

WHOLE HEARTED TERRI CONNELLAN

BOOK CLUB NOTES

A reader's introduction to Wholehearted

Wholehearted: Self-leadership for women in transition is a personal recount of one woman's journey about shifting from being a long-term government employee towards enjoying a richer, more self-directed and creative life as an inspirational life coach. It comes together as a wise mix of memoir, practical strategies and positive self-leadership resources for women going through major change in their lives. A *Wholehearted Companion Workbook* published concurrently is for those who want to go deeper with applying the self-leadership resources practically in their own lives.

Terri Connellan



Photo credit: Lauren Abi-Hanna

Invite Terri to speak with your book club or association, including virtually.

Discuss *Wholehearted* at your local book club and work with these Book Club notes, also available online at [QuietWriting.com/WholeheartedBookClubNotes](https://www.quietwriting.com/WholeheartedBookClubNotes) - and via the Companion Workbook.

Bio:

Terri Connellan is a certified life coach, writer and accredited psychological type practitioner who specialises in creativity, personality and self-leadership especially for women in transition to a life with deeper purpose. Terri works globally through her creative business, Quiet Writing and *Wholehearted* is her first book, published by [The Kind Press](https://www.thekindpress.com/).

Book links:

Wholehearted: <https://www.quietwriting.com/wholehearted-book/>

Wholehearted Companion Workbook: <https://www.quietwriting.com/wholehearted-companion-workbook/>

Website: [QuietWriting.com](https://www.quietwriting.com)

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/writingquietly/>

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Praise for *Wholehearted*: Self-leadership for women in transition

We need more guides like Terri who have traveled the path of transformation. She knows the exact thing to say, and the steps to suggest, for women who are tired of settling for a half-lived life.

Pamela Slim, author, *Body of Work* and *The Widest Net*

So many of us go through life with our eyes closed, running the program, doing what we think life expects of us. *Wholehearted* shows us how to get in touch with our own unique identity and craft a life that feeds our souls. Terri's open and honest personal accounts, combined with her expert knowledge of personality theory and tarot, make *Wholehearted* engaging and insightful. Get ready to open your eyes and see what you discover!

Dr Angelina Bennet, Chartered Occupational Psychologist and Director of I Potential Ltd

Blending tarot, memoir and self-leadership tools and techniques, Terri Connellan's *Wholehearted* is a soul-centred manual for women in any stage of life transition looking to fuse the lessons of the past with a more fulfilling, creative and connected future.

Louisa Deasey, author of *Love + Other U-Turns* and *A Letter From Paris*

Wholehearted is a comprehensive, woman-centric guide to owning your power and becoming the leader you've been waiting for. A beautiful blend of personal experience and intensive research to gently guide you in your journey towards self-leadership. Inspiring, motivating and illuminating. A thought-provoking, interactive guide to becoming your best self.

Pamela Cook, author, co-host Writes4Women podcast

Further Advance reader praise can be found [HERE](#).

Essential themes and questions for discussion

TRANSITION + TURNING POINTS

Terri shares her experiences of moving into a time of transition and knowing when there is no turning back. This is often accompanied by a turning point moment when it becomes very clear that change is happening. Change is external and transition is the internal journey of how we navigate and make our way in terms of mindset and practices. There is often a middle ground of transition which can feel uncertain and chaotic, but where new opportunities and creativity can flourish.

1. How does the framing of change as external and transition as internal help response to changing environments?
2. Where have you experienced a time of transition in your life (it might be now)?
3. What were the turning points when you knew that change was happening? How did that feel?
4. What footholds and practices helped you begin to move through?
5. Did you experience that uncertain, chaotic middle ground? How did that feel?
6. How did you begin to navigate this changing time inwardly?

SELF-LEADERSHIP

Self-leadership means leading ourselves first and takes first principles and ideas from leadership so we can feel comfortable in our skin and with how we choose to live. It involves building conscious self-awareness, self-knowledge, self-direction and making choices. It means stretching ourselves, dealing with self-sabotaging and being active rather than passive in our lives.

1. How does self-leadership relate to leadership?
2. How might concepts of self-leadership apply in your life?
3. What does it mean to lead ourselves first in practical terms?

IDENTIFYING YOUR PASSIONS

A starting point in times of change can be reconnecting with our passions and what makes us unique. These can often get left by the wayside as women as we put work and/or others first in our lives. Connecting with our passions and what we value and love to do helps us get clearer on who we are and what matters.

1. Why is it important to get back to our passions at times of transition?
2. What are your key passions and enduring loves over time? (Think: how you want to spend your time, where you feel most alive, what you want to learn more about, what calls you.)
3. How do they connect and blend in special ways to make you unique?
4. How can you reconnect with and make time for your passions?

PERSONALITY + PREFERENCES, YOUR NATURAL GIFTS

Knowing how we are wired, our natural preferences and gifts and our personal style can help us navigate change with self-knowledge. Building this knowledge more consciously can be a valuable support in times of transition especially when that shift is over an extended period.

1. Why is knowing our strengths and how we naturally operate so important to tap into when making change?
2. What do you know about your strengths and preferences now?
3. What are your natural gifts?
4. How would you describe your personal style in two words?
5. What else would you like to know and learn to help you manage change and make stronger transitions internally?

BODY OF WORK OVER TIME

Body of work is a useful concept for taking the longer view in our lives. It offers us the perspective of patterns, themes and skills in our life's work and to see how they can be combined and developed in new ways. Terri shares the key themes in her body of work (p74). Moving through times of transition, looking at our body of work helps us identify the key threads that tie our story together.

1. Why is body of work a helpful perspective in times of transition?
2. What are the key ingredients and themes of your body of work over time?
3. How can they help you navigate a new path with strength and insight?
4. Think of key life transitions like: leaving paid employment, becoming a parent, retirement, becoming self-employed, starting a new job, becoming a carer. How can your body of work and skills learnt over time support you as you move into new phases of life?

WHOLEHEARTED SELF-LEADERSHIP SKILLS

In Chapter 6, Terri shares 15 wholehearted self-leadership skills that emerged as central supports in her transition to a new, more fulfilling life in line with her desires.

1. How did the 15 wholehearted self-leadership skills emerge as a focus?
2. Which of the 15 wholehearted self-leadership skills speaks to you most now?
3. Why is that – what support do you think it might give?
4. How might you build this skill more consciously into your life now?
5. When will you start?

VALUING + BUILDING INFLUENCES + CONNECTIONS

Terri explores the importance of valuing our influences and consciously building our connections in new ways in times of transition including online.

1. Why is it valuable to review our influences and connections in times of change?
2. What influences and role models are important in your life?
3. How might you build connections in new ways now including online?

WORKING WITH THE SHADOW SIDE

Terri highlights various ways we can explore the more shadowy sides of life as part of our journey in Chapter 8. The shadow sides explored include: shadow careers, opposites in our personality, learning from grief and other challenging times, envy, working with polarities and choosing to feel whole or less than whole.

1. Why is it just as important to look at the shadow side of life as it is the lighter and positive sides?
2. What have you learnt from the shadow side of life experiences?
3. How did they help you to become more integrated and whole?
4. Which of these shadow side elements jumped out to you as an area to explore further?

GUIDES FOR THE WHOLEHEARTED PATH

Two key guides for wholehearted living are highlighted: synchronicity and learning to become fluent in the language of coincidence and signs; and being grounded in the everyday.

1. Why do you think these two areas—synchronicity and grounding in the everyday—emerged as key guides for wholehearted living?
2. What experience have you had of synchronicity and how did this guide your path?
3. How did you learn the language of symbols and signs and to listen within more intently and with wisdom?
4. How do you ground yourself in the everyday?
5. What practices and choices would help to do this more?

SELF-LEADERSHIP AND LOVE AS THE HEART OF WHOLEHEARTEDNESS

The final chapter of the book emphasises self-leadership and the many choices we have each day and that love is the heart of wholeheartedness.

1. A key aspect of self-leadership is choice and making the most of what we have with our lives. How does the concept of self-leadership fit with mindset?
2. From this list provided on pages 225-7 of choices potentially available to us, which top three jump out to you as areas to focus on in your self-leadership and transition journey?
3. Where does love and centring what you are passionate about over time fit with your transitions and self-leadership in life?

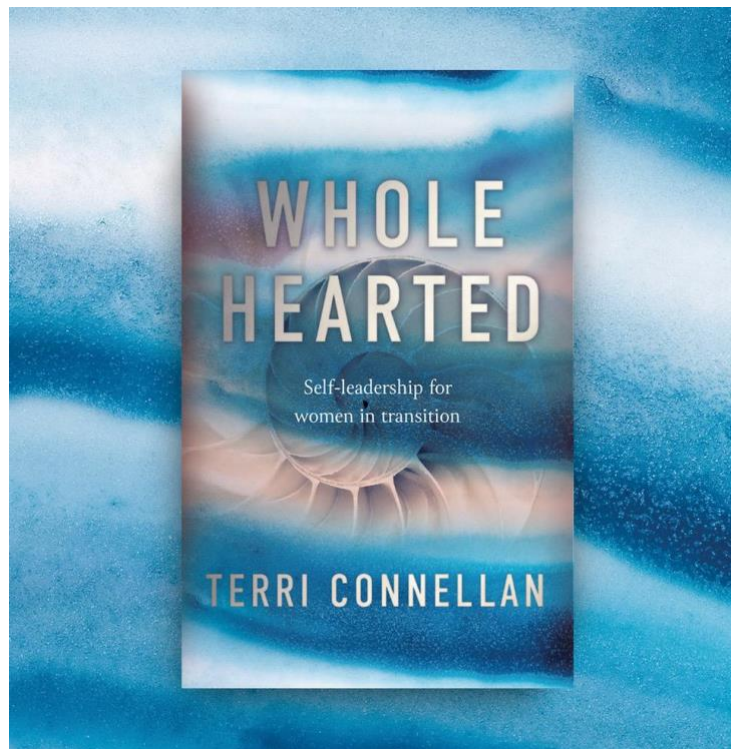
The **Wholehearted Companion Workbook:**

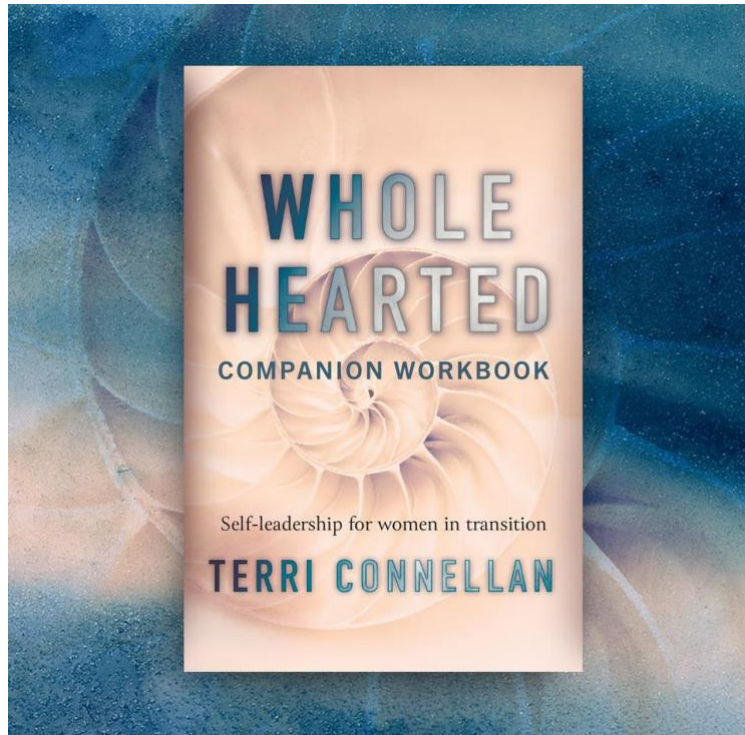
<https://www.quietwriting.com/wholehearted-companion-workbook/> offers a deeper self-leadership and self-coaching guide that can be worked on as individuals or as a group. It tracks through the main book chapter by chapter with practical examples and prompts to apply the learning and insights in your life.

Free resource:

Personal Action Checklist for Creating more Meaning and Purpose – a free resource to help you get started on more wholehearted living: <https://quietwriting.lpages.co/10-tips-mp-checklist/>

Author and book images







Link to high-quality versions and other images:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/52p7yidxpoxi2y8/AAB8hhS4EziLMgLMHzIRwIsha?dl=0>

Photographer credits are noted in the file names:

- For Sol and Co images - Lauren Abi-Hanna
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Key excerpts from the book:

‘So following that critical turning point in July 2016, I began a journey of transition back to a life that more fully reflects me. For three decades, work had taken over and important pieces of me were missing in action.’

‘I made the crossing of this unknown sea from government employee with a regulated framework and defined job description to self-employed intuitive creative making wise choices and knowing where my practice and attention need to go next. These practices have also been an excellent way to trust my own processes and not worry about what others think.’

‘Being wholehearted is finding the self-leadership to be the explorer of your heart and to own that unique journey. It means not being captive to the smallness, meanness or insensitivity of others. Or your own shoulds. It means keeping the landscape big, the canvas open, the opportunities expansive and our hopes and dreams as real as when we first thought of them, and finding a way to navigate through them to our new way of being—the one we have imagined.’

‘I committed thirty years to my organisation and at the end of it, it just felt like a waste of time. It was not a total waste, I knew in my heart of hearts, but the lack of valuing of people is endemic and I think it’s a hole in the heart of the world that I can address. I decided I would write and reflect my way through and find a way to craft a business helping people transition from an organisation or lifestyle that no longer loves them into another future that they love with their whole heart.’

‘Writing daily as a creative practice, working on larger creative non-fiction pieces and progressing towards crafting a novel, is central to my business. If I am not authentically and creatively me—writing day in and day out, showing up, and making time for the longer pieces I have outlined or the ones there in my heart—it is not genuine. I am only able to help others with their creative lives and careers through my own writing and coaching practice of living this every day.’