



Brands & Why They Matter

PART TWO

"About all you can do in life is be who you are. Some people will love you for you. Most will love you for what you can do for them, and some won't like you at all." -Rita Mae Brown



Brand Authenticity Exercise

Examine Brands That Have Had an Impact on Your Life.

Business brands and personal brands are measured in similar ways. Both are defined by relationships.

Authentic Relationships are Built When a Brand:

Has a clear purpose	Keeps its promise	Adheres to its principles
Provides experiences that are consistently fulfilling	Has a presence that's genuine	Matches the description others give it

Instructions:

Using the charts on the next page, take a few moments to rate brands in your personal and professional life. Select brands that are important to you. The business brand could be a product, service, retailer, or organization that you feel strongly about.

The personal brand could be someone you wrote about in the exercises in Chapter 2, *Determine What Matters*.

Example:

APPLE:

Attributes	My point of view
Purpose the why of its existence	I love Steve Jobs's mission statement for Apple (from 1980): "To make a contribution to the world by making tools for the mind that advance humankind." My rating: 2. I feel Apple delivers on this consistently.
Promise what customers should expect	"Think Different" My rating: 1. Apple used to be ahead of competitors. It's still my preferred brand, but my "1" rating reflects the fact some competitors have surpassed them re: innovation.
Principles what the business values	Innovation, quality, connectedness, user-focused experiences My rating: 2. Apple remains true to their principles, even without Steve Jobs.
Experiences the interactions people have with the brand	Product usability and connectivity are generally good. If something goes wrong or I need help, I get support. I am frustrated at the "timed obsolescence" of my iPhone batteries, though! My rating: 1. Room for improvement.
Presence how it's presented to the world	Stylish, fresh, clean, and fashionable; high energy and exciting marketing My rating: 2. Consistency over all touchpoints.
Description how I talk about the brand	Apple devices have become part of my life socially and professionally—they are like an extension of me. My rating: 2. I'm a loyal advocate.

Apple – Score: 10/12

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Brand Authenticity Exercise

For these exercises, you can use the following scoring system:	2	1	0
	<i>The attribute is clear and delivered consistently</i>	<i>The attribute is somewhat clear and sometimes delivered</i>	<i>The attribute is not clear and not delivered</i>

Personal Brand:

Select a person who has made an impact on your personal life.

Name: _____

Attributes	My Point of View	Rating
Purpose <i>the why in their life</i>		
Promise <i>what commitments exist</i>		
Principles <i>demonstrated values</i>		
Experiences <i>interactions during the relationship</i>		
Presence <i>how they show up</i>		
Description <i>how I talk about the brand</i>		
Brand Score:		/12

Business Brand:

Select a business brand that has made an impact on your professional life.

Name: _____

Attributes	My Point of View	Rating
Purpose <i>the why of it's existence</i>		
Promise <i>what customers should expect</i>		
Principles <i>what the business values</i>		
Experiences <i>interactions people have had with the brand</i>		
Presence <i>how it's presented to the world</i>		
Description <i>how I talk about the brand</i>		
Brand Score:		/12

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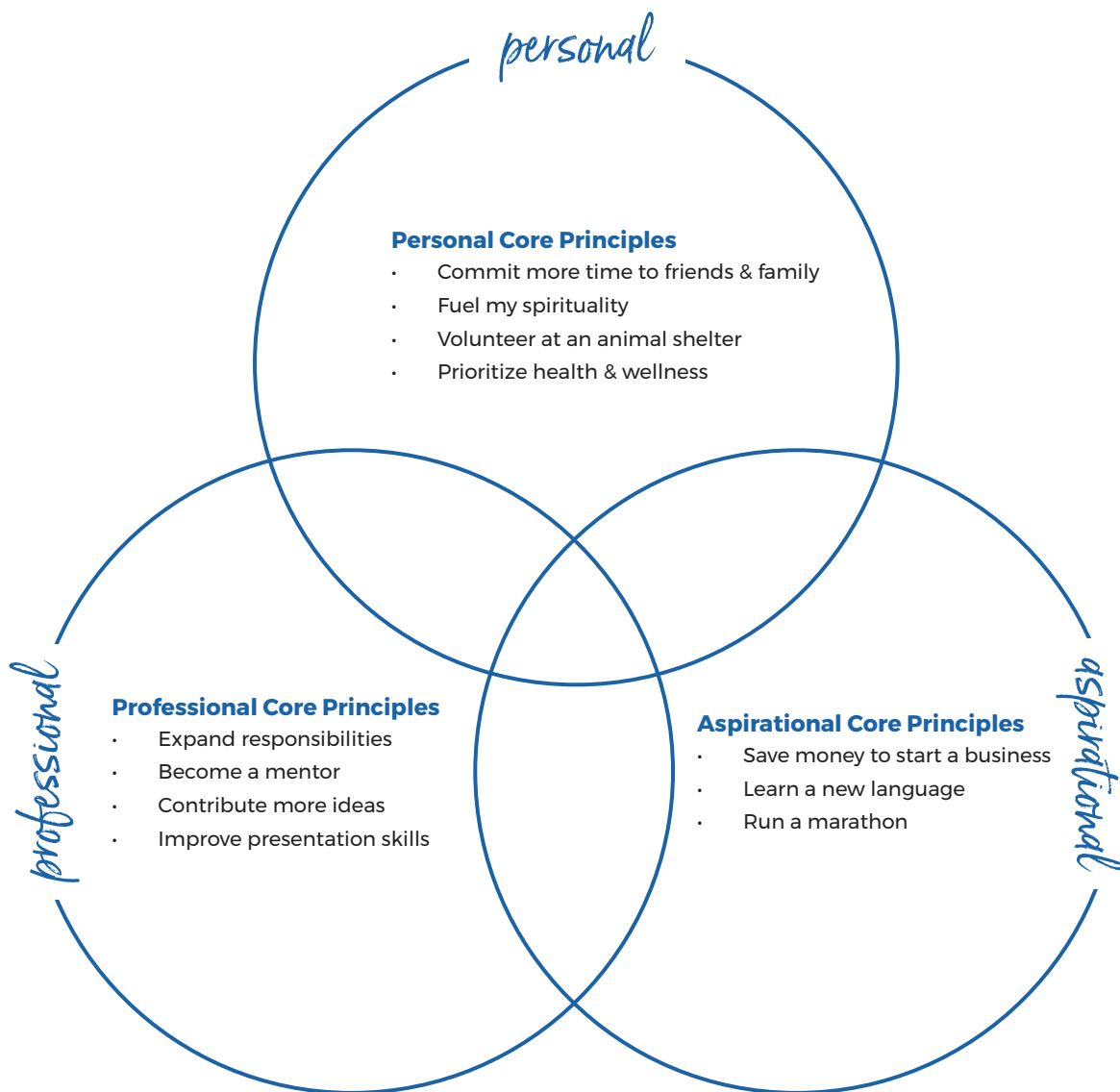
—Rita Mae Brown



Core Principles

Use a Venn diagram to capture your core principles in three areas: personal, professional, and aspirational. You'll define principles for all of these aspects of your life in order to see the commonalities and differences.

Here's an example of a completed Venn diagram. It's populated with personal, professional, and aspirational core principles.



"Only the truth of who you are, if realized, will set you free."

—Eckhart Tolle



Core Principles

Personal Core Principles

Your truths, beliefs, and passions are revealed in your responses to the questions in Chapter 2: *Determine What Matters*. The personal experiences you revisited hold the key to what matters to you in your personal relationships.

Early life and influences. Think about the leaders who influenced you deeply in your youth and consider why they were important to your development. Recall what you carried forward and how your behaviors evolved as a result.

Self-awareness. Refer to the people you identified as most important to you in your personal life. Next, consider the commitments you identified as really important to you and the things that bother you.

Career and aspirations. In thinking about what you want to achieve long term, you connect to what motivates you. Achieving your aspirational goals means connecting your passion and energy to what you want to do in life.

Professional Core Principles

The goals and achievements that are important to you in your life's work can be drawn from your experiences and the lessons you learned from the leaders in your past.

Early life and influences. Think about the leaders who embody the traits you most admire and, equally important, the traits of the leaders you consider to be less effective or damaging. Refer to your defining moments and what you learned about yourself.

Self-awareness. Refer to the people you identified as most important to you in your professional life. Also revisit your responses to the questions about what you do and why you do it. Consider how you can better link your efforts with work that makes you burst with energy.

Career and aspirations. You identified your goals for this year as well as for two, five, and ten years into the future. You also determined your barriers and the best areas in which to invest your time and energy to ensure future success. Refer to those responses for insights.

Aspirational Core Principles

Be bold, be courageous, and define a future state that you dream of achieving. Consider how you'll make your mark on the world and embody what matters in all you do.

Early life and influences. Think about who has inspired you to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more. What has their example taught you and what do you intend to do about it?

Self-awareness. As you reflect on your responses to what affects you deeply, consider how you convey this in your social media presence. Are you sharing or liking things that relate to your aspirations?

Career and aspirations. When you allowed yourself to dream about what you would do for a living if money weren't a factor, you likely discovered your deepest aspiration. Revisit this dream.

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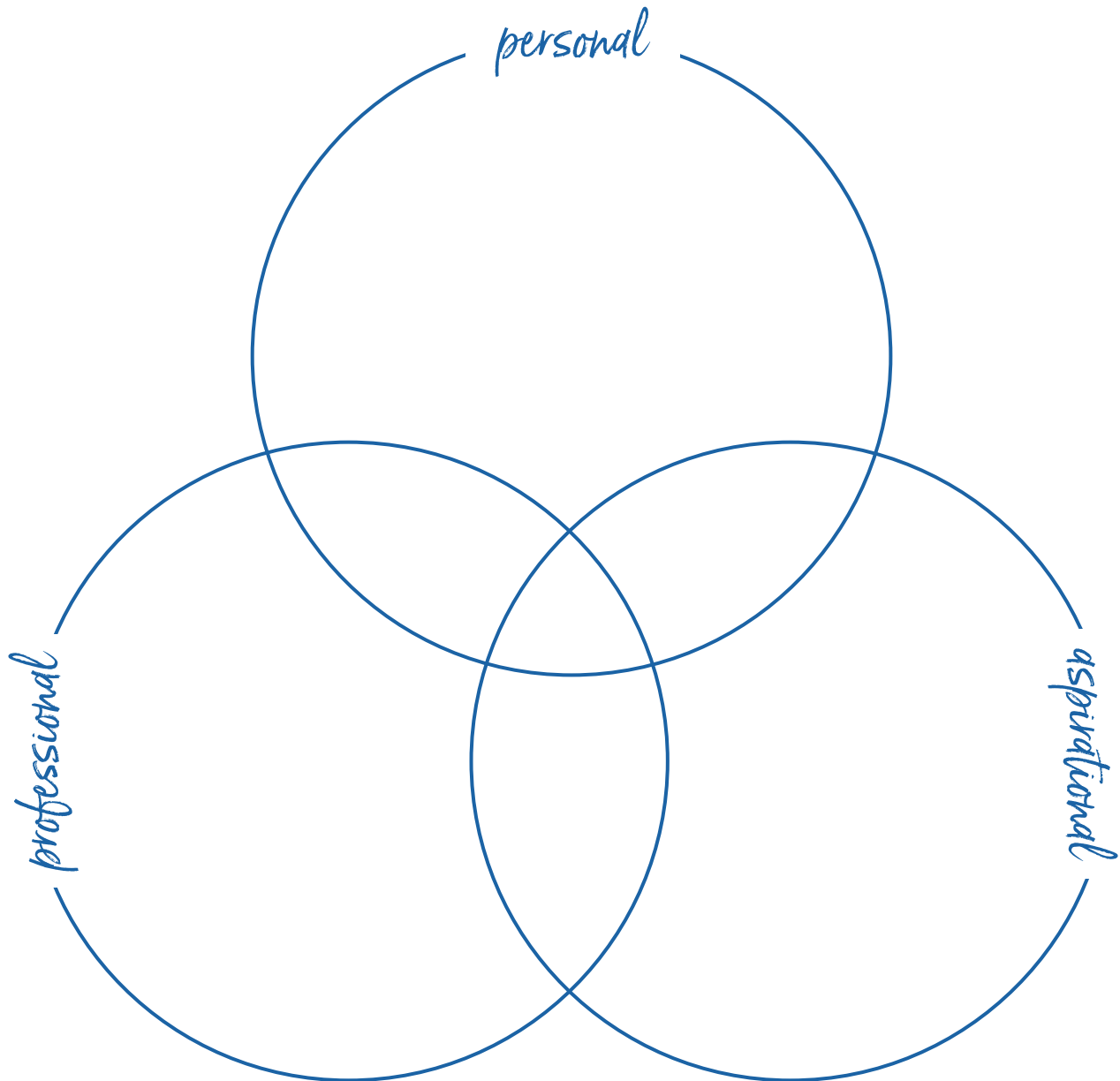
—Eckhart Tolle



Your Venn Diagram

What Are Your Personal, Professional, and Aspirational Core Principles?

How will you complete your Venn diagram?



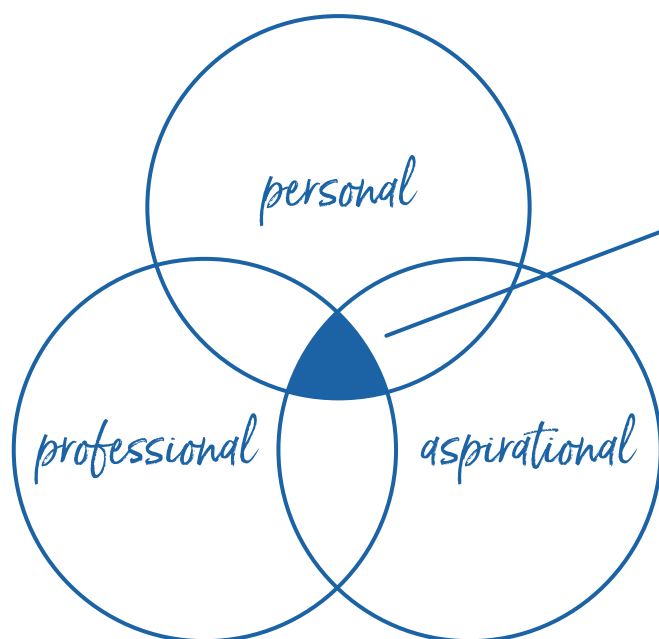
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Your Venn Diagram

The point at which your personal, professional, and aspirational core principles intersect is the nexus. This is the essence of who you are.



Nexus

Example Nexus Statements

- I'm a caregiver
- I'm an artist—I want to bring beauty to others
- I care deeply about the environment
- I'm a learning enthusiast—new people and experiences energize me
- I'm a teacher and mentor—I empower others

Your Nexus Statement

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Promise

Establish what you intend to do for yourself and others. Define your promises and consider what they mean to your personal and professional relationships. This is your non-negotiable list of commitments. They will shape your decisions and actions from this point forward.

Here Are Some Examples of Promises:

- To myself: I promise to make time to exercise at least three times weekly because my health matters to me.
- To my personal relationships: To be present for my family, I'll do my best to go offline on weekends.
- To the people who matter to me in my professional relationships: Whenever possible, I'll contribute to projects outside my normal responsibilities in an effort to collaborate with others, to learn, and to grow.
- To my future self: I'll learn all I can in my current role and will seek ways to overcome barriers so I can achieve my goal of starting my own business.

My promise to **myself**:

My promise to the people who matter to me in my **personal** relationships:

My promise to the people who matter to me in my **professional** relationships:

My promise to my future self (in regard to **aspirations**):

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Purpose

Your purpose defines you. It's a bold statement that summarizes your gifts and what you desire to achieve—your reason for being. Your purpose statement must align with what matters to you, be consistent with your core principles, and allow you to deliver on your promises. Allow time for reflection, and compose a draft or two. Begin to determine what truly resonates with you. Choose positive action words so your statement has power and energy. It doesn't need to be longer than a sentence or two.

Example:

Author's purpose statement:

"To use my strengths and experience to pay it forward by giving the gift that was given to me by all the great leaders in my life."

Purpose Statement Consideration Questions

What makes me unique?

What do I do? What will I do?

Whom do I aim to serve? What are their needs?

What is my desired outcome? What legacy do I want to leave?

My Purpose Statement

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Congratulations!

You've identified your personal, professional, and aspirational core principles, determined the promises you're committed to making to yourself and others, and crafted your purpose statement. Your personal brand is taking shape.

When you visualize your **principles, promises, and purpose**, you breathe life into them.

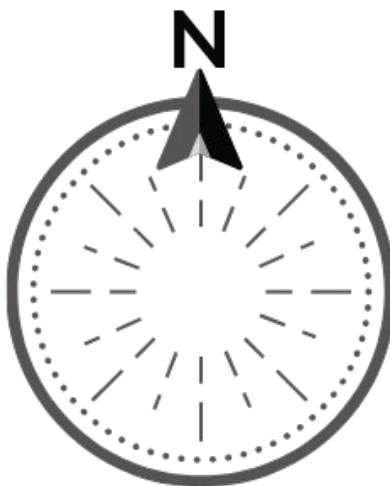
The **Venn diagram** is a tool you can keep referring to as a reminder of what you value and what you're working toward.

Your **promises** to yourself and the important people in your life will keep you focused and inspire others.

Your **purpose statement** will define your "why" from this point forward.

All six brand attributes, when authentically demonstrated, keep you facing in the direction of what matters.

They're a compass pointing to your **True North**.



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Experiences Reflection: Micro Moments

The interactions you have in your personal and professional relationships define how people feel about you. They also tell others how you feel about them. We naturally gravitate toward people who provide consistent and positive experiences.

Experiences are made up of small interactions, the ones I call micro moments. The micro moments are the day to day interactions with others that occur without much thought—like when you leave home in the morning, or return home after work, when you pass a colleague in the hallway, when you run into someone at the coffee shop, or say hello (or not) to a neighbor when you grab your mail. They add up to create a picture of you. Consider how you behave in your micro moments, when you're on autopilot.

These profound moments happen less often but can have a more lasting impact. These times in your life stand out as pivotal if you show up for them as your whole self, or, conversely, if you don't show up and end up missing an opportunity to create a desired experience.

Consider Your **Personal** Micro Moments. Ask Yourself:

How am I perceived when I'm on autopilot?

Do the people most important to me know they're important through my regular interactions?

Consider Your **Professional** Micro Moments. Ask Yourself:

How am I perceived at work when I'm on autopilot?

Do the people most important to me at work know they're important through my regular interactions?

"Your brand is what others say about you when you're not in the room."

—Jeff Bezos



Experiences Reflection: Profound Personal Moments

Think About the Interaction You Consider to be a Specific, Profound Personal Moment.

Was this moment all I wanted it to be?

What were the circumstances that made it great or difficult?

What was important or memorable about it?

How do I feel about it now? How would I change that moment if I could?

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Experiences Reflection: Profound Professional Moments

Think About the Interaction You Consider to be a Specific Profound Professional Moment.

Was this moment all I wanted it to be?

What were the circumstances that made it great or difficult?

What was important or memorable about it?

How do I feel about it now? How would I change that moment if I could?

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Presence

Presence is all about how you show up. What you wear, what you do on social media, and the energy and emotion you bring to a situation all play a role in defining your presence. Like it or not, these factors contribute to the impression of your overall brand. People will form opinions about you based on your appearance—it's not about having designer clothing but about dressing appropriately for the situation. Your social media profile will tell others a lot about who you are and what you care about. But your energy and emotion will have the greatest impact on how your presence is perceived.



Think About How You Show up in a Professional Situation:

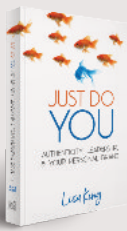
Am I fully present and prepared?	
Am I aloof and distracted?	
Do I dress appropriately for the situation?	
Do I behave in a way that shows my colleagues and leader I'm engaged?	

Think About How You Show up in a Personal Setting:

Am I fully present emotionally for those who matter most to me?	
Do I bring the energy I want to my relationships?	
Do I bring a positive mood when I enter a room?	
Do I behave in a way that shows my family and friends I'm engaged?	

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Presence



Think About Your Social Media Profiles:

Do my social profiles present a clear picture of me?	
Does my social presence match my professional presence?	
Does my social presence match my personal presence?	
Is there anyone in my personal or professional life whom I would not want to see some of my social media activity?	

Description

Now that you've done the hard work to define your purpose, promises, and principles, consider how you might want to reframe the way others describe you. What's your ideal description of yourself? To determine this, picture yourself in a situation where you're meeting someone new. You're standing next to someone who's important to you, and it's up to this person to make the introduction.

What is my preferred description? How do I want to be introduced?

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How Authentic Is Your Personal Brand?

In the following exercise, we'll examine all the aspects of your brand's authenticity through the lens of your personal and professional relationships. Let's begin.

First, refer to the "Who matters most to me" lists you created in Chapter 2, *Determine What Matters*. Consider the following exercises from their point of view.

The people who matter most to you will assist you in completing the charts on the following pages.

Who matters most to me in my personal life?

Who matters most to me in my academic or professional life?

For these exercises, you can use the following scoring system:

2

The attribute is clear and delivered consistently

1

The attribute is somewhat clear and sometimes delivered

0

The attribute is not clear and not delivered

Purpose

The essence of what I do for others

Circle your rating

My family members are aware of my gifts and what I am passionate about

My closest friends are aware of my gifts and what I am passionate about

My colleagues and leaders are aware of my gifts and what I am passionate about

My work closely aligns with my purpose

I am learning and doing things that move me toward fulfilling my purpose

Total

Promise

How I meet commitments and expectations

Circle your rating

I deliver on promises to my family

I deliver on promises to my friends

I deliver on promises at work

I deliver on my promises to myself

Total

"Authenticity is a collection of choices that we have to make every day. It's about the choice to show up and be real."

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How Authentic Is Your Personal Brand?

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Principles The embodiment of what I value deeply	Circle your rating
I'm clear about what I value	
My family is clear about what I value	
My friends are clear about what I value	
My colleagues/leaders are clear about my values	
Total	

Experiences The interactions I create	Circle your rating
My interactions with my family demonstrate my purpose and principles	
My interactions with my friends demonstrate my purpose and principles	
My interactions at work demonstrate my purpose and principles	
My interactions with my people I just met demonstrate my purpose and principles	
Total	

Presence The genuine representation of who I am	Circle your rating
I share the real me with my family	
I share the real me with my friends	
I share the real me at work	
I share the real me on social media	
Total	

Description The accurate description of who I am	Circle your rating
My family would describe me using the same words or phrases I would	
My friends would describe me using the same words or phrases I would	
My colleagues and leaders would describe me using the same words or phrases I would	
If I met someone briefly, they would get an accurate snapshot of who I am	
Total	

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How Authentic Is Your Personal Brand?

Now, Add Up all the Totals to Determine the Authenticity of Your Brand.

Totals	
Purpose	
Promise	
Principles	
Experiences	
Presence	
Description	
Total	

What Your Score Means

0-15	16-29	30-44	45-50
You've identified many areas that require your focus if you wish to lead with authenticity and purpose	Some areas of your life are aligned with your True North, but you've identified some gap areas that require your focus	You have clarity and have identified the areas you need to refine. You're well on your way!	Congratulations! You're living your brand and have perhaps identified a few areas to tweak.

Take a few moments to note these gaps or needs before you move on to the next chapter. This will come in handy later as you consider how you want to move forward.

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Brands & Why They Matter

PART TWO

Don't try to be all things to all people. Just do you.



Key Takeaways

- The Venn diagram you populated is a tool you can refer back to as a reminder of what you value and what you're working toward. It can be updated as your priorities change—for instance, as your family grows, as you change jobs, or as your interests evolve.
- Your promises to yourself and the other important people in your life should be shared and updated as circumstances change. Your commitments will keep you focused and your actions will inspire others. And your purpose statement defines your “why” from this point forward.
- The external-facing brand attributes — experiences, presence, and description — reflect how you show up. Others define the authenticity of your brand based on the experiences they have with you. Your presence in person and on social media create a picture of who you are and what you care about. The way others describe you is a clue. It's a way to step outside yourself and hear how others articulate who you are from their perspective. Only you can determine if they got it right or if you need to course correct so your external brand attributes match your inner motivations and what matters to you.
- When authentically demonstrated, your six brand attributes will keep you facing in the direction of what matters – a compass pointing to your True North. But, even if your brand meets all the criteria of authenticity, it won't resonate with everyone. If you are really being true to yourself, then you are bound to resonate with some and not others. Every day you make choices about brands — business and people—based on the experiences you have with them, the way they make you feel, and how connected you feel to what they stand for. Others will do the same as it relates to your brand.

Congratulations on Your Efforts Thus Far!

Consider how you're feeling. Before you move on, take a moment to think about what you've become more aware of through this process.