

Famous Female Artists

Planning for Success

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Sincere thanks to the Joan Mitchell Foundation, New York, NY for their publication, *Career Documentation for the Visual Artist: A Legacy Planning Workbook & Resource Guide* (2022). It has been an invaluable inspiration and resource in the creation of this work and for many artists, their loved ones, and estates.
<https://www.joanmitchellfoundation.org/guides>

Additional thanks to Nichole DeMent & Robin Arnitz for designing this SOLA publication.

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www.solaseattle.org

GRASS COCOON, 2018
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPH (WITH GRASS)



In the realm of creativity be fearless. Embrace and celebrate the peculiarities of your unique imagination. Also, put yourself in the way of inspiration, the better for it to find you.

Jeanne Simmons, 2025 SOLA Awardee
www.jeanneksimmons.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01 - 03

ABOUT SOLA & AWARDEES

04 - 12

FRAMING SUCCESS

13 - 21

GOALS

22 - 33

ACTION & ASSESSMENT

34 - 52

ARCHIVING & LEGACY

53 - 57

PERSISTENCE & CARE

59 - 63

RESOURCES

Famous Female Artists

Planning for Success

ABOUT US

SOLA stands for Support of Old Lady Artists. Founded in 2016 by internationally-acclaimed artist, Ginny Ruffner, the SOLA Award seeks to encourage and celebrate accomplished women artists whose work has not been sufficiently or widely recognized.

From 2017-2025, SOLA awarded \$129,000 in unrestricted monetary grants and additional recognition through the SOLA Awardee Video Spotlight series to women 60 and over who have dedicated 25+ years to their art careers. We additionally foster community and provide professional development and support to women artists of all ages across Washington in monthly online Community Calls, lectures & workshops.

SOLA
RECOGNIZING MATURE FEMALE ARTISTS IN WA

SOLA AWARDEES

2024 & 2025 AWARDEES

Jeanne Simmons, 2025	<i>pg. ii</i>
Jan Dove, 2024	<i>pg. 8</i>
Consuelo Soto Murphy, 2025	<i>pg. 25</i>
Karen Willenbrink-Johnsen, 2025	<i>pg. 27</i>
Lauren Grossman, 2024	<i>pg. 32</i>
Natalie Niblack, 2024	<i>pg. 33</i>
Caryn Friedlander, 2025	<i>pg. 36</i>
Cynthia Toops, 2025	<i>pg. 40</i>
Jan Hopkins, 2024	<i>pg. 47</i>
Ellen George, 2024	<i>pg. 52</i>

Accomplished
& mature
women artists
with 25+ years
experience.

2017-2023 AWARDEES

Janice Arnold, 2022	Blanca Santander, 2023
Susan Bennerstrom, 2020	Norie Sato, 2018
Gloria Bornstein, 2017	Barbara Sternberger, 2021
Mal Pina Chan, 2019	Polly Adams Sutton, 2022
Mary Coss, 2019	Tip Toland, 2018
Carol Gouthro, 2020	Gail Tremblay, 2022
Gail Grinnell, 2018	Mary Van Cline, 2021
Eva Isaksen, 2021	René Westbrook, 2023
Lisa Snow Lady, 2021	Linda Wolf, 2023
Ann Chadwick Reid, 2023	Nancy Worden, 2019
Joan Stuart Ross, 2022	

HOW TO USE THIS PLANNER

This notebook shares the artwork, tips, inspirations and some of the coolest things current SOLA Awardees have ever done, alongside worksheets and polka-dotted pages to inspire and support you towards greater success in the arts.

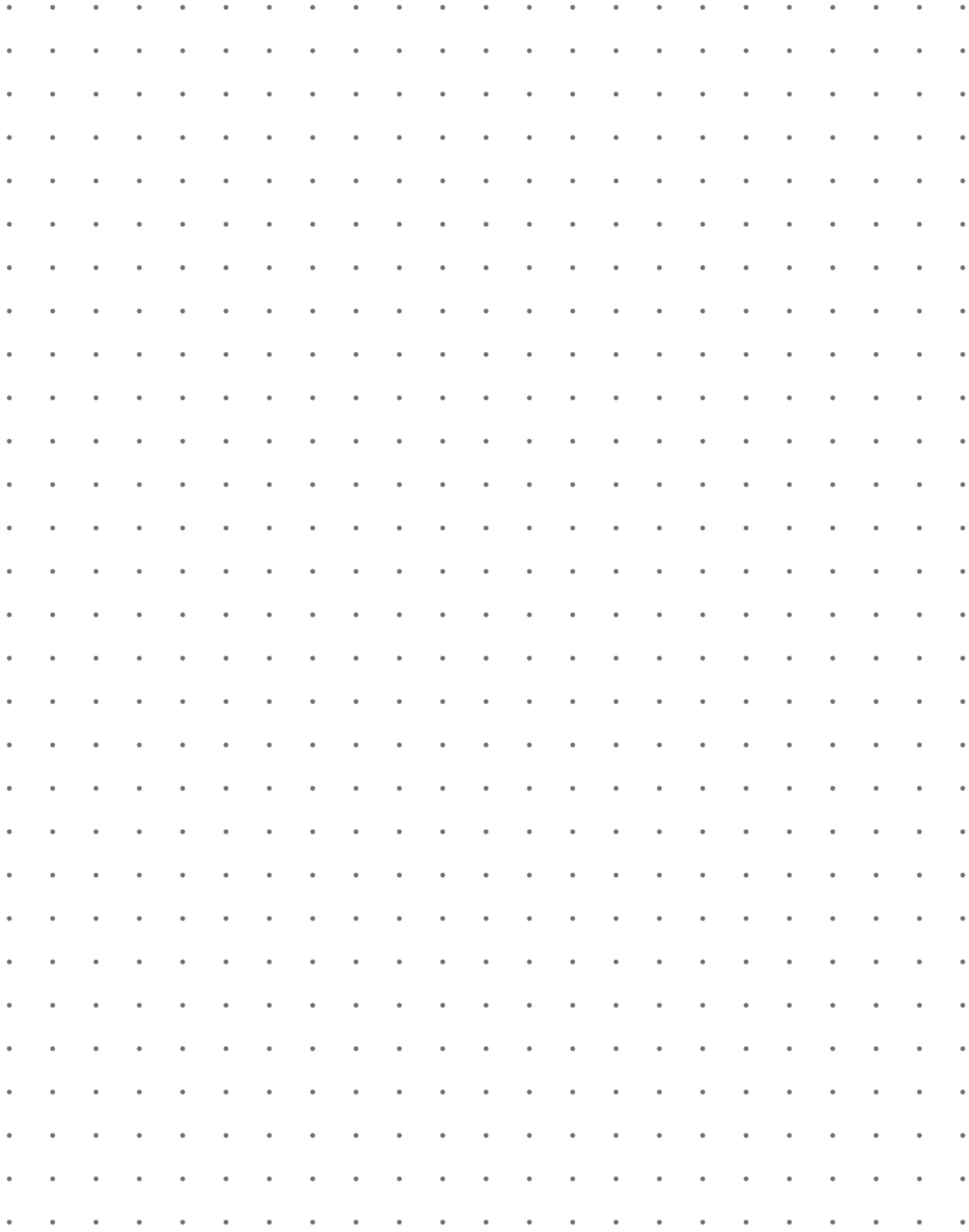
This planner is intended for use alongside the Joan Mitchell Foundation's *Career Documentation for the Visual Artist: A Legacy Planning Workbook & Resource Guide*, which can be downloaded via the Foundation's website.

Download this SOLA planner and find more free resources and info on our website: www.solaseattle.org/resources

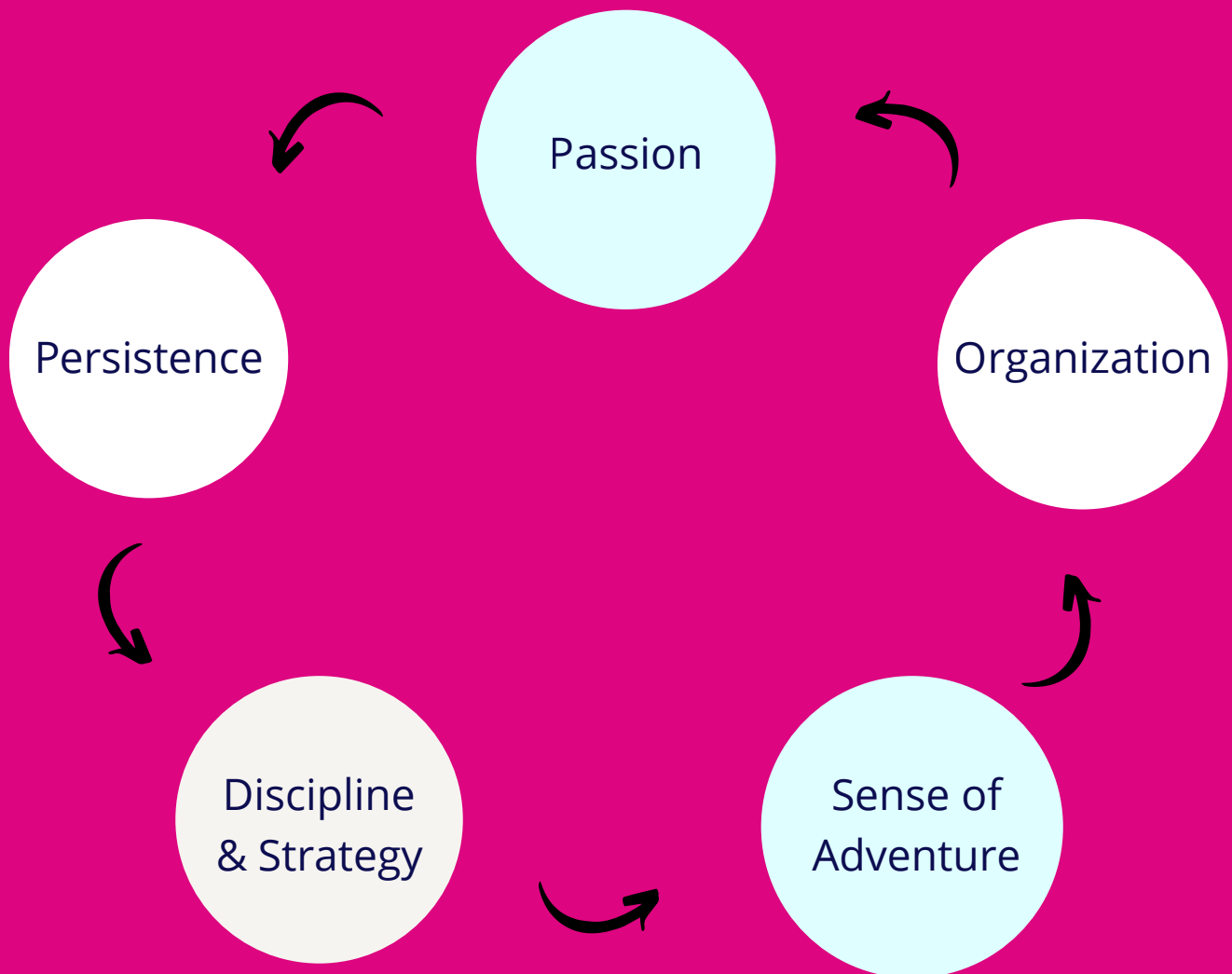
HERE'S TO YOUR SUCCESSFUL PLANNING!

Love,
SOLA

SSWWOONS



Planning for SUCCESS



Jan Dove, SOLA Awardee 2024
jandove.com



*Man With His
Mountain on
His Shoulders*
PIGMENT PRINT
ON PAPER,
17" X 22", 2017

Mindset of SUCCESS

Growth

Confidently Take Action,
Produce Work & Be In
Community

Learning

Learn to Promote, Be
Persistent & Purposeful,
Strategize for Success

Fear

Commit to Baby Steps,
SMART Goals & Build a
Network of Peers

***Comfort
Zone***

In Control, Stagnant



PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT

FOR EACH OF THE CATEGORIES BELOW, WRITE DOWN THINGS YOU ARE DOING WELL AND WHERE YOU NEED IMPROVEMENT. TAKE THE TIME TO REFLECT ON THESE, AND ADD WHERE YOU NEED HELP (I.E. TRAINING, TECHNOLOGY UPGRADE, PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT, ETC.)

CATEGORY	WHAT I'M DOING WELL	WHERE I NEED IMPROVEMENT	SUPPORT NEEDED
ART MAKING			
FINANCES			
LEARNING			
NETWORKING			
ADMINISTRATION			
SELF CARE			

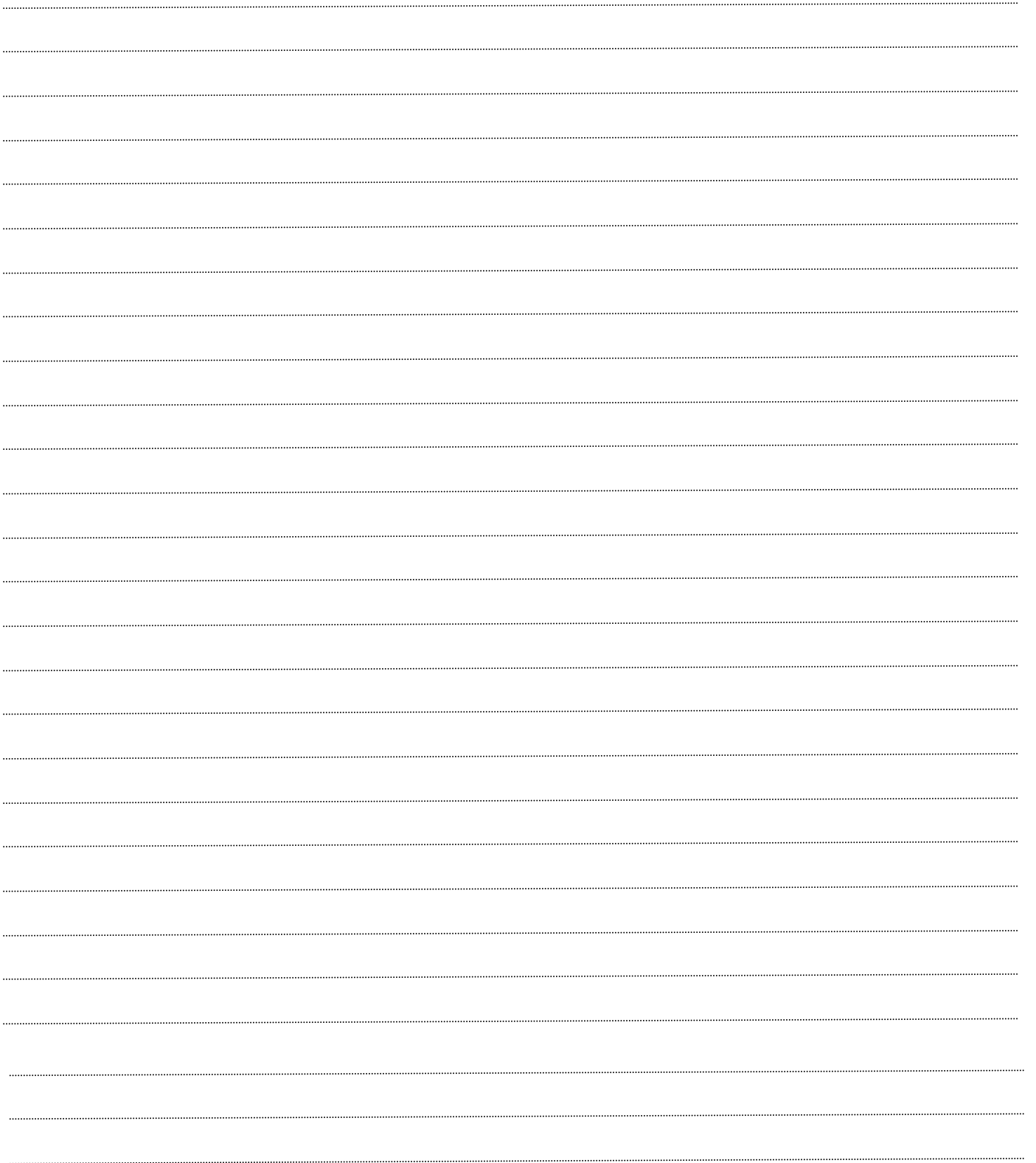
DREAM BIG!

GOAL SETTING

Think big about what you want to accomplish with your project before you begin. Take time to review & refine until you feel ready to move forward into the next phase."

-Rose Candela,
Joan Mitchell Foundation,
Career Documentation
Guide (2022), pp.19

Long Term



DREAMS:



GOAL SETTING

"Sometimes it's not about the work, it's more about who's prepared and ready to meet the opportunity that really makes a difference."

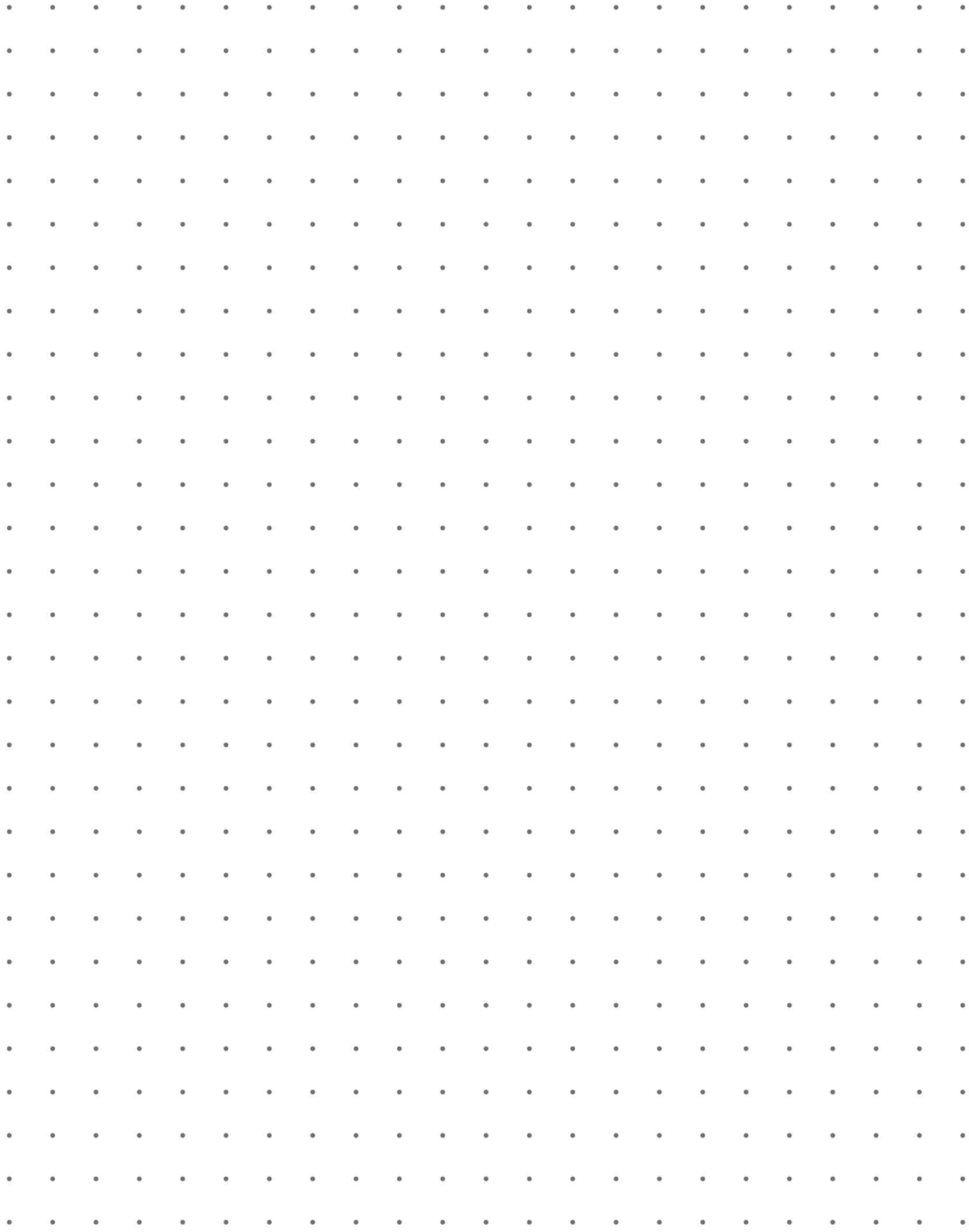
-Paul Mpagi Sepuya,
Joan Mitchell Foundation,
Career Documentation Guide
(2022), pp.10

Short Term

SMART GOALS

WHEN SETTING GOALS, MAKE SURE IT FOLLOWS THE SMART STRUCTURE.
USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO CREATE YOUR GOALS.

S	<u>SPECIFIC</u> WHAT DO I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?	
M	<u>MEASURABLE</u> HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN IT IS ACCOMPLISHED?	
A	<u>ACHIEVABLE</u> HOW CAN THE GOAL BE ACCOMPLISHED?	
R	<u>RELEVANT</u> DOES THIS SEEM WORTHWHILE?	
T	<u>TIMELY</u> WHEN CAN I ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?	



UNDERSTANDING MY GOALS

ACHIEVING OUR GOALS IS DEPENDENT ON WHETHER WE TAKE ACTION
USE THE TABLE BELOW TO UNDERSTAND THE "WHY" OF YOUR GOALS.

GOAL:

WHAT WILL THIS GIVE YOU?



AND WHAT WILL THIS GIVE YOU?



AND WHAT WILL THIS GIVE YOU?



SO, WHY IS THIS GOAL IMPORTANT?

GOAL:



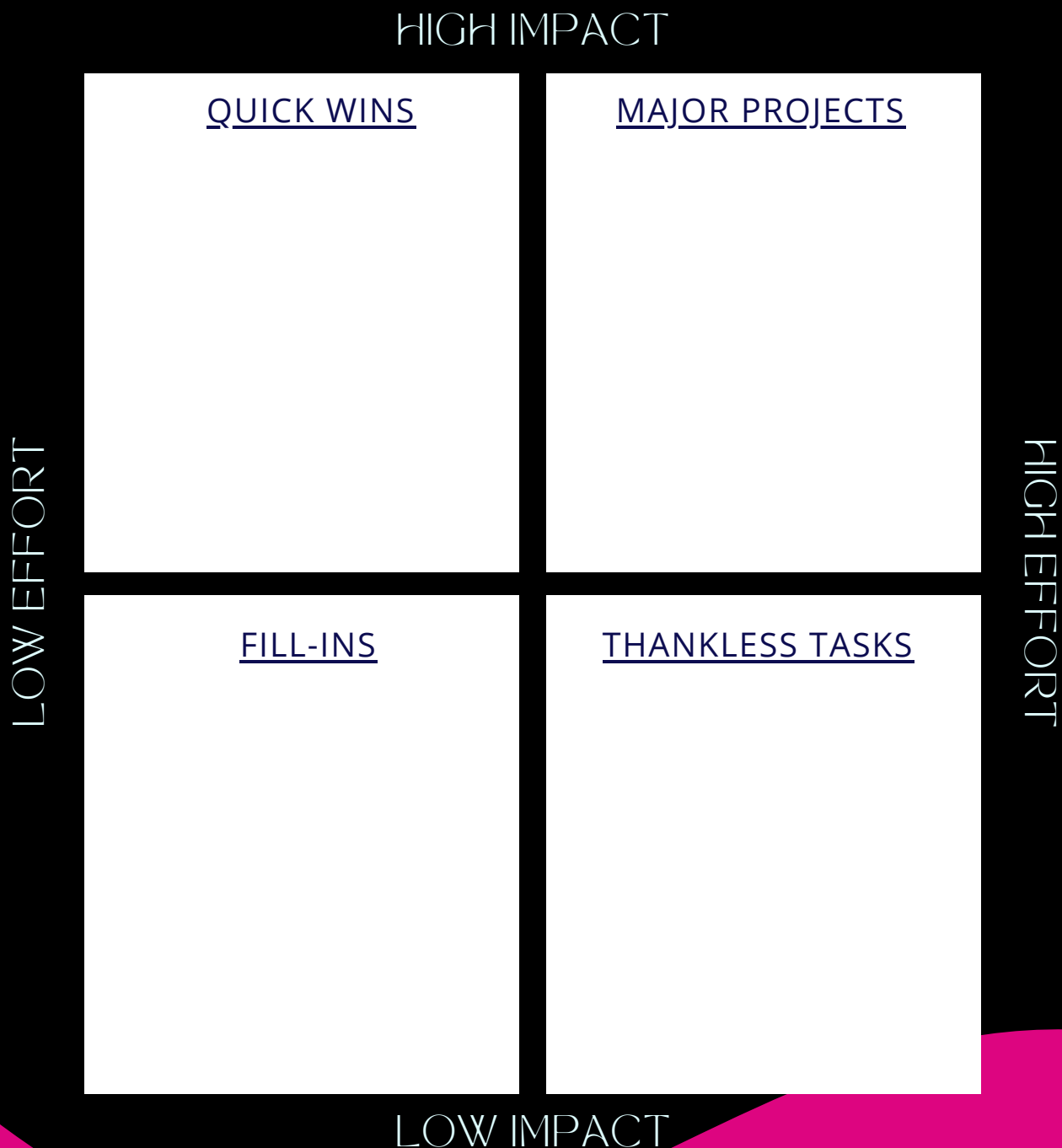
SEEDS

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal dotted lines.

ACTION PRIORITY

MATRIX

THE ACTION PRIORITY MATRIX IS A GREAT WAY TO VISUALISE WHAT TASKS TAKE PRIORITY OVER OTHERS, AND HOW TO BEST ALLOCATE YOUR TIME TOWARDS THEM.



PROCESSES

STEP ONE

STEP TWO

STEP THREE

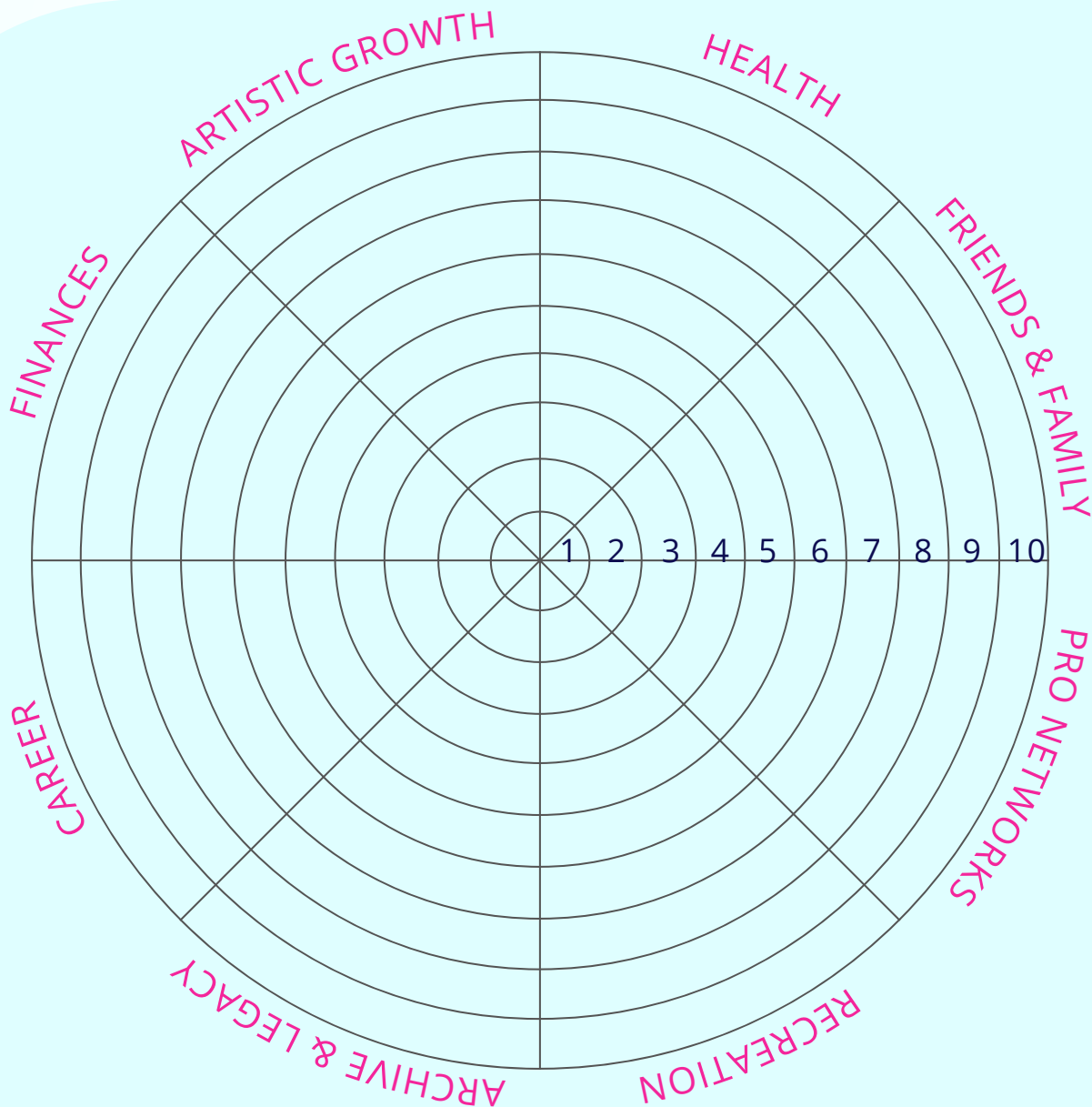
SSWCOUS



... it has been a pleasure and an honor to share my own migrant story with my community. My culture, my people, and the grueling work we do together to feed the nation and to be able to represent that in a positive way gives me peace and allows me to wake up with a smile everyday.

WHEEL OF LIFE

THE WHEEL OF LIFE IS A GREAT TOOL THAT HELPS YOU BETTER UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO MAKE YOUR LIFE MORE BALANCED. THINK ABOUT THE 8 CATEGORIES BELOW, AND RATE THEM FROM 1 - 10 WITH 1 BEING YOU SPEND MINIMAL TIME AND 10 BEING ALL OF YOUR TIME IS SPENT THERE.



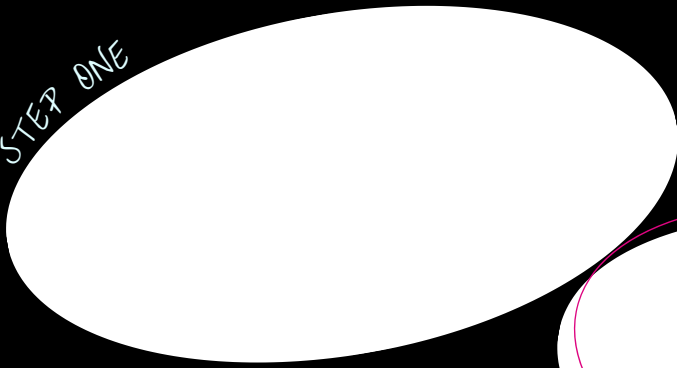
Live life with purpose, be truthful, be humble, and don't fear what looks fearful, and most importantly, live your passion.



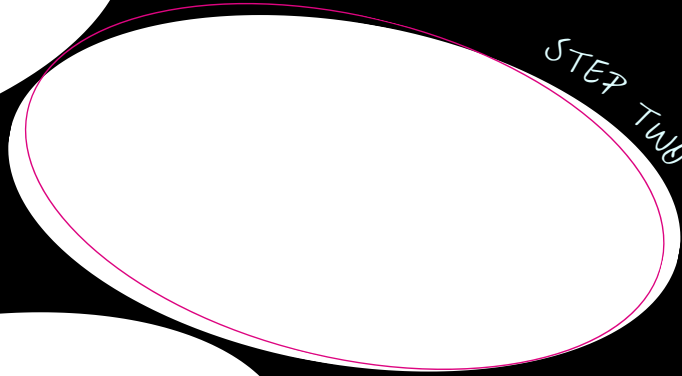
GILDED, 2014
BLOWN AND SCULPTED GLASS WITH
STEEL BRACKET, 18" X 13" X 9"

PHOTO BY RUSSEL JOHNSON

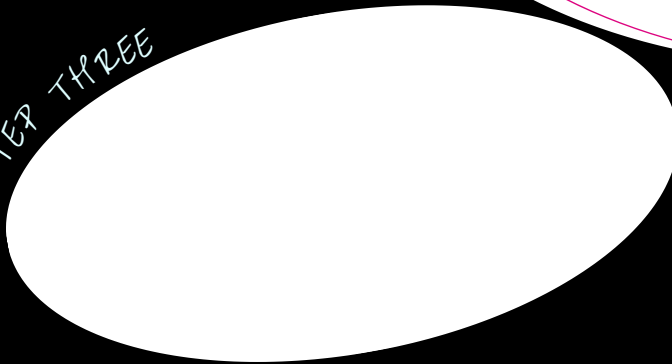
STEP ONE



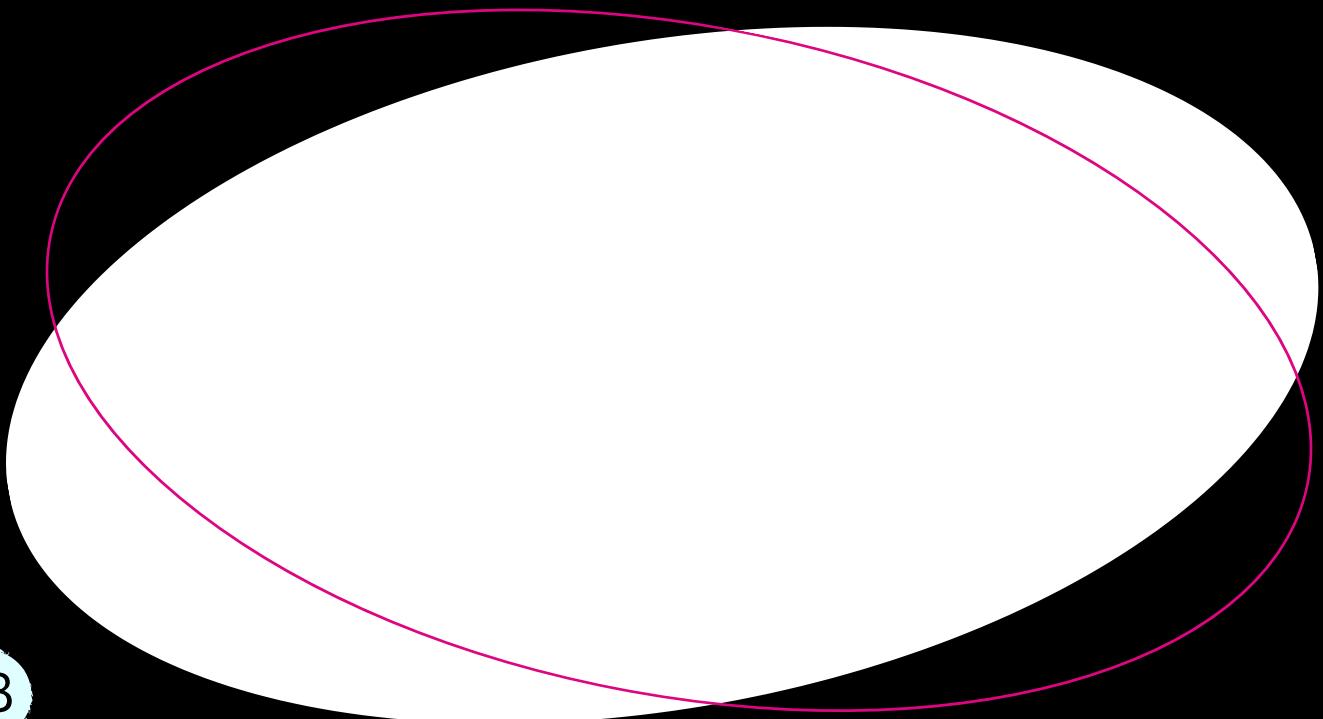
STEP TWO



STEP THREE



BALANCE



STUDIO

HABIT TRACKER

KEEPING TRACK OF HABITS CAN HELP YOU STAY ON TRACK AND ACHIEVE
YOUR GOALS OR BETTER UNDERSTAND AND TRACK HABITUAL TASKS
YOU ARE CHANGING.

FILL OUT YOUR TOP 12 STUDIO/CREATIVE GOALS AND/OR HABITS AND MARK
THEM OFF EACH DAY YOU COMPLETE THEM.

WEEK OF: _____

HABIT / STUDIO TASK

01

02

03

04

05

06

07

08

09

10

11

12

(S) (M) (T) (W) (T) (F) (S)

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REFLECTION NOTES

FINANCIAL HABIT TRACKER

KEEPING TRACK OF HABITS CAN HELP YOU STAY ON TRACK AND ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS, AS WELL AS BETTER UNDERSTAND AND TRACK HABITUAL TASKS YOU ARE CHANGING.

FILL OUT YOUR TOP 12 FINANCIAL GOALS AND/OR HABITS THEN MARK THEM OFF EACH DAY YOU COMPLETE THEM.

WEEK OF: _____

HABIT / TASK

01

02

03

04

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REFLECTION NOTES

PERSONAL HABIT TRACKER

KEEPING TRACK OF HABITS CAN HELP YOU STAY ON TRACK AND ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS OR BETTER UNDERSTAND AND TRACK HABITUAL TASKS YOU ARE CHANGING.

FILL OUT YOUR TOP 12 PERSONAL GOALS AND/OR HABITS AND MARK THEM OFF EACH DAY YOU COMPLETE THEM.

WEEK OF: _____

HABIT / PERSONAL TASK

01

02

03

04

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06

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(S) (M) (T) (W) (T) (F) (S)

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REFLECTION NOTES

SHE-ASS, 2024
CERAMIC, GLAZE,
STEEL, PAINT,
ARTIFICIAL SINEW,
INK, 39 X31 X13"

PHOTO:
MASAO EVERETTY



unfortunately, that old saw about the ratio of inspiration to perspiration in creativity rings true. However, it never mentions how damned thrilling the moments of clarity in the studio can be. Pursuit of that feeling has kept me busy for decades. Sweat on, ladies!



WATERSHED, 2017
496" X 48", OIL ON CANVAS

Art is not an escape for me, but has become a kind of activism. It makes me feel as if I am doing something to make things better by getting the message out.

LEGACY PLANNING

There will be many with ideas on your "legacy" as an artist. Your family, galleries, other commercial interests, students, scholars and researchers will all bring their own agendas. As the lead role in this story, it is necessary that you help shape and guide the one you want to tell. Maintaining your own records, tossing old work you don't want to be part of the narrative, and creating an archive that supports future researchers, curators and the general public are all tasks to help us better understand who you were, what you did and why, and possibly how, you persevered in an art career.

Whether your records are organized by body of work, by timeline, by subject or related project, or by the communities you're associated with or identify with, if you spend the time intentionally laying that groundwork, then your voice in the work will also be in the record.

CREATE A MAP

The following pages will support you in the effort to identify your story, starting with your most significant works and how you view them. Take your time and recognize that persistent small steps eventually lead to fulfilled goals and, ultimately, success.

CAREER MAPPING

LIST TEN WORKS, SERIES, OR BODIES OF WORK THAT ARE MOST REPRESENTATIVE OF YOUR OVERALL PRACTICE OR MOST CRUCIAL TO YOUR STORY.

TOP TEN WORKS OF YOUR CAREER

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Adapted from Margaret Graham's Career Mapping worksheet from the Joan Mitchell Foundation's Career Documentation Guide (2022), pp. 138

Caryn Friedlander
2025 SOLA Awardee
carynfriedlander.com



NOCTURNE, 2024
HAND-DYED SILK
50"X15"X7"

Don't try to have "a style". It's easy to get stuck in a corner that way. It's better to be curious, let who you are arise out of what you do, and journey many roads to discover what that might be on a given day. This is one of the great joys of being an artist.

DEFINING A LEGACY

HOW IS YOUR STORY ORGANIZED IN YOUR MIND

☐ *CHRONOLOGICALLY*

☐ *THEMATICALLY*

☐ *OTHER*

HOW DOES YOUR PERSONAL BIO CONNECT TO YOUR CREATIVE PRODUCTION? HOW PERSONAL DO YOU WANT TO GET, AND HOW MUCH ARE YOU COMFORTABLE SHARING?

ARE THERE OTHER WORKS OF ART (NOT YOUR OWN) OR PUBLISHED TEXTS THAT HAVE BEEN INFORMATIVE FOR YOU?

HAS ANYONE WRITTEN ABOUT YOUR WORK AND ARTICULATED INSIGHTS THAT YOU FIND POIGNANT OR RESONANT?

NOTES

LEGACY PARTNERS

CREATE PARTNERSHIPS

Whether it is a person you know, or someone you just met, it is important to create partnerships to help you along in this process. The studio and discussing or creating your artistic legacy can feel like a sacred/scary/private space so you should feel that they are someone you can trust and develop a rapport with.

Other possible partner traits & skills:

- ☐ willing to do research
- ☐ reasonably informed about the art world
- ☐ an active listener
- ☐ curious and porous to new information or perspectives
- ☐ willing to be mutually vulnerable
- ☐ patient
- ☐ healthy back
- ☐ tech savvy

OTHER

SCIENCE

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal dotted lines.

FIRST GENERATIONS, 2020

POLYMER CLAY, GLASS, SILVER, CARNELIAN, 16 X 15"

PHOTO BY DOUG YAPLE



LIFE IS SHORT.
DO WHAT YOU ENJOY.

DEFINING THE PARTNERSHIP

THROUGHOUT THE CAREER-MAPPING PROCESS, YOUR LEGACY PARTNER WILL ACT AS A MOTIVATOR AND SOUNDING BOARD, ASSISTING YOU WITH ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS, SORTING THROUGH MEMORIES, AND ASKING CREATIVE—AND SOMETIMES DIFFICULT—QUESTIONS.

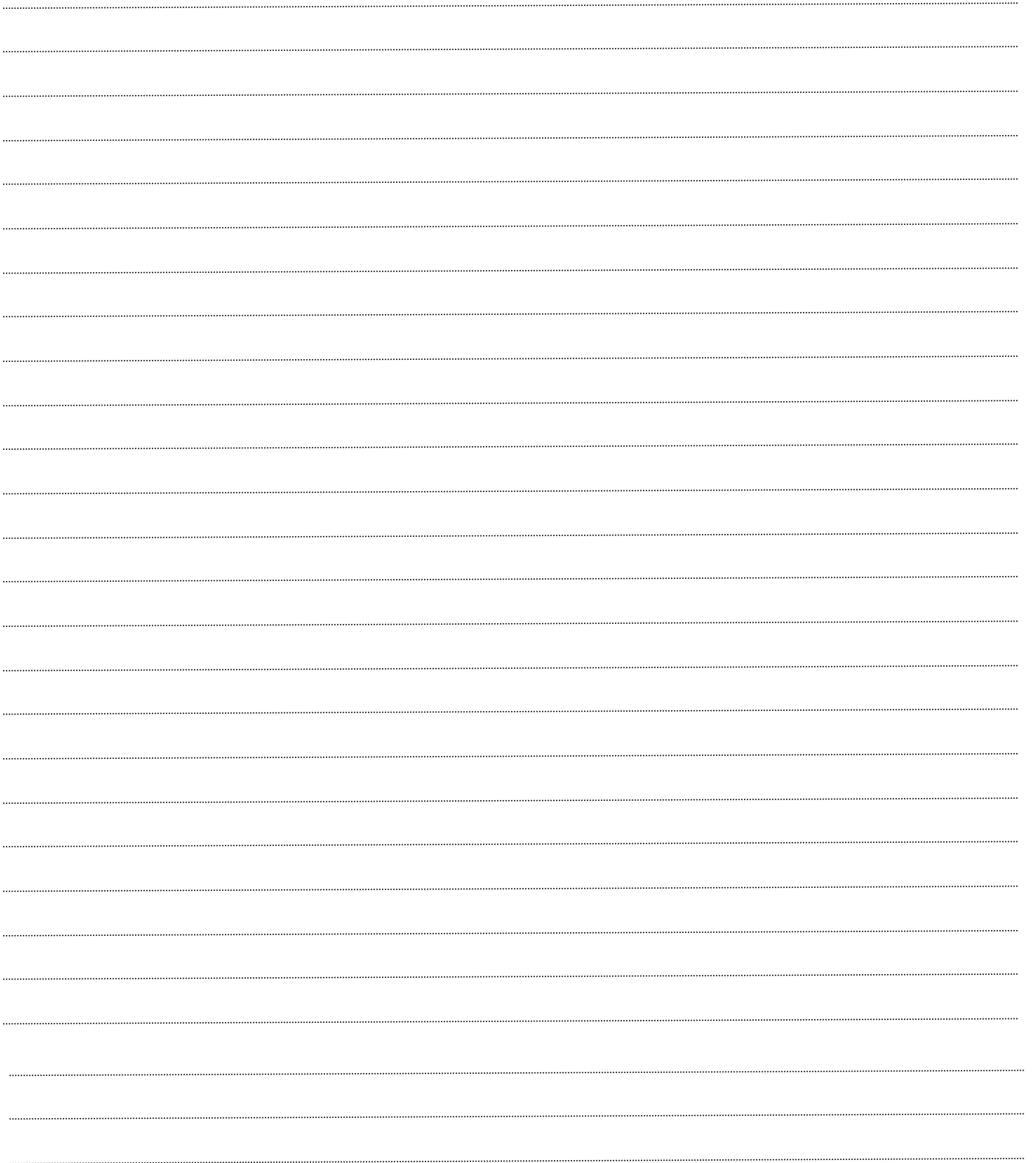
WHO IS THE PARTNER TO HELP YOU TELL YOUR STORY?

- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| ☐ FAMILY MEMBER | ☐ PEER/FELLOW ARTIST | ☐ OTHER |
| ☐ FRIEND | ☐ INTERN | |
| ☐ RESEARCHER | ☐ ASSISTANT | |

WHICH BODIES OF WORK ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU TO BEGIN DISCUSSING WITH YOUR COLLABORATOR?

WHERE AND HOW WILL DISCUSSIONS TAKE PLACE THAT WILL HELP YOUR COLLABORATOR FULLY UNDERSTAND YOUR ART & CAREER?

NOTES



ART LOCATION

For each of the columns below, write down the what, where, when, and condition of the items that make up your archive.
Create unique IDs with a format that makes sense for you, but it can include Year_Name_Title_ShowName_Location_SpecialNumber (for a grouping of similar items)

BOX, CONTAINER OR ITEM	LOCATION	CONDITION	CONTENTS DESCRIPTION	INVENTORY ID
(EXAMPLE) BANKER'S BOX	Basement	Bad, water damage	Several drafts of contracts, photos from 2010 Gallery Zed show	2010_TSmith_100 0351_ShowTitle_ GalleryZed_Base ment_310
(EXAMPLE) POSTER	Basement	Good	framed poster of 2010 Gallery Zed show	2010_TSmith_100 0351_ShowTitle_ GalleryZed_Base ment_309
(EXAMPLE) ARTWORK	7th St. Storage #B	Good	<i>Untitled</i> , 1982 30" x 52" Oil on canvas, rolled & unframed	1982_TSmith_100 022_Untitled_Stor age7b_100

ART LOCATION

For each of the columns below, write down the what, where, when, and condition of the items that make up your archive.
Create unique IDs with a format that makes sense for you, but it can include Year_Name_Title_ShowName_Location_SpecialNumber (for a grouping of similar items)

BOX, CONTAINER OR ITEM	LOCATION	CONDITION	CONTENTS DESCRIPTION	INVENTORY ID

SCWDCRS

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 30 horizontal dotted lines.

S
S
W
O
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U
S

ENZA (PANDEMIC MASK "INFLUENZA"), 2020
EUCALYPTUS LEAVES, COTINUS COGGYGRIA LEAVES (SMOKE
TREE LEAVES), MEYER LEMON PEELS, POMEGRANATE PEELS,
YELLOW CEDAR BARK, COTTON CLOTH, WATCH PARTS,
BEADS AND WAXED LINEN THREAD, 11"X11"X7.5"



My best advice came from my dad who said
"LOVE WHAT YOU DO!"

Jan Hopkins, 2024 SOLA Awardee
janhopkinsart.blogspot.com

DAILY ARCHIVE WORK SCHEDULE

DAILY TASKS

PERSON RESPONSIBLE

TODAY'S TOP GOALS

SCHEDULE

NOTES

WEEKLY GOALS

WEEK OF: _____

	MY GOALS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DONE
MON			☐
TUE			☐
WED			☐
THU			☐
FRI			☐
SAT			☐
SUN			☐

ARCHIVE

WEEKLY TO DO LIST

WEEK OF: _____

CALLS TO MAKE

EMAILS TO WRITE

MUST DO THIS WEEK

01
02
03

COMPLETE LIST OF THINGS TO DO

[illegible]

10 MIN *JUST GET IT DONE* PROJECTS

NOTES

ESTATE PLANNING

FOR EACH OF THE CATEGORIES BELOW, WRITE DOWN ITEMS TO DONATE, DEACCESS, DESTROY OR ARCHIVE. TAKE THE TIME TO REFLECT ON THESE, AND ADD WHERE THEY ARE LOCATED, WHETHER YOU WANT TO DONATE OR DESTROY AND TO WHOM.

CATEGORIES COULD INCLUDE **PET(S), FINANCIAL ITEMS, JEWELRY & ANTIQUES, AUTO(S), REAL ESTATE, ARTWORK(S) [YOURS AND OTHERS IN YOUR COLLECTION], CLOTHING, FAMILY HEIRLOOM(S), AND OTHER ITEMS OF VALUE.**

[illegible]

Ellen George, 2024 SOLA Awardee
ellengeorge.net

SENSING (3), 2023
GOUACHE, EGG TEMPERA,
CASEIN, SILVERPOINT,
GOLD METALPOINT,
BIRCH PANEL

PHOTO: MARIO GALLUCCI



With such heartening recognition, we celebrate each other with a bolstered collective confidence in ourselves to continue doing what we love.

QUALITY OF LIFE

PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL & SPIRITUAL WELLBEING

Continuing to create art as you mature is a sure way to have a higher quality of life. Key to this is the sense of purpose art creates in us, as well as moving our bodies and continually expanding our minds. Whether taking care of a pet, getting more exercise, or active social engagement to make new friends, it is essential to seek out ways to create more balance in your life as you age.

While quality of life is highly subjective to each individual, here are some other ideas to consider:

- ☐ Eat healthy foods.
- ☐ Stay active! Stretch, walk and keep making art.
- ☐ Volunteer—share wisdom from fields you know and learn new skills.
- ☐ Practice yoga, tai chi and deep breathing for greater balance and calm.
- ☐ Take a class or workshop, either online or in-person.
- ☐ Ask for help when and where you need it; focus on prevention.
- ☐ Celebrate the small stuff with friends and family.
- ☐ Be patient with yourself and others, life equals change and you are in a big transition.

CHECKLIST

FILL IN THE CHECKLIST SPACES BELOW WITH SELF-CARE ACTIVITIES, HABITS OR GOALS. GIVE YOURSELF TIME TO REFLECT ON WHAT YOU NEED AS YOU AGE.

EMOTIONAL SELF-CARE

☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____

PHYSICAL SELF-CARE

☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____

SPIRITUAL SELF-CARE

☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____

SSWCOUS

[illegible]

SIX BENEFITS OF JOURNALING

WORK OUT YOUR FEELINGS AND IDEAS

EXPLORE YOUR DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE

CONNECT YOUR PERSONAL LIFE WITH YOUR CAREER

JOURNALING HELPS YOU CENTER AND CALM YOUR MIND

Old Way vs New Way

Note below changes you have made to your career, life, processes, goals, etc. to celebrate and recognize your successes.

THEN

VS

NOW

The following organizations support mature artists with grants, information, community, and resources for professional artists and their supporters. Please find additional resources and organizations on our website: solaseattle.org/resources



SUPPORT OF OLD LADY ARTISTS
solaseattle.org



ARTIST TRUST
artisttrust.org/grants/sola-awards

**JOAN MITCHELL
FOUNDATION**

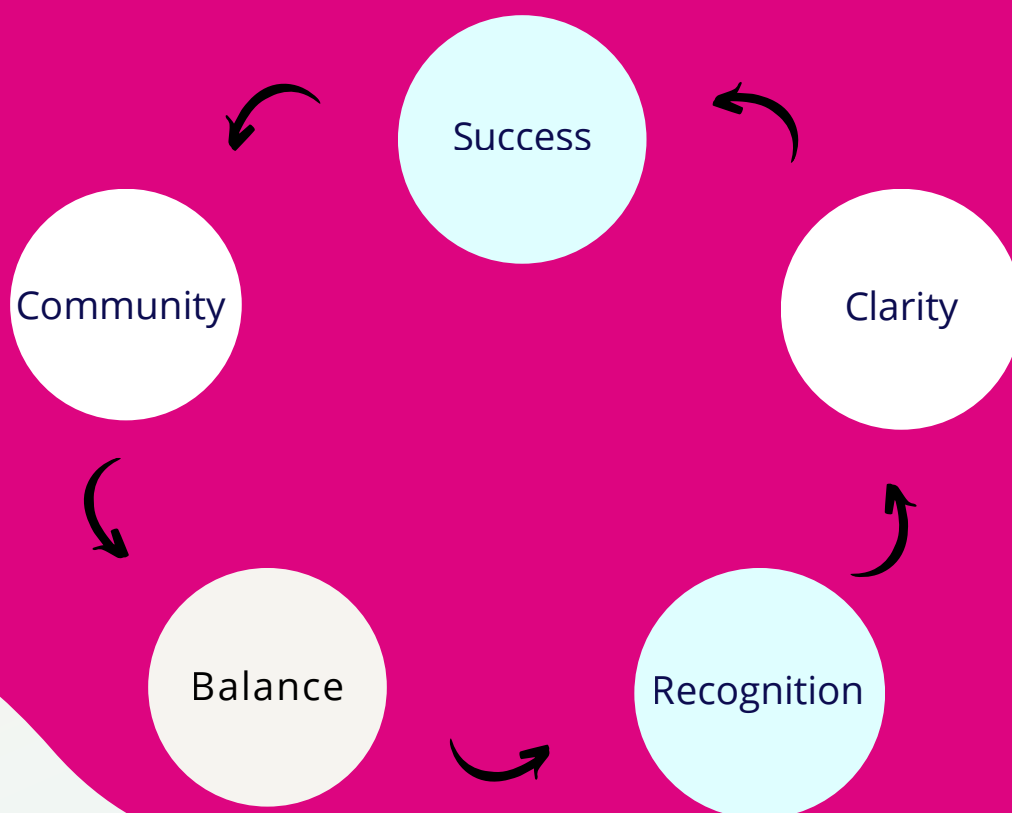
JOAN MITCHELL FOUNDATION
joanmitchellfoundation.org

*Career Documentation for the Visual Artist A LEGACY
PLANNING WORKBOOK & RESOURCE GUIDE*
[https://www.joanmitchellfoundation.org/uploads/
pdf/Career-Documentation-Guide-2022.pdf](https://www.joanmitchellfoundation.org/uploads/pdf/Career-Documentation-Guide-2022.pdf)

SOLA

RECOGNIZING MATURE FEMALE ARTISTS IN WA

We hope this planner continues to support your process to archive your art and legacy for ongoing recognition and success in the arts within a balanced and fulfilled life. Please find copies of worksheet pages in the remainder of this notebook for you to easily print and use as needed. Download this SOLA planner and find more free resources and info at www.solaseattle.org/resources





Portrait of the Artist, Ginny Ruffner, with her work, *URBAN GARDEN*, 2012, 27' X 9' X 9' KINETIC SCULPTURE
STEEL, PERFORATED STEEL, ALUMINUM, CARBON STEEL PLATE,
CARBON STEEL PIPING. PROGRAMMABLE LOGIC CONTROLLER, DIGITAL
COMPUTER (AUTOMATION OF THE ELECTROMECHANICAL PROCESSES)

COLLECTION OF SHERATON SEATTLE, WA

PERSIST.

-Ginny Ruffner
SOLA Founder & Artist

"Following Ginny Ruffner's path through the past decades is less like a stroll down an orderly garden path, and more like being in a choppy, invigorating wake of a powerful speedboat. Ruffner refuses to settle into simple form or definition. She follows her own curiosity, always inviting us into new territory."

Sheila Hughes, Executive Director
Bainbridge Island Museum of Art.

"Ginny Ruffner: What If?"
retrospective exhibition catalogue,
(Oct. 2022): pp 7.

Famous Female Artists

Planning for Success

Professional Development with SOLA

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