

INCREASING INTELLECTUAL JOY THROUGH THE SEVEN *As*

Reflective Questions for Work and Life

WORKBOOK

A companion piece to
"The Power of Intellectual Joy for
the Future of Women at Work"

ABOUT MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY'S INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP RESEARCH PAPER SERIES

The Institute for Women's Leadership at Marquette University sponsors white papers to advance and translate academic research about gender, equity, and leadership to the wider world. IWL white paper topics range from timely to enduring issues and are designed to further discussion, transform organizations, and provoke deeper conversation about today's most important issues. This research is supported by the IWL Advisory Council.

This paper's research originated in Spring 2022, when its author was an IWL Faculty Fellow, and was completed in 2023.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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INCREASING INTELLECTUAL JOY

Reflection Questions for Work and Life

WORKBOOK

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ABOUT

The following workbook includes two approaches to increasing intellectual joy in a person's life. In the work that follows, users will be asked to:

1. Discern and distill their experiences of intellectual joy, set specific goals around each of the Seven As (Autonomy, Advocacy, Access, Amplification, Authenticity, Accountability, & Adoration), and use specific goals to take steps to increase joy for them individually in their lives.
2. Use the Seven As to reflect on and work towards leading with, working towards, and living with intellectual joy with others in an organization, whatever their role may be.

DESCRIPTION

The Seven As are intended to be starting points for thinking about the power and potential to activate intellectual joy in a person's own life and workplace. They are also intended to facilitate discussion in organizations about how best to lead with an eye toward cultivating and affirming intellectual joy. The questions below would likely be most action-oriented if people can think of specific examples from their own lives, consider creating realistic and time-stamped goals to work toward increasing intellectual joy in relation to the items below, consider when each A has or hasn't been present over a certain time frame (the last week, month, or year), and use the questions both for individual and group reflection.

When working towards increasing joy in life through these Seven As it is important to both:

- Reflect on when each A has or hasn't been present over a certain appropriate time frame (the last week, month, or year); and
- Create realistic and time-stamped goals to work toward increasing intellectual joy in relation to each A when possible.

Note: The Seven As and the following reflections and planning tools offer a starting point for individuals, organizations, or communities to think about real practical ways to increase intellectual joy. Certainly there are many other elements to intellectual joy—and there is space at the end of this workbook to explore additional elements of increasing the joy in life.



AUTONOMY

The ability for a person to be **self-directing and self-determining** to develop as a full and genuine person capable of **being trusted to make competent decisions**.

How and when are your actions or those of others...

- Self-directed? _____

- Trusted? _____

- Trustworthy? _____

- Respected? _____

What role does psychological safety play in your autonomy or that of others?

- _____
- _____
- How do psychologically safe spaces help trusting relationships flourish? _____

 - What can you do to help increase psychological safety? _____

 - What would it take for you or your workplace, or in another realm of your life, to grow in this way? _____

What challenges and opportunities are presented by thinking about autonomy in these ways?

- Challenges: _____

- Opportunities: _____



ADVOCACY

The **active work of reaching out** to others to promote talent, recognize skills, suggest advancement, and solicit feedback to solve problems. Active advocacy can help create a **culture of belonging**.

When and how have you...

- Advocated for another by reaching out to that person? _____

- » What were the results? _____

- » Why? _____

- Benefited from others actively advocating for you? _____

- » What were the results? _____

- » Why? _____

- Advocated for yourself?
» What were the results? _____

- » Why? _____

How might active advocacy promote a culture of belonging? _____

- What role, if any, do person-to-person feedback sessions play? _____

- What role, if any, might "person-to-belonging" observations play to increase active advocacy? _____

» Consider how people interact with each other.

- Who is included? _____

- Who is left out? _____

- What can you do to help? _____

How is active advocacy recognized in your workplace? _____

- How is this work acknowledged and rewarded in performance reviews and raises? _____

Who performs most of this active advocacy? _____

Receiving access to information and **being encouraged to contribute intellectually** in ways that shape knowledge, understanding, and deliberation, in organization or otherwise, is **crucial** for a person's and organization's intellectual joy.

How does increasing access help a person grow in their own knowledge and express themselves as a knower? _____

Who is granted access to information they need to do their work well or contribute with purpose to the organization? _____

• Who monitors access to information? _____

» How often should organizational leaders review who is granted access to which kinds of information? _____

• Whose voices (individual or positional) are absent but ought to be heard? _____

What are harmful kinds of intellectual gatekeeping that you or others experience? _____

• What does it feel like to be left out in this way? _____

What can be done to increase access appropriately in your life or organization? _____

• How might doing so be helpful beyond being good for individual people in organizations, communities, regarding social issues, and so on? _____





AMPLIFICATION

The activity of **raising the voice of oneself or another** is a conscious effort to **elevate undervalued or dismissed voices** to give them their appropriate regard and due.

When have you amplified someone else's ideas or a set of concerns, and what has resulted from that effort? _____

How might you or your organization(s) seek out opportunities to amplify voices not typically heard? _____

When have your ideas been amplified—in the past week, month, or year? _____

How might self-amplification, especially by people who might not experience their ideas or accomplishments as routinely valued, not only be received well but encouraged? _____

- What formal policies, procedures, and practices might encourage appropriate self-amplification? _____



AUTHENTICITY

Indicating an **alignment between a person's autonomously chosen values and her actions**, this concept is understood as a **measure of integrity** or being genuine. An inauthentic person will be hard-pressed to experience intellectual joy or seek to cultivate authenticity in others.

When do you feel like your most authentic self? _____

Bringing one's "full self" to work does not mean, for instance, that there are no boundaries; indeed, boundaries between different aspects of a person's life can be essential to being authentic in life.

What kinds of boundaries can be helpful to ensure authenticity at work or in your life? _____

What opportunities exist to encourage your own authenticity and that of others? _____

How do psychologically safe spaces foster authenticity? _____

How can workplaces encourage authenticity through diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives and commitments? _____

What barriers exist to encouraging authenticity in your workplace? _____

- What could be done to help break down those barriers? _____

- And what can you do, if anything, to help break down those barriers? _____



ACCOUNTABILITY

To hold people accountable for their actions in a positive way is to respect them as **authentic, autonomous selves** without them feeling inappropriately humiliated or punished. This accountability flourishes in **trustworthy and authentic organizations**.

How is accountability key to autonomy? _____

- Why is it important for a person to be held accountable for their ideas? _____

When does accountability seem negative or punitive in your own life or organization(s)? _____

What kinds of feedback practices foster trustworthiness between employees and their employers regarding accountability? _____

Since being held accountable often connotes a distinctly negative idea of being strongly criticized, which is certainly sometimes appropriate and warranted but often is not, what would it take to change this fear into something more productive? _____

When you have been held accountable or have held someone else accountable when making an error, do you think that the consequences have been proportionate to the error made? [Consider the research showing that women are punished far more than men for their errors.] _____

How can organizations best respond today to the increased desires of employees to hold themselves accountable, for better or worse, for their actions and organizational culture? _____



ADORATION

The recognition of people's **inherent dignity**, shown and appreciated through **micro-actions** on a regular and routine basis, affirms the value of people in ways that **increase individual and shared experiences of intellectual joy**.

What concrete actions do you or might you take upon yourself to show people that you value them on a regular basis? _____

How might an organizational culture be improved by thinking about adoration? _____

What does it feel like for you to be adored and valued in the ways indicated here? _____

How might actively listening to people's stories and valuing the ways they narrate their experiences help affirm their inherent dignity? _____

How can people know that they are being heard in actionable ways without collapsing into performative allyship or lip service on the part of those listening? _____

Consider inclusive and flexible workplace practices that promote the other six *As* noted above; how to foster a sense of belonging regardless of job title or position; and/or the roles of BRGs and ERGs within an organization.

How can organizational policies and procedures practically aim to live out adoration? _____

LEADING WITH INTELLECTUAL JOY

Consider the role that each *A* does or does not play in your unit, department, or organization.

Autonomy: _____

Advocacy: _____

Access: _____

Amplification: _____

Authenticity: _____

Accountability: _____

Adoration: _____

You may wish to consider the degree to which each *A* is or ought to be valued in your organization, and consider wherein lies the strengths of your organization with respect to each *A*.

Autonomy: _____

Organization's Strength(s) Rooted in Autonomy: _____

Advocacy: _____

Organization's Strength(s) Rooted in Advocacy: _____

Access: _____

Organization's Strength(s) Rooted in Access: _____

Amplification: _____

Organization's Strength(s) Rooted in Amplification: _____

Authenticity: _____

Organization's Strength(s) Rooted in Authenticity: _____

Accountability: _____

Organization's Strength(s) Rooted in Authenticity: _____

Adoration: _____

Organization's Strength(s) Rooted in Adoration: _____

How do you lead by example through each A in your organization and empower others in each?
Consider wherein lies the strengths of your organization with respect to each A.

Strengths through Autonomy as a Leader: _____

Challenges with Autonomy as a Leader: _____

Strengths through Advocacy as a Leader: _____

Challenges with Advocacy as a Leader: _____

Strengths through Access as a Leader: _____

Challenges with Access as a Leader: _____

Strengths through Amplification as a Leader: _____

Challenges with Amplification as a Leader: _____

Strengths through Amplification as a Leader: _____

Challenges with Amplification as a Leader: _____

Strengths through Authenticity as a Leader: _____

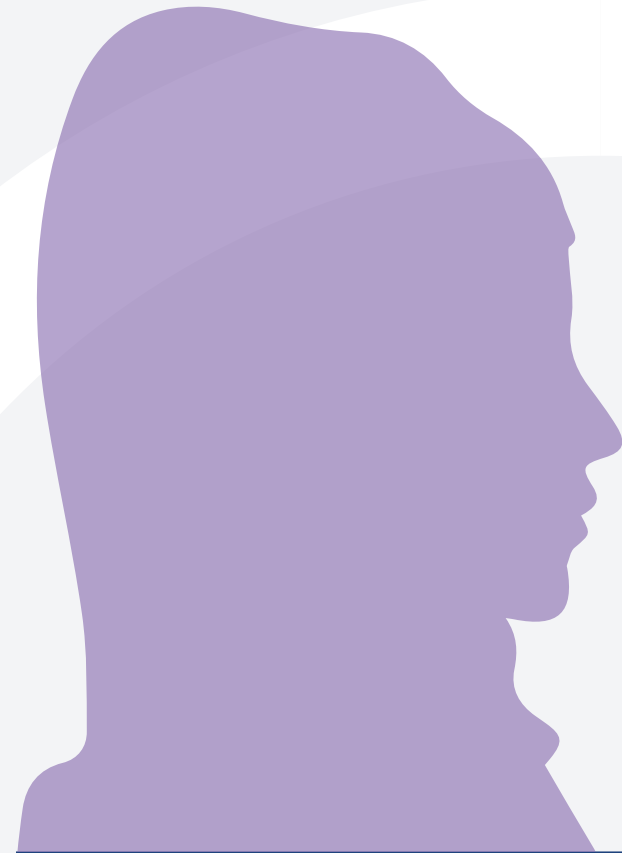
Challenges with Authenticity as a Leader: _____

Strengths through Accountability as a Leader: _____

Challenges with Accountability as a Leader: _____

Strengths through Adoration as a Leader: _____

Challenges with Adoration as a Leader: _____



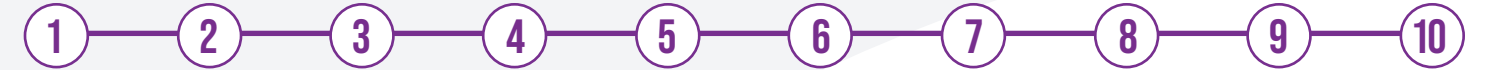
You may tailor the following sliding scales (0-10) to ask other leaders or employees to indicate where they think the organization or team lies with regard to each topic (below) or you may choose to use the Seven As to identify barriers and opportunities for individual and organizational growth (see next page).

Use the scale below, indicate your evaluation for each of the 7 As. A zero indicates non-existent and a 10 indicates that the A is truly embrace or enacted.

AUTONOMY

No Autonomy

Full Autonomy



ADVOCACY

No Advocacy

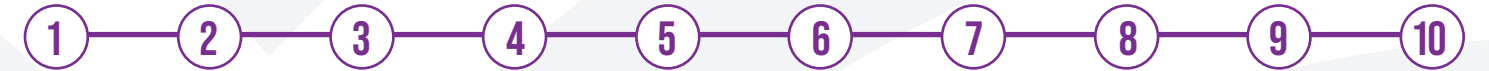
Full Advocacy



ACCESS

No Access

Full Access



AMPLIFICATION

No Amplification

Full Amplification



AUTHENTICITY

No Authenticity

Full Authenticity



ACCOUNTABILITY

No Accountability

Full Accountability



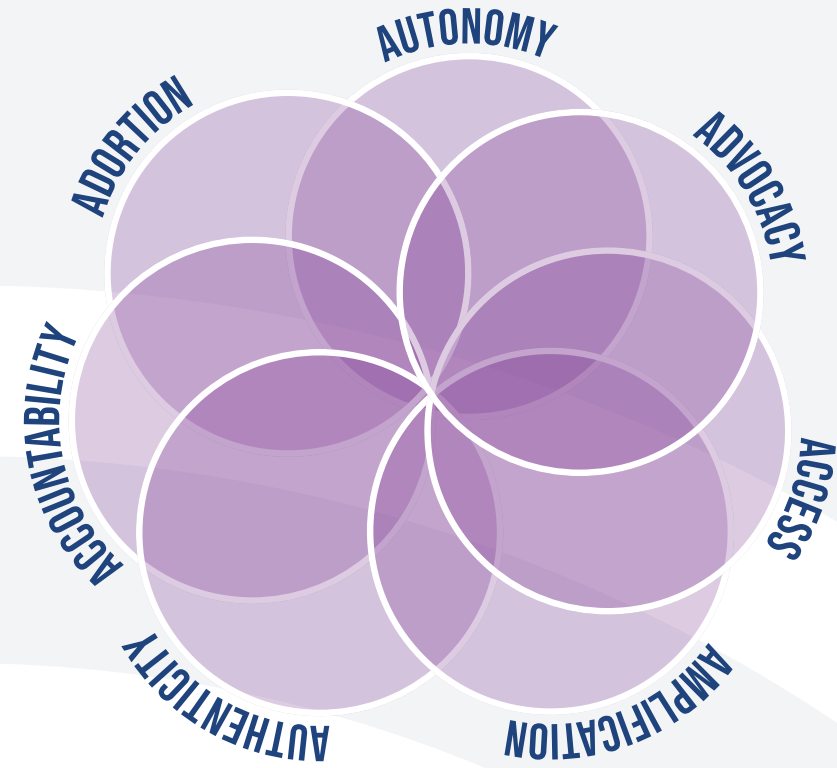
ADORATION

No Adoration

Full Adoration



Reflect on the 7 As and identify challenge and opportunities for individual growth as well as challenges and opportunities for organizational growth.



CHALLENGES TO INDIVIDUAL GROWTH:

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUAL GROWTH:

CHALLENGES TO ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH:

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH:

Additional reflection questions to journal around Leading with Intellectual Joy:

Reflect on where—and how—you have seen examples of an A, or each of the As, recently in your own life or work.

- What has it felt like?

- Where has an A been missing—and what was that A?

- » What have the consequences been when that A is missing:

- Who is harmed?

- Who is helped?

- What good might it do to focus on a specific A? _____

How can you increase intellectual joy for yourself and your [fellow] employees?

(Remember: An organizational leader might not hold a formal leadership title but can still influence change.)



WORKING TOWARDS INTELLECTUAL JOY

Consider the role that each A does or doesn't play in your own work experience—consider the degree to which each A is or ought to be valued in your work life.

	Role in Your Work Experience	Missing From Your Work Experience	How Would You Like It to Relate to Your Work Experience
Autonomy			
Advocacy			
Access			
Amplification			
Authenticity			
Accountability			
Adoration			

Reflect on the strengths and opportunities of each A at work for yourself.

Strengths through Autonomy: _____

Challenges with Autonomy: _____

Strengths through Advocacy: _____

Challenges with Advocacy: _____

Strengths through Access: _____

Challenges with Access: _____

Strengths through Amplification: _____

Challenges with Amplification: _____

Strengths through Amplification: _____

Challenges with Amplification: _____

Strengths through Authenticity: _____

Challenges with Authenticity: _____

Strengths through Accountability: _____

Challenges with Accountability: _____

Strengths through Adoration: _____

Challenges with Adoration: _____

At work, where/when you have experienced each A and where you have experienced barriers?

Places I Experience Autonomy: _____

Barriers to Autonomy I Experience:

Places I Experience Advocacy: _____

Barriers to Advocacy I Experience:

Places I Experience Access: _____

Barriers to Access I Experience:

Places I Experience Amplification: _____

Barriers to Amplification I Experience:

Places I Experience Authenticity: _____

Barriers to Authenticity I Experience:

Places I Experience Accountability: _____

Barriers to Accountability I Experience: _____

Places I Experience Adoration: _____

Barriers to Adoration I Experience: _____

You may also wish to consider where you have helped activate an A for yourself or others, or when you have seen others work with intellectual joy in mind to benefit you, someone else, or the organization as a whole: _____

- What has it felt like to experience these actions?

- What examples from your own experience are especially noteworthy?

- What barriers exist regarding intellectual joy in your workplace?

- What opportunities might exist for you at work to contribute to increasing intellectual joy?

LIVING WITH INTELLECTUAL JOY

Beyond work, consider how your intellectual joy is activated and increased.

Consider how each of the As below applies to different aspects of your life or to your life generally beyond work.

	What is Its Role in Your Life Experience?	Where is It Missing From Your Life Experience?	How Would You Like It to Relate to Your Life Experience?
Autonomy			
Advocacy			
Access			
Amplification			
Authenticity			
Accountability			
Adoration			

Reflect on where you have experienced each A outside of work and where you have experienced barriers. What barriers exist for you regarding intellectual joy in your life generally or non-work aspects of your life? What would it take to move yourself and others to experience more intellectual joy?

	Where/How I Experience Joy through...	People Who/ Resources that Helped Me Experience This...	Barriers to My Experience of Joy through...	How I Might Overcome this Barrier/People Who Helped Me Navigate this...
Autonomy				
Advocacy				
Access				
Amplification				
Authenticity				
Accountability				
Adoration				

Places I Experience Autonomy: _____

Barriers to Autonomy I Experience:

Places I Experience Advocacy: _____

Barriers to Advocacy I Experience:

Places I Experience Access: _____

Barriers to Access I Experience:

Places I Experience Amplification: _____

Barriers to Amplification I Experience:

Places I Experience Authenticity: _____

Barriers to Authenticity I Experience:

Places I Experience Accountability: _____

Barriers to Accountability I Experience: _____

Places I Experience Adoration: _____

Barriers to Adoration I Experience: _____

Where you have helped others experience intellectual joy? And what has that felt like for you?

When you have experienced intellectual joy for yourself? What examples from your own experience are noteworthy? _____

The Seven As explained here are intended to be starting points for an individual, organization, or community to think about real ways to increase intellectual joy. Certainly there are many other elements to intellectual joy.

Please use the space below for individual or shared reflection on what those elements may be—and they need not start with *A*.

ENGAGE. INSPIRE. TRANSFORM.

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