

# I CHOOSE ME!

To love and trust myself above all others.



**NLP Master  
Practitioner –  
Modelling Project**

Michelle de Silva.

11<sup>th</sup> December 2021

*“One should always be on the trail of one’s own deepest nature.”*

Henry David Thorea

# Contents

## Chapter 1

Setting the scene

## Chapter 2

The Outcome

## Chapter 3

The Model

## Chapter 4

Learning from exemplars

## Chapter 5

A journey of self-discovery

## Chapter 6

Putting it to the test

## Chapter 1.

### Setting the Scene

Have you noticed how certain individuals can light up a room when they walk into it? How they exude charm, charisma & character? How they radiate a warm energy? Their connections are powerful & they inspire hope in those around them. They are the torchbearers for people who want to reach more, aspire more and be more!

What makes these individuals so special? What makes them so comfortable in their own skin? What brings forth that raw authenticity and uniqueness that creates an aura around them?

This project will help the reader discover their own uniqueness & wear it with pride!

I chose this subject of discovering my uniqueness, my identity for a specific reason. For as long as I could remember, I felt uncomfortable. Like I didn't belong. This feeling (ki) created self-doubt & self-consciousness. (vic)

Coming from a strong catholic background I was taught to obey, respect & always think of those around me first. As the oldest in my family I was told to set an example for my siblings. Doing what was expected, conforming to the norms was a natural thing. (ve)

This blue print, stayed with me as an adult. As I stepped into a career in Banking at the age of 19, I barely knew who I was or what it is I wanted.

I knew I was following in my father's footsteps. Embracing a career that would give stability & make him proud. But what did it mean to me? As I became a mother, I had the beautiful example of my own mother. She was an exceptionally talented woman who gave up much in music & drama, to make a home for us. I always thought, she had so much more within her, that was never explored. But she set the bar high in her role as a mom(ve). This was my benchmark. Something that always caused much guilt as I juggled a high stress career with bringing up 2 children.

I recently asked my son, who is now 20 years of age how he sees me, to which he responded "my safety net". I wasn't sure if I was entirely thrilled with this response (I would have liked to think it was something more exciting). But it told the story I have been telling myself my entire life (vic).

I told myself, I had to be the safety net for everyone. My belief was that I was accountable & responsible for everyone & everything around me. Family, colleagues, community. This naturally caused stress, anxiety & guilt. Sometimes frustration & depression because I felt trapped. Suffocated (ki)

My NLP journey, and this project in particular has helped me identify my behaviour patterns. The need to be in control all the time. How this can cause anxiety & guilt. How it has influenced the choices I have made. My filters were an "away from" state and had an external frame of reference. My limiting belief, was that I was not enough.

As I re program and apply the model on myself, I see the results. As I am able to change and evolve effortlessly, I am free in my mind, happier, more confident in myself. I have peace & acceptance that everything need not be perfect.

The story I tell myself today is, that I am incredibly gifted. Blessed beyond measure! I have within me all that I need, and in just being myself, without fear of judgement or expectation I have more impact on those around me. (Aic)

I am now a torchbearer for others. They look up to me and see a woman with both sensuality& strength. Integrity & substance. (Ve)

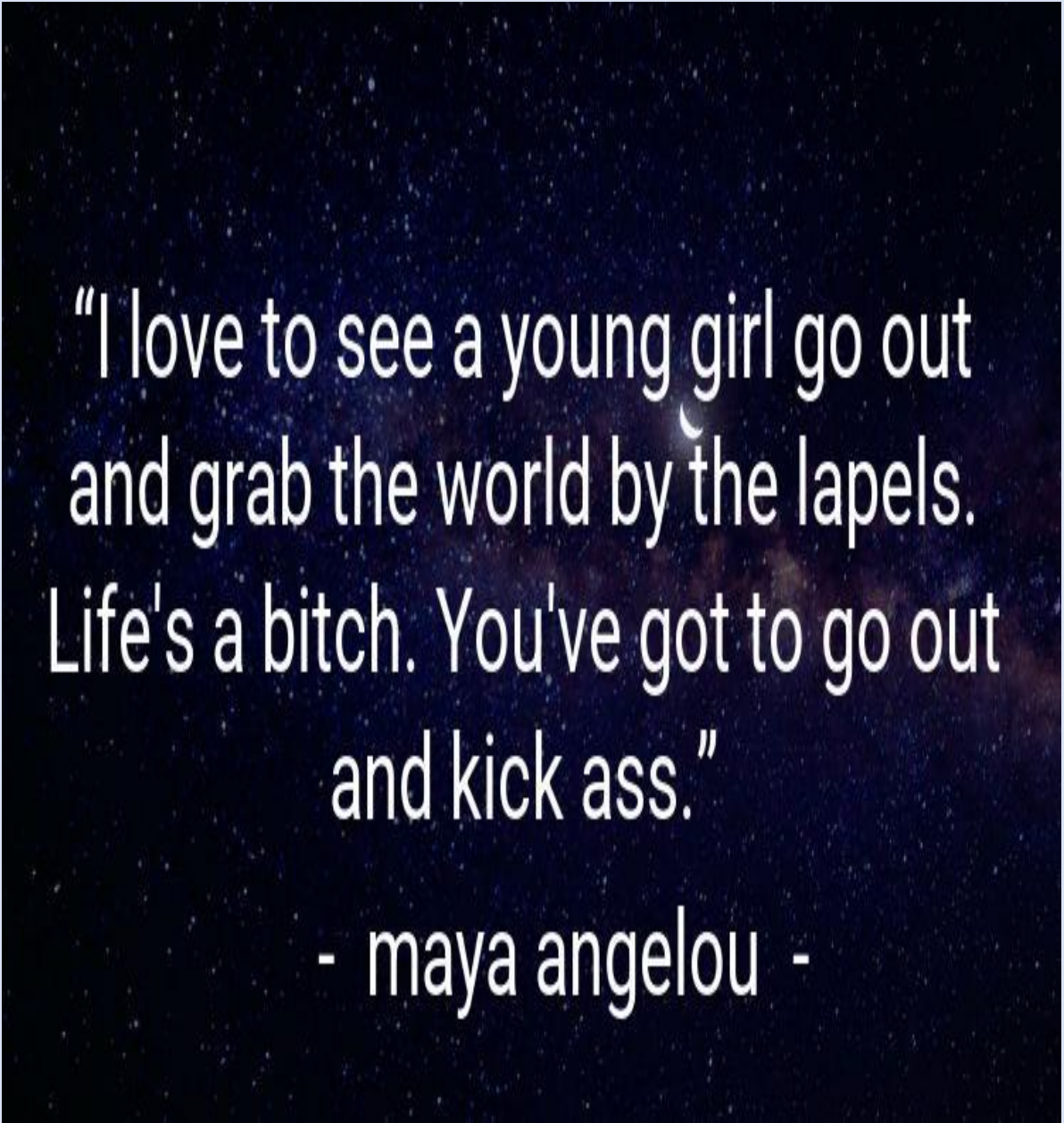
The ability to allow myself to evolve and change is a humbling quality. One that is serving me well in who I see my future self as.

I see myself aging gracefully. Physically, mentally & emotionally strong. (ve)

I hear applause and acknowledgement for my work. (Aic)

I am comfortable in a crowd as I am in solitude. (ki)

My heart is full. Because I know, I have made a difference. (Vic, Aic, ki)



“I love to see a young girl go out  
and grab the world by the lapels.  
Life's a bitch. You've got to go out  
and kick ass.”

- maya angelou -

## Chapter 2.

### **The Outcome**

As I focus on embracing my true self, I wear my identity of who I am with pride. Knowing there is no one else like me. I am unique. I am special. I am alive!

How I look, how I walk, how I talk. My ideas, my creativity, my curiosity, they all make a difference. There is no need to hide behind a mask. To be something that receives the approval of others. For I love myself. I owe it to myself to be the most I can be.

For most of us, we are brought up to behave and think in a particular way. Our families, schools, culture, environment all play a part in defining who we are. Finding our own voice amidst all this noise is not easy. Often, people settle for who they have become, without ever daring to explore, who they can become!

As a result, there is so much compromise that limits us from becoming the best version of our selves.

During my career as a Banker, I have seen so many young talented and wildly intelligent women hang up their boots and settle for an ordinary life, when they could have had an extraordinary one.

It is my goal, in how I choose to show up in the world, to inspire other young women and girls to see a future that was unimaginable. To be the torchbearer that inspires a younger generation of women to reach more, aspire more & be more!

*“And perhaps,  
what made her beautiful  
was not her appearance  
or what she achieved,  
but in her love  
and in her courage,  
and her audacity  
to believe:  
no matter  
the darkness  
around her,  
Light ran wild  
within her,  
and that was the way  
she came alive,  
and it showed up  
in everything.”*

Morgan Harper Nichols



## Chapter 3.

### **The Model**

This model will help anyone practicing it to identify their unique individual essence, and the strategy to honour & appreciate it, allowing them to experience greater fulfilment in their lives.

#### Step 1.        **Understanding & Awareness**

Our core values are our personal code of conduct. Unfortunately, many of us don't know our values, nor understand their importance.

Instead, we focus on what our community, culture & media values.

- Take a deep breath & empty the mind.
- The conscious mind does not have all the answers and we must make space for new insights & revelations to emerge.

#### **Peak Experiences**

- Consider a meaningful moment—a peak experience that stands out.
- What was happening to you?
- What was going on?
- What values were you honouring at this time?

#### **Suppressed Values**

- Now, go in the opposite direction; consider a time when you got angry, frustrated, or upset
- What was going on?
- What were you feeling?

- Now flip those feelings around.

## Code of Conduct

Looking back at these 2 experiences, when you are at 2 extremes of your emotional rainbow,

- What stands out as most important in your life? (Beyond your basic human needs), for you to experience fulfilment?

Creative self-expression? A strong level of health and vitality? A sense of excitement and adventure? Surrounded by beauty? Always learning?

- What are the personal values you must honour, or a part of you withers?
- Determine your top personal core values.

## Step 2. Revisit & Recognise

Once we are aware of our core values, learning to recognize them is as important to hold them true.

- As a unique individual, we all have our strengths & weaknesses.
- The values we end up with identifying must represent our most primary way of being, and support our inner self.
- This process needs to be re visited a number of times.
- How do they make you feel?
- Do you feel they are consistent with who you are?
- Are they personal to you?

Do you see any values that feel inconsistent with your identity?  
(as if they belong to someone else, like an authority figure or society) and not you?

- Check your priority ranking. Do you feel like your values are in the proper order of importance?

## Step 3. Choice.

At the point a choice or decision must be made, there are several factors our logical minds consider. The decision could be as simple as or complicated as, “do I stay, or do I go?”

- Take a moment & stay still.
- Our minds analyse & pre-suppose. Our bodies never lie.
- Listen to your body.
- What does it tell you? Do you feel excited? Nervous? Happy? Sad?
- Those feelings are important.
- Do these feelings align with your core values?
- You will be surprised how closely our emotions are linked to what is important to us.
- If our feelings elevate our values, we are making the right choice that is true to our inner self.
- With this clarity decisions become simpler, allowing yourself to show-up as yourself.

## Step 4. Communication

This is an important part of the process. Because as we begin to make choices more in line with our core values, the chances of disappointing or not living up to someone else's expectations is greater.

- If you don't want to do something or you don't want someone else to do something, tell them.
- Communication is so important.
- Tell the other person why you are making the choice.
- Using a calm and non-defensive tone, and giving respect to the other person is important.
- They will in turn understand.
- If there is friction in ideas, we must have courage to stand up for what we believe in, or walk away.

## Step 5. Gratitude

As you can see, not all decisions are straight forward. Every choice we make, no matter how purely we have done so, may not be the right choice. But the ability to accept the outcome of the choices we make in alignment to our core values, become so much more important.

- At the end of each day find time to re-connect with your inner self.
- Accept the outcome of your choice or be thankful.
- Gratitude is powerful.
- Owning our identity happens when we can accept the outcomes we create.

## Step 6. Self- Love

Finally look after yourself. It is when you have regard for your identity, yourself, however you choose to show up in the world, is when you are at your best & it radiates around you.

- Eat Well
- Sleep well
- exercise & allow time to relax

*“Respond to  
every call that  
excites your  
spirit.”*

---

R U M I

## Chapter 4

### Learning from Exemplars.

This model was created by analysing the commonalities between the 3 exemplars I chose to learn from. My 3 exemplars were all women of similar age. Their individual models enabled them to show up as sensual, strong & inspiring women. Although different in their own right, they all wore that spark that could illuminate a room.

Exemplar 1  
Rashanthi W.

Rashanthi is a childhood friend, a mother and a professional accountant permanently residing in Perth Australia.

The reason I chose Rashanthi, was because of late, she had taken to running. She was never a serious athlete in school. She was also an only child who loved attention and affection.

When I saw her post images of her running adventures almost every other week, I was intrigued to understand where that energy & enthusiasm came from. How she mustered up the determination & commitment that was naturally required to commit to a sport like running.

She looked fabulous! And what always caught my attention was seeing her family supporting and cheering her on!

I felt she had found her passion in running and was truly making it a part of her life.

When I spoke with RW, and asked her what triggered this journey, she explained how a few years ago when her dad died of cancer, she decided to run to raise funds for cancer research. That was the beginning of an exciting journey that boasts, 33 half marathons & 7 full marathons.

She explains how she would have anxiety attacks before a run. But when she saw much older folk do it, she thought "if other people can do it why can't I."

Once she began, the effort & discipline that was required tested her. She mentions how peer groups helped. With food, research, travel, endurance. A sense of belonging to a community & having a group that was supportive & accepting was encouraging.

Her reward was the joy of completing one run after another. Improving her timing.

I asked, her about family. Didn't this take you away from them too much? Was there no guilt?

She explained how they would have family meetings. Communication was critical.

The day before a run she told them she needed "me" time to prepare mentally. Her exercise & training routines were pre planned. Yes, it did take her away from family time, but she would make it up to them. She would cook and hang out with them on her off days.

In the end, she says our worst enemy is ourselves. When you face your insecurities, you surprise yourself. She also said, how this had improved her life style, fitness & mentality. I plan my day & make sure all the important things get done. There is a lot of self- talk that happens as I see how far I can push myself.

She said she also has a coach. This has helped as she ran more consistently.

What keeps you going, I asked? She said,  
1<sup>st</sup> it's the satisfaction of accomplishing something great. 2<sup>nd</sup> it makes me happy to run for a purpose. When I am happy, everyone around me is happy too.  
3<sup>rd</sup>, we think of everyone else. Who is thinking about us? We need to take care of ourselves.

She told me her aspiration was to run the 3 world major marathons!

She had found something that had both purpose and passion. More importantly she had factored it into her lifestyle without disrupting the relationships that were important to her.

There were several strengths she displayed. Determination, self- belief, connections. Most importantly self- love & self- trust.

Coding – Ve, Vic Aid, Ki, Ke

## Exemplar 2 Kasturi W

Kasturi is a public icon. She is the 1<sup>st</sup> female Group CEO of a public quoted conglomerate in SL, voted one of the Top 12 women change makers in the country in 2019, by the parliament of SL & USAID.

I chose her because she exuberated such charm & character! Her presence anywhere was larger than life. She spoke unafraid and unashamed.

I was in awe of how simple and down to earth she was as an individual, but how strong she was as a leader holding her own in a man's world.

She explained that this balance did not come naturally. She worked at it.

KW was naturally an extremely soft person who could cry for both a happy or a sad movie. She loved helping people. She was also playful and loved a good time.

She was a sportswoman who held national colours and so had a natural leadership streak. She always wanted to get things done fast. Hated mediocracy, dishonesty or laziness.

So how did she find that balance? She explained, she needed to be tough at work. She held people accountable & expected them to work smart. "I didn't mind being known as a tough person at work" she says. I don't hide it. Those who worked closest to her also saw her humane side. How she would go that extra mile to help someone personally.

It's how I chose to show up. Strong & bold at work, kind and understanding outside. Kasturi says, once you identify the good, bad & ugly in you, you choose to own it with pride!

One thing she worked hard on in finding this balance was her communication. She recalled as a single mom of 2 boys, how she would explain to them why she had to do certain things, or why they shouldn't do certain things. She said she never missed an important event in their lives. She was always there, and work had to take care of itself. She said. I built my teams to work independently. "That's who I am. I have to make tough choices every day. I make choices & live with it."

The art of communication was a big part of how she handles these situations. She learnt being too assertive, too straight forward didn't work. It was hurtful & corporatized. In a situation that was difficult, she chose to rise above the other person & not get too emotional. She also told me how she refrained from engaging in too much expression at work. "I don't change my values. I adjust how I behave or react. That way I stay true to my identity."

All this required a lot of soul searching. To understand who she was and who she wanted to be. She repeatedly said, "I chose to be who I am."

Coding – (Ve,Vic,Aid,Ki,Ke)

### Exemplar 3 Chiranthi C

Chiranthi is a Member of the Corporate Management of a leading Private Commercial Bank in SL. She is an HR professional and is on several advisory boards of AISEC SL, Past President of Association of HR Professionals in SL. I chose her because I saw a rebel in her. She lived life on her own terms. I was curious to understand her strategy in life.

She began the interview by saying, "I was destined to be different."

She explains as a girl who came from a conservative catholic home, how she always realized she had a demon and rebel spirit and would revel in it. A naughty young girl who enjoyed defying the norm. She was fearless & it liberated her. She was also an achiever! It was her father who pushed her and she always wanted to come clean in his eyes.

She followed idols like Lenin & Marx, but also had posters of Boy George & Madonna on her walls.

Life was not always kind to her. A single mother, she had to raise 2 children at a very young age. But she was determined not to let life or anyone else get the better of her. She says, "I was determined to claim my space."

She believed she was always competing with herself. That's what drives her,

Although she showed off this tough exterior, she says there have been days she has cried herself to sleep. When you choose to be yourself, you are bound to ruffle a few feathers. "I am my own moral compass. If I can make peace with my god at night, I have done right." She also finds peace journaling and talking to herself."

She is an achiever who will push herself to reach the very top. "Having a strong identity, helps me pull the levers, because I know who I am."

Coding – (Ve,Vir,Vic,Air,AID,Ki,Ke)

Eliefs of Excellence

All 3 exemplars had their own beliefs and strategies. They were at the top of the logical levels. Living with purpose.

The commonalities were,

- They all trusted & believed & were true to their authentic selves.
- They all chose how they wanted to show up.
- They all used communication as a bridge between themselves and others.
- They found ways of making time for themselves.
- They all showed discipline & determination.
- They all competed with themselves.

Beliefs of Excellence held –

- If other can do it, why can't I?
- People are always making the best choices available to them.
- Each person is unique.
- All behaviour is contextual & has a positive intention.
- Everyone has all the resources they need.
- Meaning of the communication is the response that you get.



**Putting myself first  
was a quiet thing.  
Soft & certain.  
A gentle rebellion,  
long overdue.**

**S.r.W**

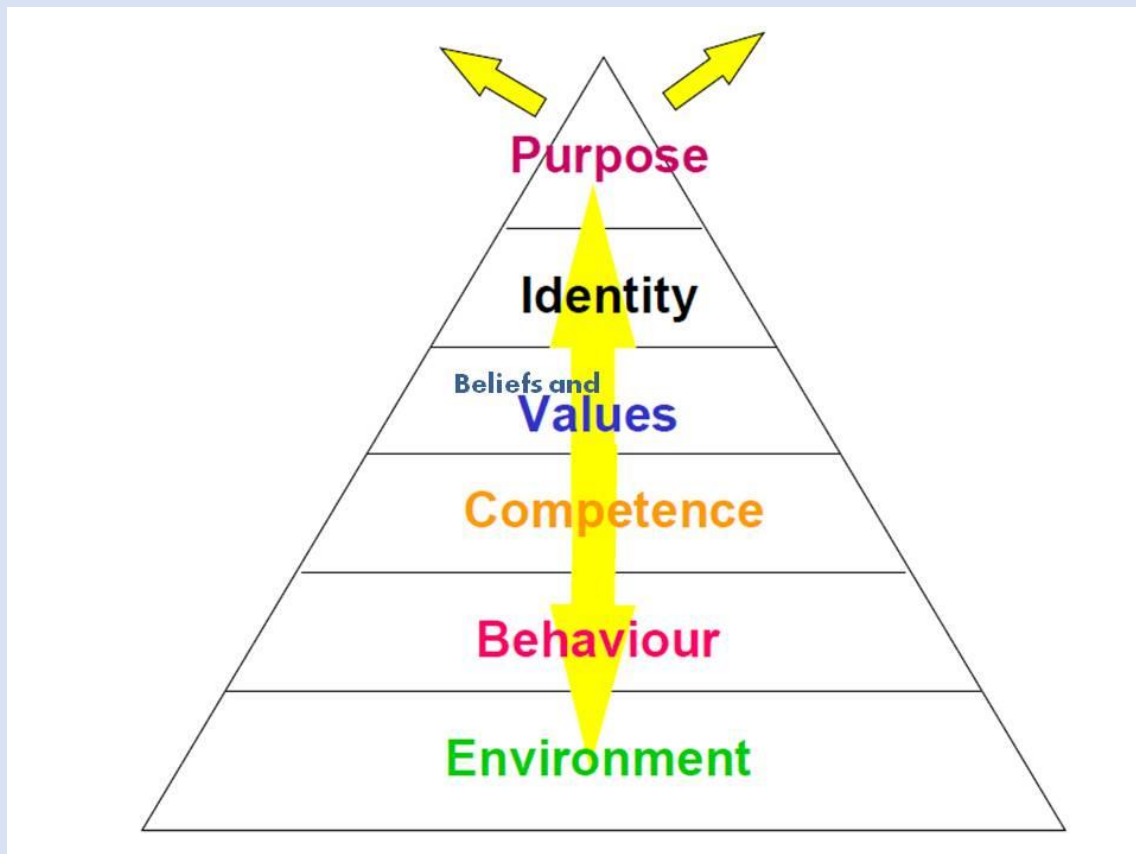
## Chapter 5.

### **A Journey of Self-discovery.**

As explained in Chapter 1, until very recently, I was lost. I always knew there was more I wanted to be, more I wanted to do, but didn't know what it was.

So when I started my modelling project, I couldn't quite put my finger on what my "It" was. I started with wanting to change my identity narrative. To change the story I was telling myself. But when I was asked what it is I would have to let go, I had no idea.

As I explored this feeling more, using the Neurological levels I found something interesting.



When analysing the different levels, I noticed certain behaviour patterns. Like how I needed to be in control of every situation. Whether it was work or family. How that in turn caused stress and anxiety. Because, things are not always within your control.

I also wanted to be everything to everyone! The saviour. The safety-net. And if I couldn't, it caused so much guilt. Even made me feel undeserving. This was where I was stuck.

As I explored the next level, I realized, how blessed I am. I have been gifted skills and capabilities that can be put to so much good use. It's what makes me unique. The more I studied this behaviour pattern I realized, guilt is experienced depending on the moral code I live on.

So, what are my values? What is important to me? Freedom of mind & spirit, expression of creativity, love and belonging, Loyalty & integrity, Excitement & adventure, Humanism & connection, Fitness, Faith. These were my values. This was me. It is important that I honour these values to live a fulfilled and purposeful life.

Guilt, was a way of recognizing I had not lived up to my values & standards. But understanding what my core values were, I realized these standards were not necessarily mine. They were systemic, cultural, religious beliefs that were imprinted in my mind.

It made me realize, I had to let go of the fear of disappointing others. The need to make sure everything had to be perfect. Let go of the beliefs I was holding onto, in order to make space for new insights and beliefs.

I had to give myself permission to fail, to be imperfect, to be myself! To be this, as I learnt from my exemplars, I had to learn to love & trust myself first. To own the good the bad and the ugly & wear it with pride! Yes, It did sound rather selfish & self centered. But like all my exemplars displayed, they had all found that "sweet spot" between selfish & selfless.

What is this sweet spot?

The sweet spot is when you strike a balance between the 2. When you know yourself so well, you recognize the good, the bad & the ugly within yourself, and choose to own it!

How do I know I have it?

Following the model shared, I have found access to this sweet spot. I know because,

- I am able to make choices without the underlying feeling of guilt.
- I am able to accept the outcome of those choices.
- I am confident being me.
- I feel a sense of freedom and exhilaration.
- I can give myself time and I find I have more energy & love for others.
- I am able to connect with my inner self, and be at peace with what I see.

**The thing that is really hard and really amazing, is giving up on being perfect and beginning to work on becoming yourself.**

**– Anna Quindlen**

## Chapter 6.

### Putting it to the test!

I have tried out the model several times and the TOTE I've run has proved to be rewarding experiences.

The 1<sup>st</sup> place I tried it was with my children. Like an over protective mother hen, I've always tried to be there for them. Protecting & shielding them from the disappointments & dangers in life. Letting go, was one of the hard things I had to do. This, 31<sup>st</sup> of December when my 20 year old asked to be out with his friends, my mind said No! It was too dangerous. But my gut said he needed to have his freedom. Have his own experiences. Learn his own lessons. This was in alignment with my value of having faith. Trusting him and what I have taught him. The result? I learnt he could be responsible! He could take care of himself.

I've been trying this out at work as well. Giving priority to what is important to me and trusting my team with what I have trained them to do. It appears people don't need me as much as I think they do! All the stress & strain is for nothing.

Another challenging point of testing the model was the ability to say No. The reaction & outcome is not always positive. Using communication as a bridge has helped me understand that each one own programs. Being aware of our own, helps us relate to others better. The trick, is to learn to care about yourself as much as you care for others.

A space you act in alignment to your deepest values.

A space where you are motivated & energized.

A space where you are your most authentic self.

A space where you can rejuvenate & revive yourself when you're tired.

A place you are filled with love & joy, and so you have more to give others!

Finding this sweet-spot is not always easy. It's a thin line. Like walking a tight rope. But the more you practice making choices in line with your values, the more you become your own.

As I change & evolve in practicing this model, I live a life of purpose & permission & I am confident the light that shines from within, inspires others to discover their power!

is unique and each one of us have our own set of values.

**Don't ask yourself  
what the world  
needs, ask yourself  
what makes you  
come alive. And  
then go do that.  
Because what the  
world needs are  
people who have  
come alive.**

**– Harold Whitman**