

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO

I'm Not a Robot: How to Human Better in an AI World

Carrie Spaulding, PCC

How to Use this Resource

I'm thrilled to offer you this resource to help you practice and deepen what you learned in our time together! Before you jump in, here are a few things to keep in mind as you go:

❖ **Share your experience and stay in touch.**

I love to hear your stories of how you're applying my ideas—and what the impact is. If you have experiences, stories, and wins to share, don't hesitate to reach out.

❖ **Respect printing, sharing, and copyright rules.**

What I've shared with you in this program is an important part of my life's work! I want to offer you clear guidelines for its use.

As a Converge attendee, you are welcome to print one copy of this booklet for your own use.

No part of this handout, including images or text, in whole or in part, may be otherwise copied, modified, reused, shared, published, or distributed, by hard copy or virtually, without personalized written permission from me, Carrie Spaulding.

If you share your experience and/or my ideas (online or offline), please be sure to share my name (and tag me/link to me, if online).

Thank you for respecting my work.

❖ **Let me know how I can further support you.**

If you would like my help in going deeper with these ideas, bringing them to your organization, or putting them into practice, I'll be delighted to hear from you. You'll find my contact information on the last page.



ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO

Select all images with a
human



VERIFY

I'M NOT A ROBOT:

HOW TO HUMAN BETTER IN AN AI WORLD

Carrie Spaulding, PCC

© Carrie Spaulding 2025

Whether you see AI as an exciting opportunity or a problematic Pandora's box, it's here. And whether you are enthusiastic or reluctant about embracing AI, it's natural to go through tremendous growing pains as we grapple with a massive shift in the way we—and our clients and colleagues—work and live.

As coaches and leaders in a rapidly evolving world, we operate in an environment of relentless change. How can we help ourselves (and those we serve) to develop in future-ready ways? How can we become more adaptable, creative, and resilient? How do we prepare to thrive in a landscape we can't yet fully envision?

As humans, we don't get to choose our moment. We do get to decide how to *meet* the moment.

Foundations of this Work

On January 1, 2018, I set out on what was to be a one-year nomadic adventure living all over the United States. It turned out to be a much longer journey.

I'm often asked how and why I started and continue this bold venture. I've spent the last several years translating the insights of that "how" and "why" into experiences and tools for the people I coach, teach, and speak to.

**BE WHO YOU ARE.
DO WHAT YOU'RE HERE FOR.
VENTURE BOLDLY FORWARD.**

© Carrie Spaulding 2025

My overarching mission is to help you **be who you are, do what you're here for, and venture boldly forward** in your work and life.

VENTURE BOLDLY: To risk a daring undertaking / journey with willingness, courage, and (ever-increasing) confidence

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO

*As humans, we don't get to choose our moment. We do get to ask ourselves:
How will I meet this moment? How will I prepare myself to meet the next one?*

As an improviser, I want you to benefit from the skills and concepts of **improvisation**, whether or not you ever set foot on a stage.

As a visual artist, I want you to get all the enormous benefits and skills that come from beginning, rekindling, or deepening a **creative practice**, in whatever form that takes.

As a nomad, I want you to launch your own **nomad-inspired experiments** from right where you are, so that you can gain many of the benefits and skills that come from such an adventure without actually setting out on one.

My greatest goal is for you to have greater **access** to the benefits of these insights and methodologies, **permission** (from yourself) to become who you want to be and do what you're here for, and some **tools** to help you to venture boldly forward.

Are you ready? Fasten that metaphorical seatbelt. It's time to hit the road!

Venturing Boldly Forward in an Ever-Changing, Increasingly Automated World

If you're feeling daunted by the prospect of the future, it's understandable! As humans at this time, we are integrating monumental changes. The picture of our lives and careers that we once had in our heads is likely quite different from the new reality.

We're moving forward even as the ground underneath us shifts. We can't see what's around the bend, and yet we know we need to be ready for it. We may feel like we're locked in on a ride we didn't choose!

What's more, as we move through a rapidly changing landscape, we're bombarded with messages—some of them quite harsh and unnuanced—about how we should respond to the world we're navigating.

We exist in a context that includes **external and systemic obstacles and inequities**. We also may be subject to **true constraints**.

When venturing boldly forward, it's important to recognize and acknowledge these external obstacles and true constraints that are part of our reality, while doing what we can to remove any **inner obstacles** that we put on *ourselves*.

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO

The Whole Reality

My improv-grounded, nomad-tested concept of the Whole Reality can be incredibly useful in helping us navigate a complex and everchanging world. This concept acknowledges that:

- Reality is complex, vast, and partly unknowable.
- The whole truth is often complicated and messy, and rarely absolute.
- Trying to squash or deny part of the reality creates conflict and disintegration within you and in your relationships with others and with the world.
- I feel, think, want, and experience many things at the same time.
- Both (or all) parts can coexist. We can allow all parts of the truth to be.
- Choosing one thing doesn't require denying the existence, validity, or importance of the other.
- Each part of your/our experience is real—so we're going to treat it like it's real.

I feel
this
way...

I value
x...

I'm
showing
up like
this...



I also feel
this way.

I also
value y.

I'm also
showing
up like
this...

Your inquiry into your relationship with AI is a portal into deeper empathy, inclusion, belonging, and awareness and embrace of the diversity that surrounds you.

Reflect:

Take inventory of some aspects of your internal Whole Reality as it relates to an AI world by completing the following sentences.

In an AI world,...

- ❖ I'm feeling...
- ❖ I'm thinking...
- ❖ I worry...
- ❖ I wish...
- ❖ I hope...
- ❖ I plan to...
- ❖ I won't...

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO

Keys to Help Us Human Better in an AI World



One of the most powerful steps you can take to future-ready yourself is to get crystal-clear on what you're here to contribute, what you bring with you to that effort, and what motivates you. Then, you can orient yourself, take action, and upskill accordingly.

Getting to the core of your contribution requires you to look beyond job titles and responsibilities and consider on a more fundamental level what *drives* everything you do.

With that integrated awareness, you can find ways to pour your purpose into every step you take, and use that clarity of contribution to evaluate and pursue possibilities.

Here are some things *not* to do: ignore your values; ignore your intuition; or react to what it seems like everyone else is doing, while disregarding your own knowing.

Making the time and space to self-assess and set your compass is one of the best investments you can make in a complex, shifting world.

The clearer you are on the point of view and the "why" and "what" you're bringing to your life and your work, the better you will be able to spot and seize opportunities to channel them into, the more energy you'll have for the work ahead of you, and the more resilient and resourceful you'll be through bumps in the road.

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO

Reflect:

- ❖ What do you actually, authentically, deeply care about?
- ❖ What core values drive you?
- ❖ Consider the projects you've cared most about, and those achievements, contributions, or insights you've been most recognized for. What are the commonalities and patterns you see among them? What mattered to you about them? What human skills helped you succeed with them?
- ❖ What point of view, experience, and skills do you bring?
- ❖ What problems do you want to help solve, or questions do you want to help answer?
- ❖ What do you stand for?

Sign up for it.

Risk is inherent in the human experience. Whether we venture boldly forward or not, we are taking risks. When we block ourselves from venturing boldly forward, we risk keeping ourselves stuck and stagnant, not experiencing the growth and fulfilment we want, and not making the contribution we could make. The wise, brave, realistic question becomes: **Which risk do I choose?** We can think of the risks we consciously choose as **Right Risks**.

Signing up for it means that we recognize the risks of getting in the game and taking bold action, and we are willing to “yes, and” those risks and take action anyway.

Signing up for it also means accepting our current Whole Reality, and deciding to venture forward wholeheartedly. Imperfect though it may feel, this is your time. These are your people. This is your place. **This is it.**

We are on this planet for such a little while, and this is the time we've got. Do what matters NOW.

Even if you can only carve out tiny pockets of your day to drive forward what you view as your most essential contributions, that counts and it matters.

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO

FUTURE-PROOF FUTURE-READY YOURSELF: To intentionally develop, stretch, and disrupt yourself for continuous growth, so you can evolve and flourish in an ever-changing landscape and unknown future

Double Down on Soft Skills

How can we prepare ourselves for an unknown future, while engaging fully in the present?

One key is to double down on the very human soft skills that are evergreen and ever-essential. In an AI era and a context of global conflict and change, with hybrid and remote workers collaborating across distances, soft skills are more important than ever.

The great news is that the most vital soft skills you and your organization need to thrive in an AI world can be learned and practiced. Upskilling to “human better” can help you thrive as you meet today’s challenges and prepare for the unknown future.

When you invest in these skills, you’re not only increasing your abilities today; you are also weaving a “safety net” by investing in key skills as the world continues to change.

Reflect:

Look at the list of skills below.

1. ★ Put a star next to the skills that you think are already well-developed strengths in you.
2. Underline the skills that you think are least developed in you.
3. On the blank lines, add any skills that are missing that you think should be on the list.
4. Now, circle the 2-4 skills you want to focus on developing and using in the coming year. (This may include skills that you identified as well-developed and skills that you think are least developed!)
5. For each skill, jot down some ideas for steps you could take to develop them.

adaptability

flexibility

resilience

resourcefulness

empathy

relationship building

communication

collaboration

creativity

innovation

curiosity

problem solving

critical thinking

learning orientation

judgment

decision-making

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO



KEY #2

STRETCH:

**Practice
making bold
moves in small,
everyday ways.**

© Carrie Spaulding 2025

When you see someone making big bold moves, what you *don't* see is that they've built the competencies to do that by taking steps out of their comfort zone again and again.

Courage is a skill you can practice!

To be sure, our confidence and our sense of resilience increase with experience and success. And yet, taking the leaps that will *lead* to experience and success requires a certain degree of confidence and trust in our resilience!

How do we handle this conundrum? How can we develop confidence and resilience when we haven't yet racked up a lot of experience and successes?

The key is to DECIDE to [stretch](#), develop, & self-disrupt voluntarily, intentionally, and safely to foster your expansion. Get out of your comfort zone on purpose, often, and with adequate scaffolding.

Choosing to proactively engage in these practices can help us build our confidence and resilience from right where we are, and make ourselves future-ready—or at least future-readier!

Reflect:

- ❖ In what areas would you like to be more bold?

ICF CONVERGE

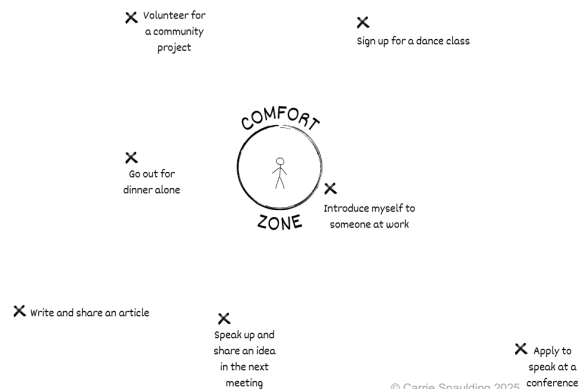
OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO

Exercise

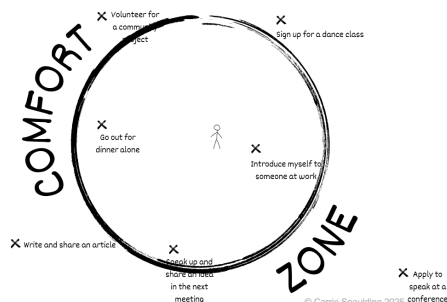
1. Get a piece of paper and something to write with. In the middle of the paper, draw yourself inside a circle. This is your comfort zone.



2. Jot down some ideas for “small” ways you could step outside your comfort zone. (They may seem small, yet feel big to you!) Plot an X and write the step closer to or further from your comfort zone, depending on how far out of your comfort zone it is. You may wish to draw a little doodle to accompany each action item! **Note that these action steps do not need to have anything to do with your work in order to help you build competencies that will pay off in your career!** Bold moves in any area will help you expand in ways that will ripple into other areas of life.



3. In the coming weeks, work on taking some of these steps! After you’ve taken some of them (perhaps some more than once), you’ll find that your comfort zone has grown!



ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO



KEY #3

Develop your spontaneous responsiveness skills.

© Carrie Spaulding 2025

Learning, practicing with, and applying the basic principles and skills of **spontaneous responsiveness**, which are rooted in improvisation, can help you support yourself in venturing boldly forward into the unknown. When we practice spontaneous responsiveness, we learn to build on the current reality as it continuously shifts and emerges, and to “yes, and” the gifts that are available to us in each moment.

The first rule of improvisation is to say yes. Saying yes means to **accept** all **offers**. An **offer** is any information that is available to us from any person (including ourselves) or from our environment. Offers may be **verbal/sonic**, **physical**, and/or **energetic**. Offers from ourselves come in the form of thoughts, somatic experiences, and intuition.

To **accept** an offer means to take it in and incorporate it as true (not necessarily as the WHOLE truth—rather, as a real and relevant *part* of our whole [and/or shared] reality). Accepting doesn't mean agreeing, endorsing, supporting, or taking an offer as “marching orders.”. It simply means recognizing it, taking it in, and incorporating it as part of reality.

In improvisation, we practice a huge number of skills that help us human better in an AI world. Some of these include taking risks safely; embracing the unknown; adapting; assuming, seeing, and seizing opportunities everywhere; processing the world and being present with the Whole Reality; and engaging and belonging.

Developing these skills and understanding the core concepts can be major assets in helping you human better in an ever-changing world, as you learn to engage more effectively in the daily improvisation that is your life and work! Practicing these competencies will help you become more confident, courageous, and resilient. The adaptability, creative thinking, collaboration, listening, and embodied presence you'll gain are game-changers.

Reflect:

- ❖ What could be different for you if you were more confident in your spontaneous responsiveness skills? Where could these skills help you?
- ❖ How can you say “yes, and” to your current Whole Reality?

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO



Most humans don't tap into all of our resources. A creative practice can help you access more parts of your personal “toolkit” so that you can live and work with more vitality and resourcefulness. In fact, a creative practice is one of the most effective ways to develop the essential soft skills we’re exploring.

Your creative practice may involve visual art, gardening, cooking, music, writing, or something else. Do not allow time scarcity or a belief that you’re not creative to lead you to miss out on this superpower, which is for *everyone*.

A creative practice...

- helps you tune into and enhance intuition; deepen self-awareness; and increase innovation, creativity, ideation, insight, and authenticity in every part of your life and work.
- can be the “glue” that helps you process, synthesize, integrate, and ideate about all of the other areas of your life.
- is a place in which you can have total autonomy, learn to hear yourself and your voice, release perfectionism, and deal effectively with your inner critic.
- can help you to deepen your relationships with yourself, others, and the world
- may lead you to discover parts of yourself you didn't know existed, and solve problems and innovate in ways you couldn't have predicted.

Critically, a creative practice can help us to reduce burnout and increase the joy, play, and fun we have in our lives. This replenishes us and makes us more likely to be fully resourced when we return to our work, families, communities, and other areas. Increasing joy and play in your life will enhance everything else you do!

Reflect:

- ❖ Brainstorm creative practices you could begin, rekindle, or deepen, and first steps you could take.

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO

- ❖ If you already have an active creative practice, consider how it helps you do each of the following. Taking inventory of this checklist can help you “connect the dots,” deepening and expanding applications and benefits that you may not have previously recognized. We’re more likely to spot and further opportunities that we’re looking for.

- ☐ Play for the sake of play, joy, pleasure, and fun.
- ☐ Experiment & engage with autonomy.
- ☐ Activate the inner critic and practice anti-perfectionism.
- ☐ Stretch outside your comfort zone in a structured context.
- ☐ Use your voice; express authentically.
- ☐ Consider and explore multiple perspectives and/or approaches.
- ☐ Process externally, and often non-verbally.
- ☐ Drop into deep presence, attunement, & attention.
- ☐ Develop your relationship with yourself (which powers everything).
- ☐ Explore ideas, think critically, & solve problems.
- ☐ Hone your intuition.
- ☐ Connect to friends & family.
- ☐ Connect to a wider community.
- ☐ Connect to and engage actively with your world.
- ☐ Be seen, connect, contribute, & inspire.
- ☐ Discover and embrace parts of yourself you never knew existed!

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO



Connection is essential to wellbeing, growth, career success, and sustainable change. The increasingly uncanny simulation of connection that AI agents provide, as well as the reduced need for interaction due to AI assistance with many tasks, have the potential to increase isolation and decrease connection with other people, with our physical world, and even with ourselves.

As you venture boldly forward and look towards future-proofing yourself, it's essential to develop three key relationships:

- your relationship with yourself
- your relationship with other people
- your relationship with the place / your environment and the wider world

Though most of us are accustomed to thinking of relationships mainly in terms of our relationships with other people, investing in and strengthening all three of these types of relationships will pay enormous dividends.

We learn and grow in connection. As you make your plans to future-ready yourself, consider how you will incorporate community and collaboration into your learning and growth plan. Proactively build in connection that is **real-time, direct, collaborative, and expansive**.

For each type of relationship:

- Ask regularly: *Is there anything I can do for you?*
- Be you, and be out there.
- Shine your light and own your magic.
- Be seen.
- Share in ways that are aligned with your wellbeing.

Reflect:

- ❖ What is one experiment you could try THIS WEEK to strengthen your relationship
...with yourself?
...with other people?
...with your environment, place, or world?

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO



As AI grows more and more effective at simulating human interaction, we may find ourselves allotting less time and energy to the less efficient, less predictable, more vulnerable process of fully embodying and “sitting with” ourselves; connecting and collaborating with other humans; and engaging directly with the outside world. In the process, we may become alienated from some of the experiences that make us human.

Many things can be accomplished more quickly, more independently, and in some cases with greater effectiveness, with the use of AI. We may find ourselves using AI for many tasks that we previously completed without assistance. Creating on our own has rapidly become optional. If we’re going to wrestle with questions and projects without the help of artificial intelligence, it may mean signing up for discomfort, struggle, and flawed outcomes.

What’s the Point?

Why should we bother doing things that we can use AI to do faster and better—or “better”? Why should we dwell in the discomfort of doing things that we can’t do with perfect competence? Why should we mess with a messy, imperfect world?

Reflect on what you gain from space to think, play, and create without non-human intervention or collaboration.

No one is going to make you do these things, or make the decision to do them for you.

Deciding to double down on your humanity—which can be vulnerable, time-consuming, and humbling—will give you an edge where it comes to the “soft” skills that are evergreen and ever-essential. What’s more, over time, your insistence on making space for Humaning Harder will contribute to your wellbeing, connectedness, and vitality as a human being.

These practices can help us lean into and amplify our humanity:

- Block out Analog Hours.
- Carve out AI-Free Think/Work/Play Sessions.
- Engage your senses with intention and collaboration.
- Experience awe.
- Feel your feelings.
- Unleash your enthusiasm, wonder, and joy.
- Embody yourself.
- Feel your empathy expanding, and channel it into action.

ICF CONVERGE

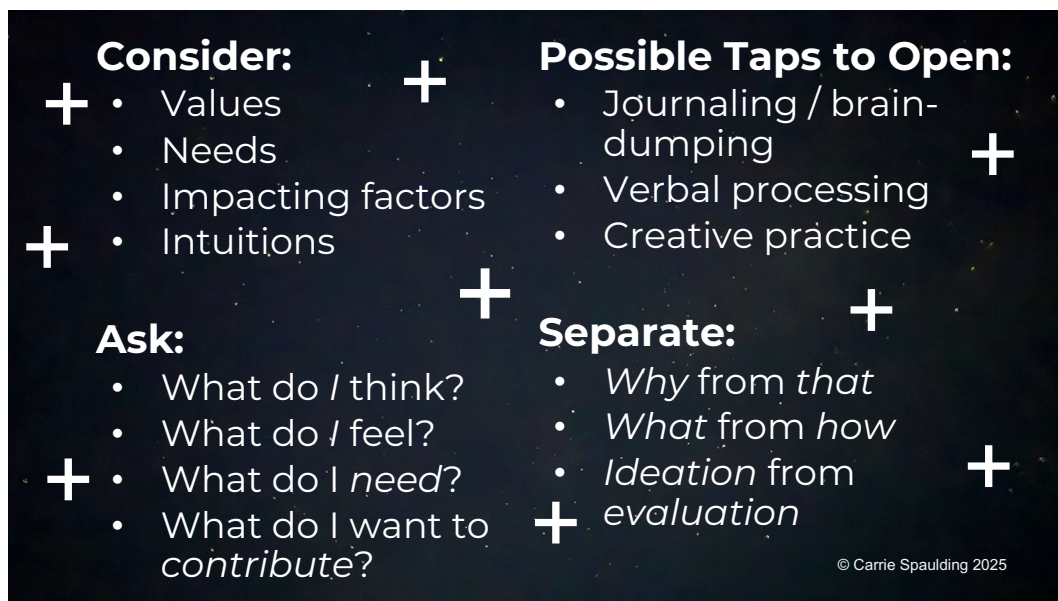
OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO

A Key Practice: Audit Your Whole Reality

A Whole Reality Audit allows you to check in with all of the truths you're managing and "offers" you're taking in, so that you can reorient your map and move forward.

Signals that a Whole Reality Audit is indicated could include:

- Big feelings (positive or negative)
- Overwhelm
- Disengagement
- Resentment
- Procrastination and avoidance
- Worry



Exercise:

When out and about, practice engaging directly with your environment with these prompts:

I notice...
I wonder...
I remember...
I could...
I want to...
I feel...
I wish I could...
I am...



This exercise will help you to be active (not passive) in your everyday life, collaborate with your immediate environment, integrate your internal and external worlds, (re)discover and access different parts of yourself, recognize opportunities, encourage your creativity and intuition, and double down on your humanity.

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO



Reflect and Apply

Take a moment to synthesize and crystallize your learning, and set some intentions to move forward!

Reflect:

- ❖ What was the most interesting and/or powerful discovery you made in this program?

Set an intention:

- ❖ How will you apply what you learned and discovered to your coaching and leadership?
- ❖ How will you apply what you learned and discovered to your other parts of your life?

ICF CONVERGE

OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO

A Few Final Words of Encouragement



It's easy to get overwhelmed in a time of so much upheaval. On a daily basis, we must face the uncertainty of what's to come, the opportunity and possibility we want to seize, the grief of what's already gone, and the awareness that the pace of change is unrelenting.

As we take steps to human better in an AI world, we'll go further and faster when we make space for our Whole Reality, and all the complexities that accompany this undertaking.

I remember so clearly the moment I set out on my nomadic adventure. I simultaneously had no idea what lay ahead of me—the people I'd meet, the experiences I'd have, the way my relationship with myself would blossom—and at the same time I knew, in my gut, that I was exactly where I was meant to be, on the path I was meant to be traveling. I can't imagine my life without everything that has come about as a result of this adventure.

This is what I want for you. Not to become a nomad—though I will cheer you on so enthusiastically if that's what you decide to do!—rather, to **venture boldly forward on your own path, from right where you are.**

Use the keys I've shared to unlock a deeper level of resourcefulness, confidence, presence, and impact as you say yes to yourself, your time, and your world. Embrace yourself and the context in which you find yourself, and future-ready yourself with so much care and intention that your sense of resilience and groundedness grow with each step you take.

Be who you are. Do what you're here for. Venture boldly forward.

I'm here to help if you need me. I'm cheering you on!



Carrie Spaulding, PCC
The Thirtysomething Coach®
[Coach](#), [Speaker](#), [Facilitator](#),
[Educator](#), [Writer](#), [Artist](#), [Human](#)

carrie@carriespaulding.com
www.carriespaulding.com
[@carriespaulding](#)
www.linkedin.com/in/carriespaulding