

# YOUR PRESENCE IS YOUR POWER

*“It’s not about commanding the room, It’s about aligning with who you are before you ever enter it”.*



**- Kathryn Ficarra**

**Founder/CEO, The C Group Studio LLC**

# WELCOME

Hi there,

If you're reading this, chances are you're craving more than just another leadership tactic.

You've probably achieved a lot. Maybe you've climbed the ranks, hit milestones, built a life that looks successful from the outside... and yet something still feels off.

You're showing up, but you're not being seen.

You're speaking, but you're not being heard.

You're leading, but it's draining instead of fulfilling.

I know that feeling—because I lived it.

For over 20 years, I was a high-achieving executive, leading teams across industries, collecting titles and checking all the boxes. But inside, I was disconnected. I thought presence meant “performance”—so I kept pushing, proving, and perfecting.

Until my body said no. My soul said no. And I finally listened.

This book isn't just about executive presence. It's about reclaiming the parts of you that got lost in the performance.

It's about remembering that your power was never outside of you.

And it's about learning how to walk into any room anchored, aligned, and unshakably you.

You don't need to be louder to be heard.

You don't need to be someone else to be respected.

You just need to come home to yourself.

In the pages ahead, I'll walk you through the six internal shifts that changed everything for me—and for the leaders I now coach. I call this my IMPACT framework. These shifts are rooted in neuroscience, embodiment, and lived experience. They're not quick fixes. They're deep recalibrations.

I'm honored you're here. And I hope this work helps you remember what's always been true:

Your presence is your power. It is yours to own, yours to live with and yours and to lead with.

With purpose,  
Kathryn

# IDENTITY + ALIGNMENT

“Before you can lead others with presence, you have to know who you are when no one is watching.”

We spend so much of our professional lives trying to become what others expect—

the competent one, the strong one, the fixer, the closer, the team player.

And somewhere along the way, we lose track of ourselves.

We trade authenticity for approval.

Power for performance.

Presence for perfection.

But executive presence isn't about image. It's about alignment.

It's about what happens internally before you ever say a word.

Most people lead from their title, not their truth.

But leadership that lasts comes from congruence—when who you are, what you value, and how you show up all point in the same direction.

This is the foundation of presence. And without it? Everything feels off.

People might follow you, but they don't feel you.

And eventually, neither do you.

Here's how misalignment might show up:

- You say yes when your gut says no
- You have those butterflies of anxiety you don't know how to control
- You shrink in rooms where you should lead
- You question your decisions after making them
- You feel two steps behind yourself all the time

# IDENTITY + ALIGNMENT CONT.

The first relationship you need to develop in this journey is the one you have with your nervous system.

Your nervous system is more than just a reaction center—it's an intelligent feedback system. It holds the imprint of every belief you've internalized, especially the limiting ones.

These beliefs shape your triggers.

They drive how you interpret the world, how you respond under stress, and how you show up in relationships, work, and leadership.

We all live through a personal paradigm—a lens shaped by our belief system.

That's why two people can hear the same story and walk away with completely different truths.

When those beliefs operate beneath the surface, unchecked and unconscious, they show up as overreactions, shutdowns, anxiety, people-pleasing—not because something's wrong with you, but because your system is trying to protect you.

But protection isn't the same as alignment.

Until you become aware of the beliefs running the show, you'll keep reacting instead of choosing.

# YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM AND ITS TRUTH

When we're in a dysregulated state—fight, flight, freeze, or fawn—we lead from protection, not power.

We become reactive, over-controlling, or overly accommodating.

But when our nervous system is regulated, we lead from presence.

That's when clarity, confidence, and authenticity return.

You can feel a regulated leader walk into the room.

Most people think leadership presence comes from charisma or credentials, but it's actually about coherence—when your inner state, identity, and external actions all align.

That kind of presence? You can't fake it. But you can build it. The most magnetic leaders aren't trying to be someone—they're grounded in who they already are.

They've done the inner work to know their core identity, and they make decisions from that place of clarity.

Use these prompts to reconnect with your authentic leadership from the inside out.

## **1. What are my non-negotiable values as a leader?**

2. → When I honor these, my nervous system feels safe and congruent.
3. → When I betray them, I feel uneasy—even if everything looks “successful.”

## **1. What's the deeper mission I care about?**

2. → Nervous system alignment happens when your actions match your inner purpose.
3. → Beyond performance, what are you here to *embody* and *ignite* in others?

# YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM AND ITS TRUTH CONT.

- **What version of myself am I ready to retire?**
- → Is there a nervous system pattern (like fawning or over-functioning) I'm done with?
- → Example: "The fixer," "the invisible one," or "the one who never says no."
- **What truth have I been afraid to say out loud—but know is mine?**
- → Regulated leadership means you can name your truth without collapse or defense.
- → What wants to be said—but hasn't been safe to express?

## PRESENCE PROMPT:

"When my identity and my behavior are in alignment, I feel..."

## FINAL THOUGHT:

You don't build presence by learning how to perform better.

You build it by **coming home to yourself**—and learning to lead from that place, even when it's uncomfortable.

And that starts with nervous system mastery.

# MINDSET MASTERY – HOW YOU THINK

“You can’t outperform your beliefs. You lead how you think.”

- Most people think presence is about how you speak or how you enter a room.
- But the truth is, executive presence begins before you walk through the door.
- It starts with what you believe—about yourself, your value, and your power.
- Presence isn’t just about your body language—it’s about your inner conversations.
- THE BELIEF LOOP (Cybernetic System)
  - Beliefs → Thoughts → Emotions → Actions → Results → Reinforces original Beliefs
- If you don’t interrupt this loop, you’ll keep repeating the same experience—no matter how much effort you put in.
- You don’t need to work harder.
- You need to shift what you believe is possible for you.
- COMMON LIMITING BELIEFS:
  - - I have to prove my value to be respected
  - - If I slow down, I’ll lose my edge
  - - I need to keep it together for everyone else
  - - I’m not qualified enough to lead at the next level
  - - I can’t be myself and be taken seriously
- TOOL: Thought-to-Feeling Map
  - 1. Write a belief you’ve been carrying.
  - 2. What emotion does that belief create?
  - 3. What action do you take from that emotion?
  - 4. What result do you get?

# MINDSET MASTERY – HOW YOU THINK

## Cont..

Then rewire:

- 5. Reframe the belief.
- 6. What new emotion does it create?
- 7. What new action could come from this state?
- 8. Where in your life have you seen this be true? Find the existing evidence for your subconscious to anchor.
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- **PRESENCE PROMPT:**
- What's one belief about your leadership that you're ready to rewrite?
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- **FINAL THOUGHT:**
- True power doesn't come from controlling the room... It comes from mastering your inner one.



# Persona Embodiment – Who You Become

“It's not what you say, it's all in  
how you show up..”

You can memorize the talking points.

You can wear the perfect outfit.

You can walk in with your shoulders back and your voice  
rehearsed.

But if the energy underneath doesn't match, people feel it.  
And so do you.

The difference between Role and Persona:

Roles are performed. Persona is embodied.

Your persona is the most integrated version of you.

**SHIFT: From Performer to Embodied Leader**

**TOOL: Future Self Embodiment**

Step 1: Visualize your next-level self.

Step 2: Align through these prompts:

- My next-level self would stop \_\_\_\_\_
- And would start \_\_\_\_\_
- And no longer tolerates \_\_\_\_\_
- And is learning to trust \_\_\_\_\_

Choose one micro-shift to embody today.

**PRESENCE PROMPT:**

What would change this week if I stopped performing and  
started embodying my next-level self?

**FINAL THOUGHT:**

Who you become... is entirely up to you.

# Authority – How You Lead

“You don’t wait for authority  
to be given. You decide to  
embody it.”

Authority isn’t about titles.

It’s about how your energy speaks before you do.

It’s the felt sense you carry that says:

“I trust myself, even in the unknown.”

But here’s what most of us were taught:

- “Stay humble.”
- “Don’t be too much.”
- “Wait your turn.”
- “Earn your worth.”

You were conditioned to believe:

- “When I get the credentials, I’ll feel confident.”
- “When they validate me, I’ll feel credible.”

But that’s backwards.

Authority doesn’t follow achievement.

It follows alignment and activation.

Your nervous system and authority:

The nervous system can’t fake power.

When you’re dysregulated, your body speaks for you—  
through hesitation, overexplaining, shrinking, or over-  
controlling.

When you’re regulated, your presence communicates calm  
certainty, even when you don’t have every answer.

This is the power of embodied authority.

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It’s not about knowing more. It’s about being grounded in  
who you are.

# Authority – How You Lead

Stop Shrinking. Start Leading.

You don't need to dominate to be powerful.

But you do need to own your space.

Leadership doesn't begin with strategy.

It begins with internal permission.

Ask yourself:

→ Where am I still waiting for permission to take up space?

→ Where am I outsourcing confidence instead of cultivating it?

TOOL: Aligned Yes / Empowered No

This tool isn't about boundaries for the sake of boundaries.

It's about building trust with yourself.

Say "YES" when:

- It supports your deeper mission, not just your image
- It energizes you and aligns with your nervous system capacity
- It comes from clarity—not guilt, fear, or scarcity

Say "NO" when:

- It derails your focus or feels like a self-betrayal
- You'd be performing instead of contributing
- You feel your body tighten or your voice disconnect as you agree

Practice:

Start with one empowered "no" this week.

Say it clearly.

Then notice: Do you feel guilt... or freedom? Either one is a sign you're rewiring something big.

Final Reflection:

Authority isn't something you step into after they choose you.

It's something you become when you choose yourself.

And when you do?

People feel it before you say a word.

# COMMUNICATION EXCELLENCE

Presence is felt before it's heard. You can say all the right things, but if your state is anxious, rushed, or disconnected, people won't trust what you're saying—they'll feel the incongruence. Communication isn't just verbal. It's energetic. And your nervous system is the broadcast tower. When your system is dysregulated, your message comes through distorted. You may over-explain to prove your value, rush through your point to avoid discomfort, soften your truth to avoid conflict, or shrink and second-guess yourself entirely. These aren't personality flaws. They're protective patterns rooted in survival physiology—fight, flight, freeze, or fawn.

But when your nervous system is grounded, communication becomes efficient, embodied, and influential. You speak less, but say more. You don't rush to fill silence because you're not seeking approval—you're speaking from self-trust. You don't perform. You project presence. That's where executive presence begins: when your body, voice, and message are in alignment.

Shift: From Performing to Projecting Presence.

Leadership communication isn't about charisma. It's about coherence. The most credible leaders speak from a regulated body and a clear internal compass. They don't just sound confident. They feel congruent.

Tool: Own the Room in 30 Seconds

This tool helps you lead conversations, meetings, and moments with clarity and presence—even under pressure. Start by regulating your nervous system: take three deep belly breaths, plant your feet on the ground, and settle into your body. Then use this simple framework:

1. What I believe: Anchor in your values or perspective.
2. Why it matters: Connect it to a meaningful outcome or impact.
3. What I propose: Offer a clear direction, next step, or decision.

Your voice becomes a mirror of your presence. When your system is calm and your message is clear, you don't just sound like a leader—you feel like one. And that feeling is what others follow.

# TRANSFORMATIVE GROWTH

“Presence isn’t a performance. It’s a practice. And when practiced daily, it becomes who you are.”

You don’t become powerful by adding more.

You become powerful by returning to who you truly are.

It is when you are your most authentic self, your presence leads you.

Your presence - your energetic frequency- is the conversation you have without ever saying a word. It is your strategic advantage, your secret weapon. It is a daily reminder and a diligent practice to stay committed to your own awareness.

## INTEGRATION TOOL: 90-Day Presence Tracker

Define: “Over the next 90 days, I am committed to embodying...”

Weekly Reflection:

- What felt aligned?
- Where did I abandon myself?
- What would my next-level self do differently tomorrow?

## PRESENCE PROMPT:

If I led from the version of me I’ve been becoming—what would change this week?

## FINAL THOUGHT:

Your presence is your power. Own it. Live it. Lead with it.

# ABOUT KATHRYN

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Kathryn has over two decades of experience at the VP level across diverse industries, including start-ups, gaming, and e-commerce. Now, as a transformational architect, she helps high-performers decode the DNA of extraordinary leadership through her proprietary IMPACT Framework—a revolutionary approach to executive presence that goes beyond traditional leadership development.

In addition to her leadership work, Kathryn is a licensed facilitator of the Purpose Assessment, a science-backed tool that helps leaders align their purpose with their work, driving both fulfillment and performance, and the host of Leadership on purpose. podcast.





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