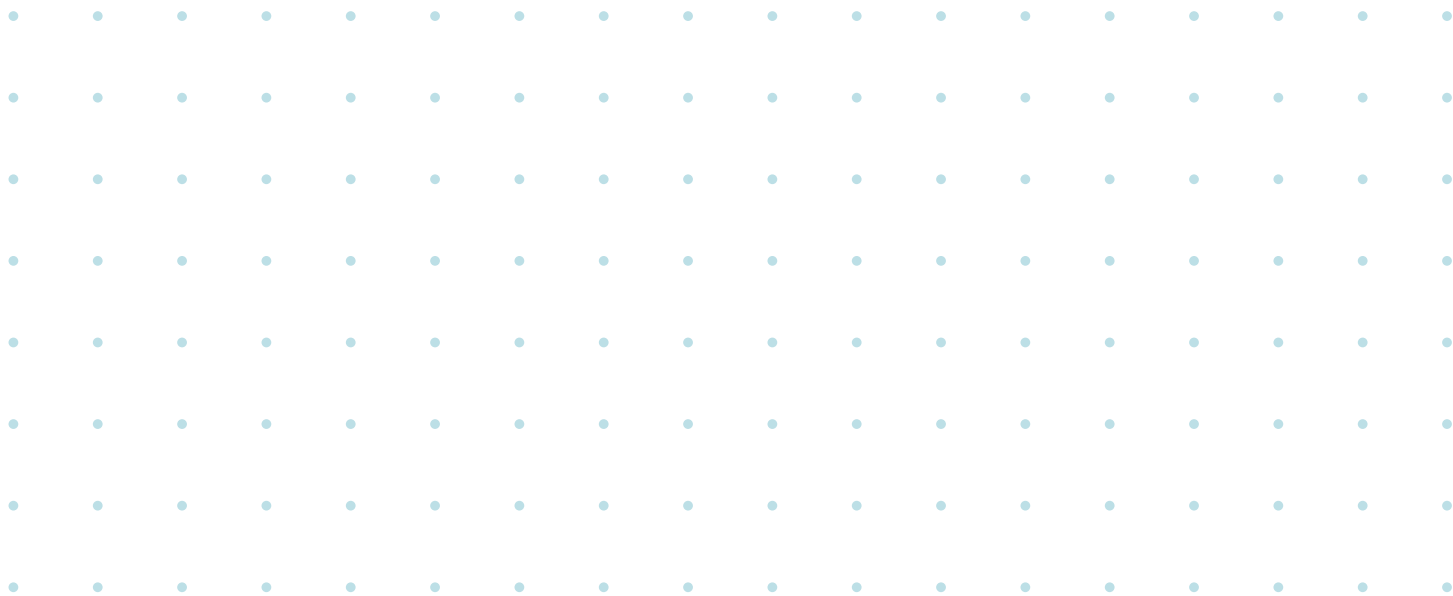
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Reflection Invitation 6.3

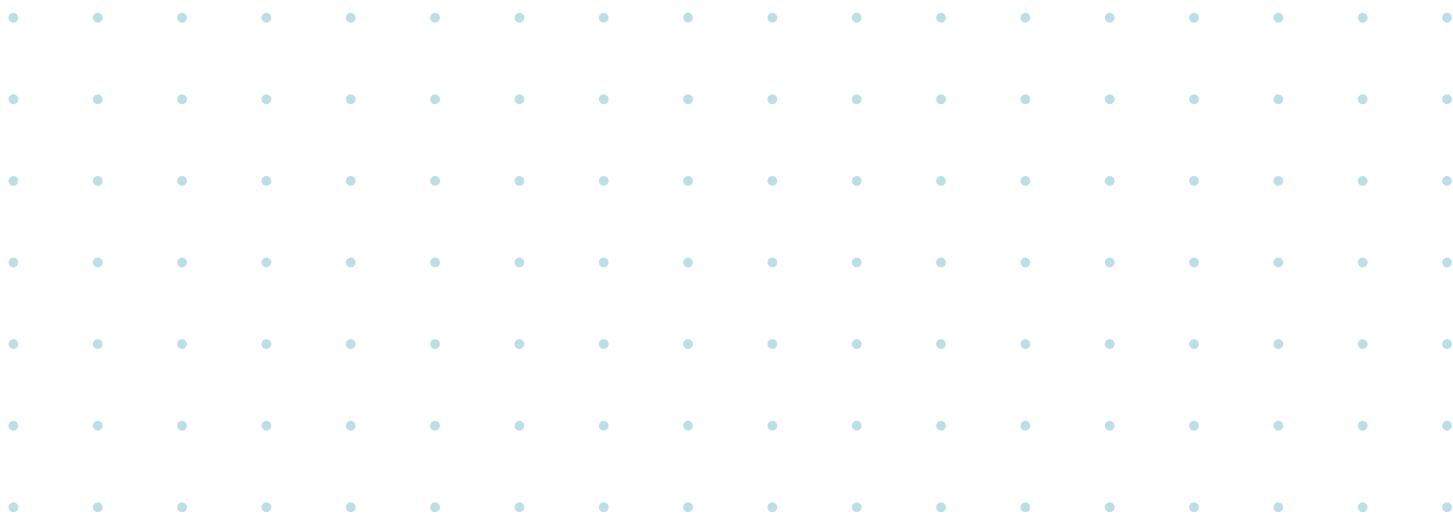
Lena's journey from frozen silence to courageous action reveals how ethical leadership emerges not from having perfect moral clarity, but from the willingness to bring both conscience and professionalism to the moments that test our values most deeply.

Think about a recent decision where you felt tension between what was expedient and what felt right. What voices were competing for your attention whether via organizational expectations, personal safety, professional advancement, or your inner compass? How did you navigate that tension, and what did you learn about your own decision-making process under pressure?

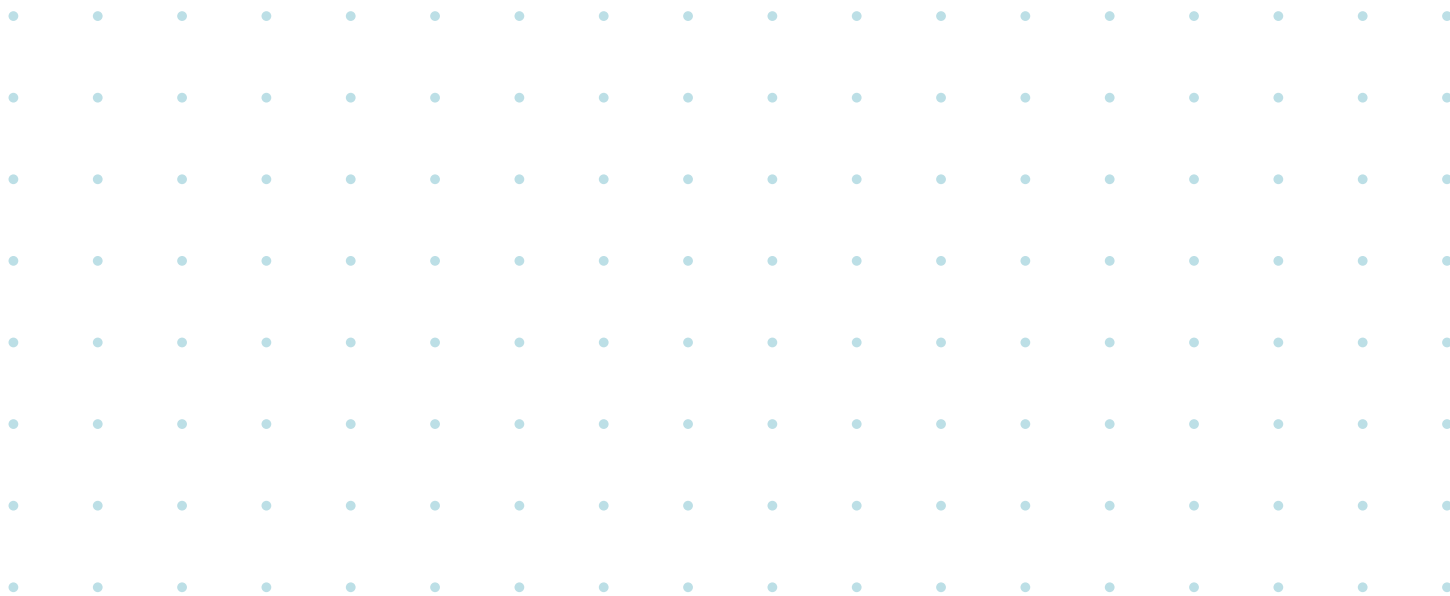
Consider the intersection of urgency and ethics in your leadership. When time pressure builds and stakeholders demand quick action, what happens to your capacity to pause and ask “What really matters here?” How do you distinguish between legitimate urgency and the pressure to avoid difficult conversations?



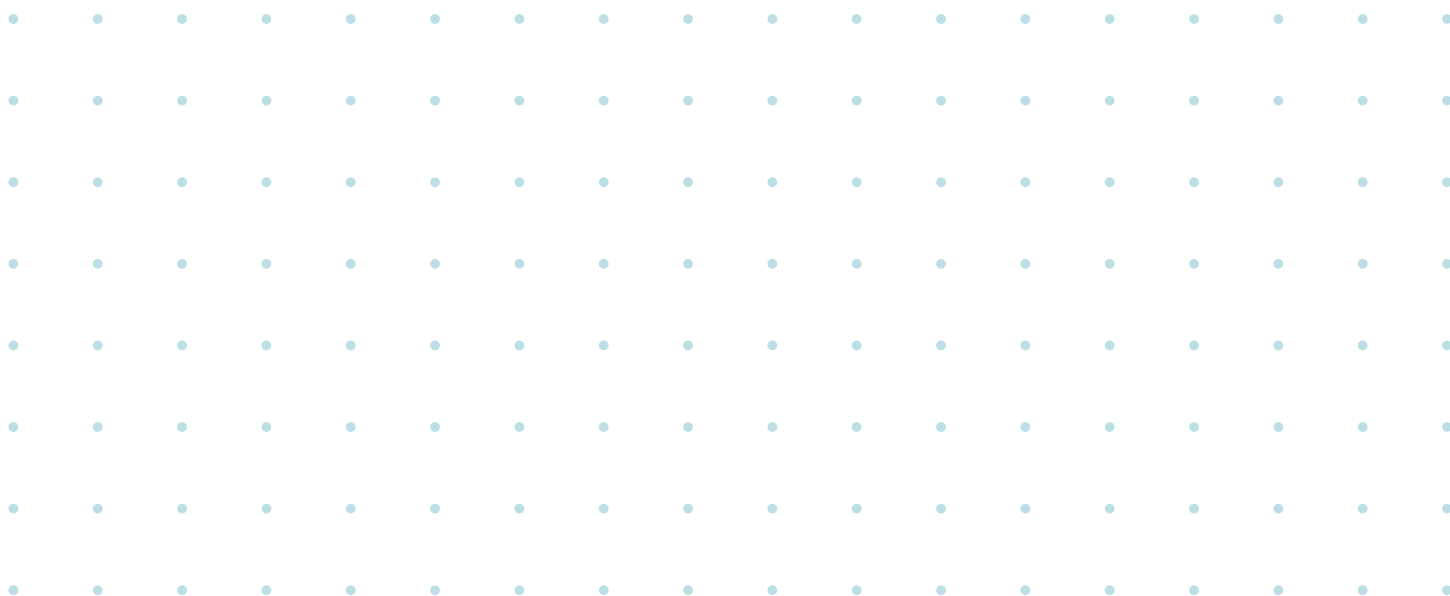
Reflect on your relationship with moral courage in complex systems. Where might you be defaulting to silence or compliance when your values are asking you to speak or act differently? What would it look like to find ways to honor both your principles and your professional relationships without sacrificing either?



When you think about “seeing both what is and what ought to be,” what comes up for you? How do you balance accepting current reality while still holding vision for what could be more ethical, just, or aligned with deeper values? What small acts of moral clarity might be available to you right now?



Where in your current context might someone be waiting for a leader to create space for truth-telling rather than damage control? What would it look like to ask, “What do we owe, not just legally, but relationally?” in a situation that calls for accountability and repair?



Notice what emerges without rushing to dramatic moral stands. Sometimes the most powerful ethical leadership happens through everyday choices to ask different questions, open space for difficult truths, and choose transparency over expedience in the small moments that shape organizational culture.

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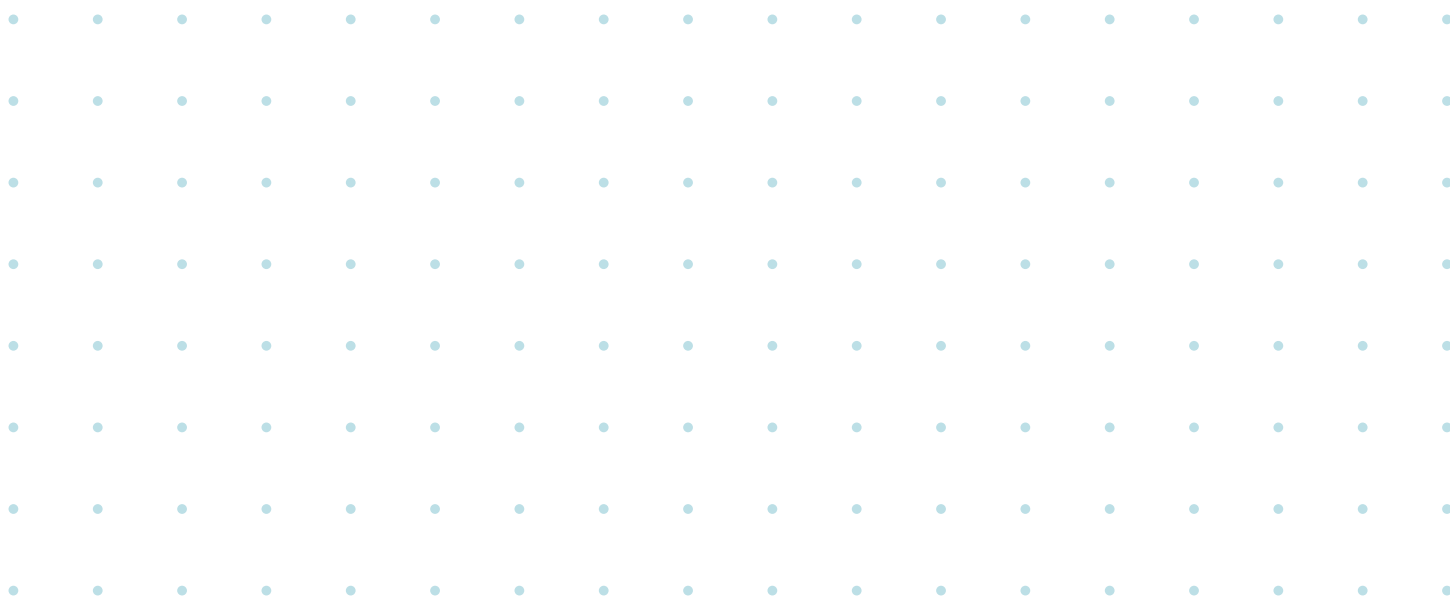
Reflection Invitation 6.4

The stories of Sofia, Daniel, and Lena reveal how adaptability becomes the thread that weaves all other leadership capacities together. With adaptability, we don't abandon what matters but find new ways to honor it when circumstances shift beneath our feet.

Think about a recent time when your original plan or approach stopped working. What was your first instinct? Was it to push harder with the original strategy, to abandon it entirely, or to pause and ask what the situation was teaching you? How do you typically respond when reality refuses to cooperate with your carefully crafted expectations?

Consider where you might be clinging too tightly in your current leadership. Are there ideas, strategies, roles, or ways of working that you're holding onto even though they may no longer serve the current context? What would it look like to hold your convictions firmly while holding your methods lightly?

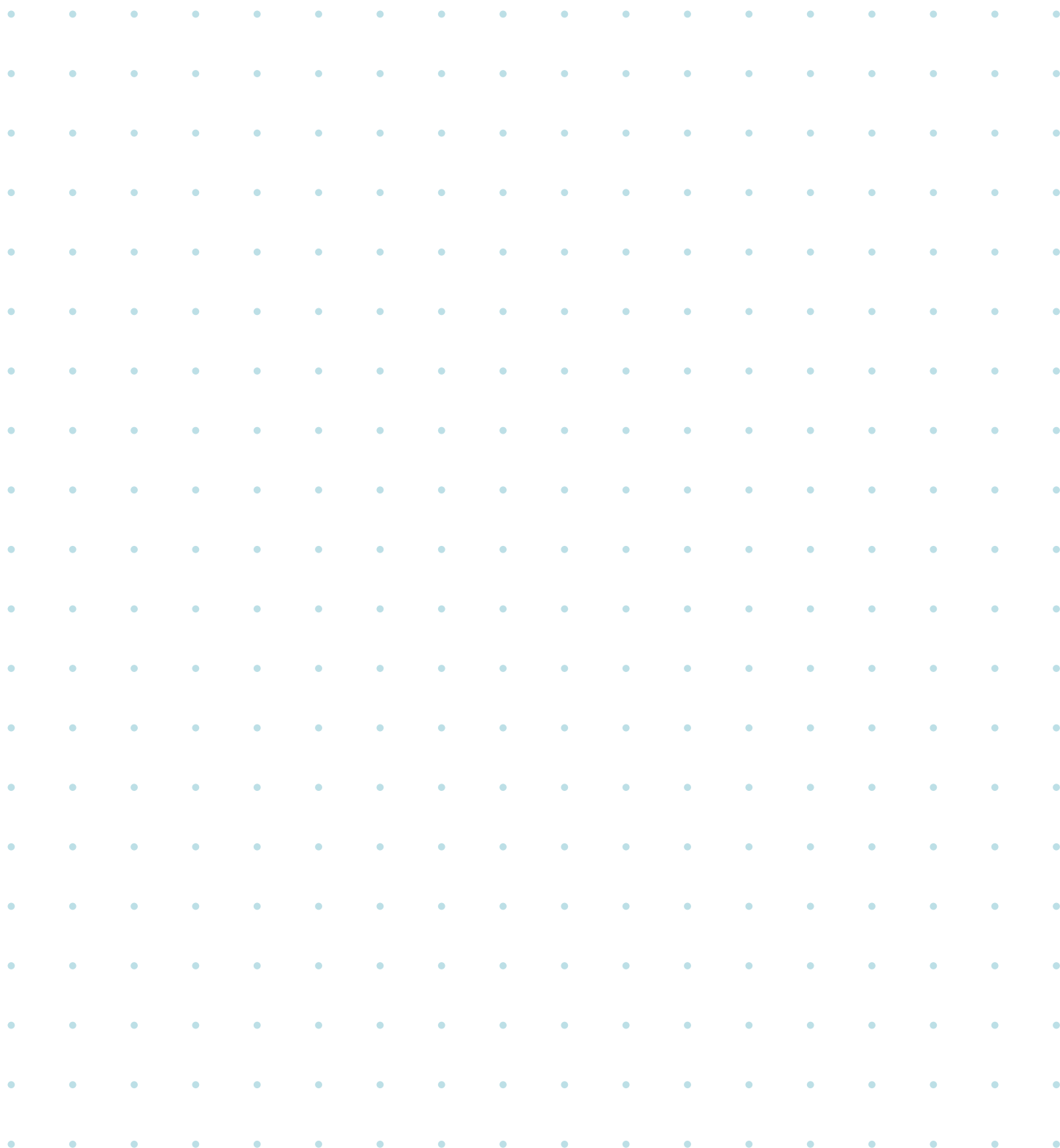
Reflect on the signs of change you're noticing but haven't yet acted on: What shifts in your team, organization, or industry are asking for your attention? Where might you be waiting for permission or certainty before responding to what's already unfolding around you?



When you think about “conviction-with-flexibility,” what comes up for you? How do you distinguish between core commitments that should remain steady and approaches that need to evolve? What would it mean to let your values find new form without losing their essence?



Where in your leadership could you move from reacting to change toward actively shaping what emerges? What small experiment in responsive leadership might help you practice staying present with uncertainty while still moving purposefully toward what matters most?



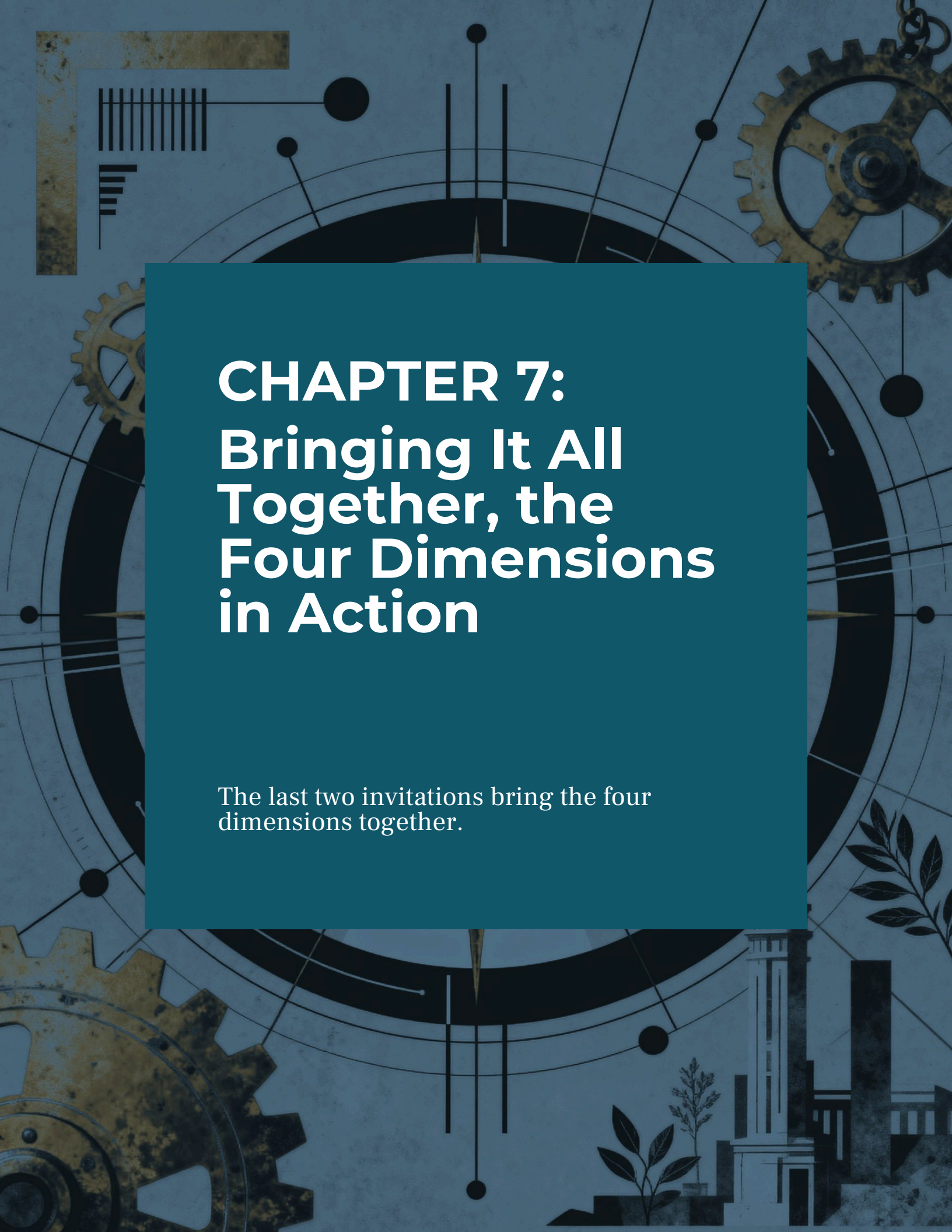
Notice what surfaces without rushing to immediate action. Sometimes the most powerful adaptation begins with simply acknowledging where we've been resisting necessary change and opening ourselves to the possibility that what's emerging might serve our deepest purposes better than what we're trying to preserve.

What surfaced:

One small experiment I'll try:

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CHAPTER 7: Bringing It All Together, the Four Dimensions in Action

The last two invitations bring the four dimensions together.

Reflection Invitation 7.1

When has your rush toward certainty closed you off from deeper wisdom?
What leadership challenge might benefit from living in the question a little longer while you're still in motion?

What surfaced:

One small experiment I'll try:

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Reflection Invitation 7.2

Where in your own leadership journey might letting go serve a larger purpose? Which quadrant’s questions help shine light on what’s most needed now—for you and for those around you?

What surfaced:

One small experiment I’ll try:

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Looking Across the Four Dimensions

When you have worked through several chapters, read back over what you wrote. A central idea of the Leadership Integrity Framework® is that leadership tends to come apart in the gaps between the dimensions rather than inside any one of them. These questions help you look for those gaps.

Purpose and Presence

Where do my values stay inside me instead of shaping how I act?

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Presence and Partnership

Where am I showing up well but not connecting?

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Partnership and Perspective

Where are my relationships strong but without a shared direction?

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Perspective and Purpose

Where is my strategy clear but disconnected from what I care about?

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Reading back over everything I wrote, what keeps returning?

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Keep Going

The Leadership Integrity Framework Assessment

leadershipintegrityframework.com/lif-assessment/

Questions & Answers, updated as new questions come in

leadershipintegrityframework.com/questions/

The framework visuals and the other companion materials

leadershipintegrityframework.com/audiobook

Write to me

lifbook@mariawade.us. I answer personally.

Join the community

Newsletter

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WhatsApp channel

chat.whatsapp.com/GZQPjniqAxODYtuWQgOVOU

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