

REFLECTION & ACTION JOURNAL

What We Are Not Changing, We Are Choosing

By Chasity Wells-Armstrong, Catalyst Coaching & Transformation

INTRODUCTION

Violence in America isn't new – it is foundational. From colonization to slavery, lynchings, school shootings, political assassinations, and systemic neglect – violence is baked into our country's DNA.

Leaders today have a choice: continue to normalize it through performative politics, or disrupt it by confronting it with honesty, empathy, and courage.

This journal is not about easy answers. It's about honest reflection. Each page asks you to wrestle with dissonance, hypocrisy, and responsibility.





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REFLECTION CASE 1: CHARLIE KIRK

Charlie Kirk, a white conservative influencer, often said things like: “*Gun deaths are a cost we pay for the Second Amendment*” and “*Empathy is weakness.*” He demeaned Black women publicly and mocked victims of violence. Yet his death by gun violence was met with demands for national mourning.

Reflection Prompt: How does selective empathy show up in public leadership — and in your own response?



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REFLECTION CASE 2: MELISSA HORTMAN

Minnesota House Speaker Melissa Hortman and her husband were murdered in their own home. She was a public servant, yet her death did not inspire the same national outcry or media coverage.

Reflection Prompt: Why do some leaders' lives spark outrage while others' sacrifices are minimized?



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REFLECTION CASE 3: GEORGE FLOYD

George Floyd, pinned to the ground for 9 minutes, cried out “I can’t breathe” and called for his mother. The officer stared coldly into the camera while bystanders screamed. Floyd’s children, mother, and sister were left to grieve in silence while his humanity was debated.

Reflection Prompt: Did you feel the same outrage for Floyd as you did for Charlie Kirk? Why or why not?



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REFLECTION CASE 4: PHILANDRO CASTILE

Philando Castile was pulled over, calmly told the officer he had a licensed firearm, and was shot in front of his girlfriend and her young daughter. The officer was acquitted.

Reflection Prompt: What does justice look like when leaders and systems fail to value Black life equally?



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BIG PICTURE REFLECTION

What We Are Not Changing, We Are Choosing

- What myths about violence in America need to be confronted?
- Where do I see performative politics in my own community?
- How do I perpetuate silence or selective empathy — even unintentionally?
- What boundaries must I set to lead with courage?



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ACTION STEP

Reflection means little without action. Choose one commitment this week:

- Challenge performative outrage in conversation.
- Call for consistent standards in condemning violence.
- Support legislation addressing root causes like poverty and gun access.
- Mentor a young leader who can disrupt cycles of harm.

My Commitment: _____





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ACTION STEP

Leadership is not about performance. It is about courage, integrity, and disrupting harmful patterns.

This journal is an invitation to move from reflection → action. To choose change.

Because what we are not changing, we are choosing.



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I partner with women in elected and appointed government leadership through The Catalyst Power Retainer™ — a high-touch, confidential coaching and strategy space to navigate the realities of public leadership and move from reflection to powerful action.

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