

Workbook Belongs to: _____

Every Story Counts,
We Are One CBIZ

Workbook

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ABOUT JOEY AVILÉS

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Joey Avilés helps organizations elevate leadership, strengthen team trust, and build high-performance cultures where people feel safe to grow, lead, and stay.

Global brands like VISA, NASA, Pfizer, Zoom, LinkedIn, Dell Technologies, and Ferrara trust Joey to guide their leaders through one of today's most urgent challenges: how to inspire connection, resilience, and belonging in environments defined by complexity, regulation, and rapid change.

With more than 15 years of experience driving cultural transformation inside government agencies and Fortune 500 companies, Joey brings a rare dual lens—executive strategy and human-centered execution. He previously served as Chief of Diversity & Inclusion for the U.S. Coast Guard and held senior leadership roles in talent development and organizational effectiveness across three federal departments.

Whether speaking to C-suite executives, plant leaders, or hybrid teams, Joey equips organizations with research-backed strategies to:

- Boost psychological safety and trust across high-stakes environments
- Help leaders communicate with impact and confidence under pressure
- Fuel high-performers with the clarity and connection they need to go further

At the core of his approach is the ALIVE Method—a five-part leadership framework designed to help teams lead with clarity, compassion, and cultural intelligence. Joey's insights have been featured in The Washington Post, Telemundo, and the Chicago Tribune, and his sessions are known for blending practical strategy with bold energy, authentic storytelling, and lasting results.



Building the Life You Choose

Mapping Moments, Manifesting Dreams

Awaken, Activate, Achieve

If Chapters 1 and 2 helped you unlock the door towards a deeper level of consciousness, this next step is about stepping through it with intention and courage. Because knowledge without action is like a seed that has never been planted, it holds potential but never grows.

This chapter is not about ideas that sit on a shelf. It is about breakthroughs that will shake you, move you, and elevate you to a level you did not even know existed. Let me tell you something: I have lived these moments. I have sat in rooms where the exercises

I am about to share brought me to tears. I have written visions of my life that terrified me because I did not know if I could be that person. I did not know if I deserved to dream that big. And yet, those same exercises are what got me here today.

I have had strangers—mothers, fathers, sons, daughters—hug me after a keynote. People who did not know me, but who saw themselves in my words. They grabbed my hand, looked me straight in the eyes, and said,

[This was the message I needed to hear. This is the hope I did not know I could hold onto.]

I remember a mother from India. She came to me, tears streaming down her face. Her daughter had attempted to end her life, and this exercise, this moment of imagination, of awakening—was exactly what she wished her daughter could hear.

These tools, these simple yet powerful tools, are more than exercises. They are lifelines.

And now, I get to give that gift to you.

This is not just a chapter. You are not just reading a book. You are embarking on a journey with three major stops. Your job here is to roll up your sleeves and do the work. This is where you sit with yourself, for the first time in a long time. You sit with your fears, your dreams, your triumphs, and your doubts. And

you dig deep. Because the answers you are looking for—the clarity, the confidence, the power—are waiting for you on the other side of these exercises.

Awaken to the truth of who you are.

Activate the vision of who you want to become

Achieve the life you know deep down you were born to live.

Now, let us get to work.

First Stop: Your Iconic Moments

***Map Your Story. Unearth Your Values.
Reclaim Your Power.***

This exercise invites you to explore your life, moment by moment. Today will be rooted in love, exploration, and kindness. It is about studying your story with curiosity, peeling back the layers to reveal who you are, where you have been, and the deeper meaning behind your journey. I have done this exercise countless times, and every single time, it has brought me closer to understanding the essence of my own narrative and the opportunities it holds.

Here is what you need:

- Flip chart paper or a giant sheet of paper (we are not thinking small, my friend).
- Markers, pens, colors, anything that brings creativity to your process.

Step 1: Draw Your Lifeline

Start at the very beginning. Draw a straight horizontal line across your paper. This line represents your life from birth to the present day. Mark key moments on this line:

- **The highs:** Successes, breakthroughs, moments of joy.
- **The lows:** Failures, heartbreaks, struggles.
- **The flat points:** Times of waiting, reflecting, or feeling stuck.

These are your **iconic moments**. The good, the bad, and the ugly—they all make you who you are.

Here is the deal: for a lifeline to be a lifeline, it must have highs and lows. Flatlines? Well, that means no pulse—hello! And let us be real, we all have seasons in life that feel like we are stuck in neutral, or chaotic seasons of hyper ups and downs, but hey, that simply means you are still alive, you are still in the game, baby!

Step 2: Dig Deeper

Once you have mapped your life, stand in front of that line. Look at it. Really look at it. Ask yourself:

- What **values** emerged from these moments? Courage? Resilience? Family? Creativity?
- Which moments **shaped** you the most?
- What patterns do you notice? What lessons can be learned from these moments?

Step 3: Choose Your Top 3 Moments

Pick three moments that made you. These are the ones that took you apart and put you back together stronger.

Write them down. Give each one a word—a single word—that captures its essence. It could be **GRIT**, **FAITH**, **LOVE**, **FREEDOM**. Whatever resonates with you.

“When you map your story, you step into the heartbeat of life—where effort meets serendipity, and faith combined with hope fuels the journey. You stop being a prisoner of your past and start seeing the undeniable threads of favor and purpose woven into your life, guiding you toward a greater calling.”

ONE WORD STORIES

LIST THE 3 ICONIC MOMENTS THAT DEFINED WHO YOU ARE TODAY?

1

2

3

COME UP WITH ONE CORE VALUE THAT DESCRIBES THOSE 5 MOMENTS

BE PREPARED TO SHARE YOUR WORD AND A SUMMARY OF ONE OF YOUR TOP DEFINING MOMENTS IN 60 SECONDS

Step 4: Rise Above - The View from 30,000 Feet

Now, it is time to take a step back—literally and metaphorically. You have mapped your story. You have unearthed the values hidden in your moments. You have named the top three moments that shaped you. But here is where the real magic happens: you level up your view.

Stand back from your chart. Now, imagine you are sitting in an airplane, cruising at 30,000 feet. You glance out the window, and there it is—your life laid out below you, like a sprawling map of terrain. There are mountains of triumph, valleys of struggle, and long, winding roads of reflection.

What do you see? Which moments stand out, like shining cities or dry forests? Where do the paths connect, and where do they seem to fade?

Take a deep breath, and ask yourself these questions:

1. **What themes emerge?** Do you see patterns of resilience, love, or reinvention?
2. **How have your challenges shaped your strengths?** Think about how the lows fueled your ability to rise.
3. **What are the recurring values that show up?** These might point to the core principles you live by—courage, connection, faith, or growth.

4. **Who have you become because of these moments?** Consider not just what you have endured, but the person into whom you have evolved.
5. **What is missing?** Is there a story, a goal, or a value you wish was part of your narrative?

Step 5: Living Your Mission-From Words to Action

Here is the truth: a mission statement that lives on paper but not in your heart is like a car without an engine. It is not going anywhere. And while businesses have popularized mission and value statements, let us be real—how often do those words shape decisions or guide action?

For this step, we are not just crafting a set of inspiring words to stick to a wall or save in a journal. We are designing a *living, breathing compass*—a guiding force that evolves with you and becomes a filter for the life you are building.



How to create a mission statement that lives, endures and transcends

1. Start with the story behind the words.

Before writing anything down, revisit your top three moments and ask yourself:

- *What did these moments teach me about who I am?*
- *What do I want to carry forward with these experiences?*
- *Who do I want to become because of this journey?*

2. Your mission should be born from these reflections. It is not a catchy phrase—it is the heartbeat of your story.

3. **Think about how you will use it.**

A mission is not meant to decorate; it is meant to direct. Ask yourself:

- *How will this mission show up in my everyday life?*
- *How will it guide my relationships, my work, and my decisions?*

4. **Craft a statement that speaks to your soul.**

Let the words feel personal, alive, and real. Avoid buzzwords that sound impressive but do not connect with your heart. Think about a sentence that makes you *feel something* every time you say it. Example:

- *"I wake up each day to create spaces where people feel seen and alive, while staying rooted in faith and gratitude."*
- *"I move through life with courage, connection, and joy, knowing that my journey inspires others to find their light."*

Action: Make Your Mission Unmissable

This is where most mission statements fail—they are written, admired briefly, and then forgotten. Not here. Here is how to make yours a living part of your daily life:

1. **Embed it in your rituals.**

Write it on a mirror or at the top of your to-do list. Make it the wallpaper on your phone or computer.

2. **Use it as your decision-making tool.**

When opportunities, challenges, or distractions arise, ask yourself: *Does this align with my mission?* Let your statement guide you like a compass through the noise.

3. **Revisit and refine it often.**

Life changes. So should your mission. Check in with yourself every six months or whenever a major milestone or shift happens. Let your mission grow as you do.

Reflection Close-Out

As you step back from your lifeline, remember this: You are not defined by a single moment but by the magic they create. These moments—your triumphs, trials, and transitions—are threads of favor, purpose, and hope.

Your mission statement is not the final chapter; it is the opening lines of a new story. A story where you, my friend, are not just alive—but thriving, baby!

Power Thought:

Your life's
greatest moments
aren't just behind you
—they're **ahead** of you,
waiting to be claimed,
waiting to be lived,
waiting to become
your reality.

Feedback: The Engine That Keeps Visibility Sustainable.

BUILD YOUR TRUTH CIRCLE

EXPAND YOUR LENS.



ASK EARLY, ASK OFTEN



TEST, THEN TUNE.



TREAT FEEDBACK AS FUEL.

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU RECEIVED FEEDBACK THAT TRULY SHOOK YOU—WHAT MADE IT HIT SO DEEPLY, AND WHAT DID IT REVEAL ABOUT HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF?

WHAT'S ONE PIECE OF FEEDBACK YOU'VE AVOIDED—OR QUIETLY DISAGREED WITH—THAT MIGHT ACTUALLY BE THE KEY TO YOUR NEXT LEVEL OF VISIBILITY?

WHO IN YOUR CIRCLE DO YOU TRUST ENOUGH TO TELL YOU WHAT OTHERS WON'T—AND WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU INVITED THAT LEVEL OF HONESTY?

Magnify Your Inner Critic

Sit down with it, side by side, and ask:

1

What is your name? (Identify your inner critic by naming it—e.g., Judge, Comparer, Perfectionist, Impostor, Procrastinator, Bully.)

2

Write down the typical message your inner critic tells you.

3

When did you first appear in my life?

4

Where do you come from?

5

What do you want me to learn from you?

6

Give your inner critic a firm command by setting boundaries.

7

Show your inner critic how to be compassionate (How can you teach your inner critic to be appreciative?)

FROM INNER NOISE TO INNER VISION



Capture the vision of your audacious, uninterrupted self. What breakthroughs are you building? How are you redefining the way care is delivered to create greater impact—today, tomorrow, and beyond? ✕

Guiding Questions

1. What meaningful work are you doing—and why does it matter? What impact are you making? Who are you serving? How does your work reflect your deepest values?
2. What does a deeply fulfilling day look like for you? From start to finish—what rhythms, relationships, and roles bring you energy, joy, and peace?
3. Who are you surrounded by, and how do they elevate your life? What relationships shape your world? Who challenges, supports, and inspires your next level?
4. How does your home environment fuel your growth? What does your physical space feel like? Is it a place of creativity, peace, connection, or inspiration?
5. What keeps your mind and body strong, focused, and ready? What practices energize your leadership? How are you showing up for your health and resilience?
6. What legacy are you quietly building—day by day? What do you want people to remember about you? How are your actions shaping that vision right now?
7. How do you define abundance—and how do you share it? Think beyond money. What are you giving generously? How do you multiply value for others?

7 DAY CONNECTION CHALLENGE

Storytelling & Connection Challenge: Every Story Matters, Every Story Counts
True inclusion isn't just about who's in the room, it's about whose stories are heard.

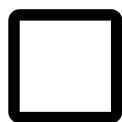
Over the next seven days, take one intentional step each day to amplify connection, honor stories, and bring more humanity into how you lead, listen, and show up. Because when we share our stories, and help others rise through theirs, we build culture, we build community.



DAY 1:

Speak Like You Belong

Challenge: Share a personal moment that shaped who you are — in a meeting, email, or 1:1. Model vulnerability by replacing “perfect answers” with real stories.
Reflection: How did your story invite others to open up or see you differently?



DAY 2:

Listen Beyond Words

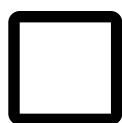
Challenge: In your next conversation, ask someone, “What’s a story that shaped how you lead or live?” Then, simply listen, no fixing, no interrupting.
Reflection: What did you learn about them that data or metrics could never tell you?



DAY 3:

Magnify What Makes You Human

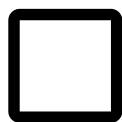
Challenge: Write down one belief your inner critic has whispered this week. Now, rewrite it with compassion. Example: “I’m not ready” → “I’m learning in real time — and that’s brave.”
Reflection: What changes when your self-talk becomes self-leadership?



DAY 4:

Pass the Mic

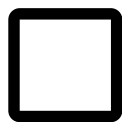
Challenge: In your next team meeting, invite someone else to share their story or insight. Visibility is not a solo act, it’s a shared spotlight.
Reflection: How did giving the mic away strengthen connection or trust?



DAY 5:

Celebrate the Everyday Hero

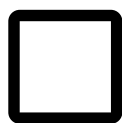
Challenge: Publicly recognize someone whose story, kindness, or courage has inspired you — especially if they’re often unseen.
Reflection: How did your acknowledgment help their story ripple through others?



DAY 6:

Bridge Cultures, Share Context

Challenge: Ask a colleague from another region or culture to share a custom, tradition, or belief that matters to them. Then share one of your own.
Reflection: What did you discover about belonging across borders?



DAY 7:

Write Your Future Story

Challenge: Imagine yourself five years from now, being invited to share your story on a global stage. Write a short paragraph about what you want to say — and who you’ve become.
Reflection: What small decision today brings that story closer to reality?

*When I tell my story, I heal.
When I listen to yours, I grow.
When we share them both ---> WE RISE.*

EVERY STORY MATTERS ACTION PLAN

As a result of what I learned, I am going to ...

- Next Week:
- Within One Month:
- Within Three Months:

I know I am succeeding with my learnings when....

My Key AHA Moments are:

① _____

② _____

③ _____

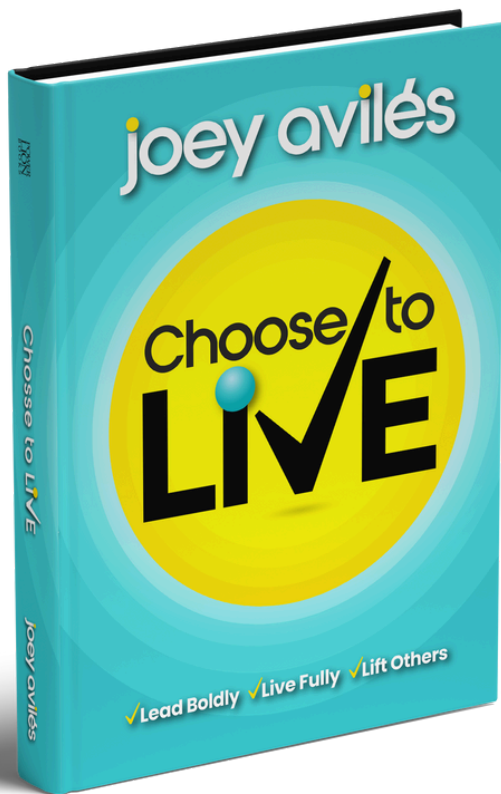
90-Day Follow Up: After ninety days, assess your progress.

① How well did you accomplish your objectives?

② What in your work environment supported you in achieving your goals?

③ What in your work environment blocked you in achieving your goals?

④ What ongoing goal(s) will you now strive to achieve?



The Blueprint for **BOLD** Leadership, **Real** Connection, and **Unstoppable** Resilience

From former Chief of Global Culture Transformation, Leadership Strategist, in-demand Keynote Speaker, Lead Researcher and Executive Coach
Joey Avilés



ABOUT THE BOOK

Choose to Live blends the depth of a manifesto with the utility of a guided workbook—nearly 400 full-color pages built to train the muscles of modern leadership: emotional intelligence, conviction, reinvention, and connection.

Built on the ALIVE Method—a five-part leadership framework shaped through years of hands-on work with Fortune 500 teams—this book delivers practical strategies that translate into measurable impact:

- Lead with precision by taming fear in four deliberate moves
- Craft a five-year vision rooted in lived experience and purpose
- Spark real connection in 60 seconds or less through empathy bursts
- Manage well-being like a high-stakes asset: body, mind, and boundaries
- Turn resistance into progress with the Five Laws of Elevation and a 30-Day Challenge

This is the kind of tool people return to—during pivots, plateaus, or moments that call for reinvention.

It's not just a read.

It's a system to help people rise.

GRAB
YOURS
TODAY



<https://choosetoliveshop.com>