

CRISES AS A CATALYST 2.0

A Toolkit for Thriving 
Through Uncertainty

VALUES-ALIGNED
DECISION MAKING

*A workbook to support senior leaders with navigating crises
by aligning decisions with organizational values*

WORKBOOK 3

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PURPOSE

We are grateful you are here. This workbook was created for senior leaders and decision makers in nonprofit organizations and foundations who are navigating complexity, pressure, and real consequences for their communities.

We are living in a time when social impact work is under scrutiny, politicized, and at times, targeted. Journalists, educators, organizers, and public servants are being challenged simply for doing their jobs. The work of advancing equity and justice is not partisan but values-driven. It is rooted in dignity, lived experience, and the belief that people deserve safety, access, and opportunity.

Leadership at this moment cannot operate as business as usual. Because our decisions affect people's livelihoods, safety, access to resources, and time and energy, leading with equity and justice is not optional. It is a responsibility.

The day-to-day choices senior leaders make shape access to material resources, working conditions, voice, belonging, and long-term sustainability. If we are working toward a more just and humane world externally, our internal decisions must reflect that same vision.

This workbook invites you to examine how your everyday choices shape organizational culture, structure, and norms. It helps you identify where patterns may unintentionally exhaust, marginalize, or silence people, and how values-aligned decision-making can interrupt those patterns.

In times of crisis, values-aligned action transforms decision-making from reactive to intentional. It allows you to move with clarity instead of fear and to build trust, shared responsibility, and long-term thriving.

THIS WORKBOOK IS FOR SENIOR LEADERS WHO ARE:

- Committed to ensuring that decisions reflect their values
- Interested in embodying organizational commitments in daily practice
- Seeking greater alignment between stated beliefs and lived behaviors
- Working to align internal culture with external equity commitments
- Navigating crisis and wanting to lead with steadiness and integrity

Values alignment is not only about what we believe. It is about how we behave, especially under pressure.

What We Mean by Values-Aligned Action

Values-aligned action means making choices, shaping behaviors, and designing policies that clearly reflect commitments to racial equity, belonging, and justice.

When leaders act from their values:

- Decisions feel coherent rather than contradictory
- Priorities feel clearer
- Staff experience integrity between words and actions
- Trust increases

Values alignment strengthens transparency and shared accountability. It allows leaders to explain not only what was decided, but why that decision reflects organizational commitments. It also creates healthier disagreement. Conversations become grounded in shared values rather than personal preference or positional authority.

Values-aligned leadership requires noticing when you are operating from habit, urgency, or fear, rather than intention. It requires reflection and adjustment.

In practice, values alignment means:

- Slowing down before major decisions
- Naming the values guiding the choice
- Considering equity impacts
- Communicating the rationale clearly
- Following through in ways that reinforce trust

FIVE CORE PRACTICES FOR VALUES-ALIGNED ACTION

01 VALUE CHECK-IN

Begin meetings by naming one value that will guide decisions or interactions. Invite others to share theirs.

02 SLOW DECISION PAUSE

Before significant decisions, ask:

- Which value is guiding this choice?
- How will that value be visible in the outcome?

03 EQUITY IMPACT SCAN

Ask:

- Who benefits?
- Who is burdened?
- Whose perspective is missing?
- What adjustment would increase equity?

04 SCENARIO REFLECTION

After a decision, ask:

- Where did I act in alignment?
- Where could I bring more intention next time?

05 ALIGNMENT JOURNALING

At the end of each week, reflect briefly:

- One moment of alignment.
- One moment, inviting greater awareness.

A MONTHLY RHYTHM FOR PRACTICE

WEEK	FOCUS	SIMPLE PRACTICES	REFLECTION PROMPT
1	Ground in Values	Identify one or two values that will guide your month. Share them with your team or post them visibly.	Why do these values matter right now?
2	Practice Alignment	Choose one daily behavior that reflects your values.	How did this behavior influence my leadership?
3	Reflect and Adjust	Review recent decisions.	Where did alignment feel strong? Where did urgency override intention?
4	Recommit	Name one commitment to carry forward and one pattern to release.	How will I hold myself accountable next month?

Ongoing Integration

Use these prompts regularly:

- What patterns am I noticing in my crisis decision-making?
- Where am I leading from fear rather than clarity?
- What practice sustains my alignment?
- What relationship or decision needs repair or follow-up?

*NOTES:

Values-aligned leadership is not about perfection. It is about coherence. It is the practice of ensuring that how you lead under pressure reflects the world you are trying to build.

When leaders act from values:

- Trust strengthens
- Culture activates
- Long-term change becomes possible

Crisis will test alignment. It can also deepen it.

THRIVING INTENTION STATEMENT

Complete this sentence:

In times of crises, I choose to lead with alignment and purpose by showing up as _____.