Most of us have a “to do” list—the many things others count on us to complete. And, given our busy lives, that list can be overwhelming! Consider creating a new list—a “to be” list that can be your North Star for what you do.

My ‘to be’ list is a reflection of what I aspire for my life, not necessarily what others expect of me. It’s changed over my life—from my desire to be a top student in high school, to a successful professional at work, to today, a role model for my daughter of a person who contributes to the world in a meaningful and compassionate way.

But it doesn’t just happen—like most things in life, you need to work at getting what you want. That’s why it’s important to give yourself permission to take time—perhaps just ten minutes every day—to consider your progress on your “to be” list. Ask yourself, are you being who you want to be? Is your “to do” list getting in the way, or congruent with your “to be” list? This reflection may cause you to change your course or make different decisions. Or, ideally this time can ground you on what’s really important despite the chaos of life.

“‘My ‘to be’ list is a reflection of what I aspire for my life, not necessarily what others expect of me.’”

-Cathy Fraser, Chief Human Resources Officer

Use these quick tips to make it a habit to Give Yourself Permission:

- Create a “to be” list that you can reflect on each day; the best list reflects your personal core values.
- Recognize when it might be beneficial to revise your “to be” list—if your life is changing, so might your “to be” list.
- Your “to do” list may not be in full alignment, however, cannot be out of alignment over time.
- When reflecting on the past and anticipating the future, remember to consider the context in which you and others behave—we all have a story.
- Consider the higher principles of gratitude, acceptance, compassion, meaning, and forgiveness.