

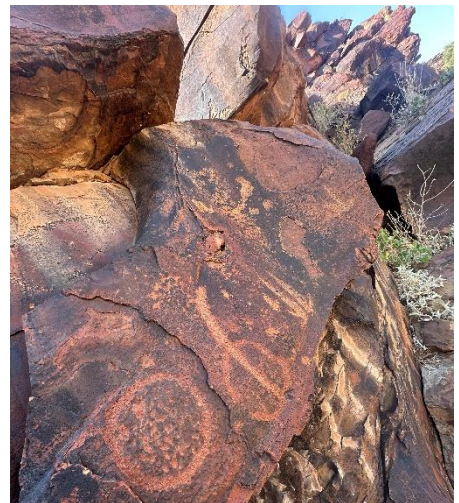


My Annual Gratitude Letter 2024

My 20th Annual Letter

Hooray, it is 31 December, and I am happy to close off 2023 as I sit down preparing to write this Annual Gratitude Letter for the birth of 2024. I sit on my back veranda in Valley of Joy, having cleared out cupboards, put away the Christmas tree and meal prepped for the week ahead. There is something cathartic about clearing away the old and decluttering as we prepare for the new, a physical real clean slate. The Valley is quiet, a few birds tweeting, the rustle of a gentle breeze in the gum trees and otherwise all is still and soft. It's like the planet and all her beings are suspended, waiting, holding position in anticipation of the new year turning over.

This is the 20th year I have penned a letter to my future self to pull me forward into a vision of how I will grow over the next 12 months. As we bid farewell to the transformative journey that was 2023 and prepare to envision the future, I reflect that the year of 2023 was one of great challenge as well as great growth and expansion – for myself and all of humanity. I am grateful for the expansion of my soul's journey following hosting an Elders Mystery School and Women's Sacred Lore camps here in the Valley, to walking country with my love and camping in a swag with traditional Adnamathna people in the Flinders Ranges. Words are inadequate tools for sharing the profound depth and ancient wisdom gleaned from the land, the emus and the petroglyphs in the Flinders, needless to say none of us who journeyed will ever be the same.



I am grateful for the care of strangers who have essentially become quasi-family at my pappa bears nursing home for taking care of him in his senior years as his dementia progresses and his anxiety increases. I am grateful to my love Michael for his constant, steady, masculine support and his silly, irreverent, childlike humour that keeps me grounded and real. Living together has provided much magic, love and happiness.

I am grateful to the land and my dogs Spirit, M'Bari and Sasha as they all remind me to stop and smell the grass, to play, to run, to listen and to play. I am grateful to Michelle, Jennylee and Murray for the work we have collaborated on and the respect we extend to each other for showing up and serving leaders in the way we know best. I am grateful to my clients for the trust they have in me, in the process, in themselves as we weave new workplace culture and leadership stories for their future. This year has been full of challenges, growth, and the unveiling of both inner and outer conflicts—which has paved the way for new beginnings and profound transformations.



2024 came loaded with potential never before experienced on planet Earth. This came with great excitement and great responsibility. We are living through prophesized times and the onus is on us to take up the challenge purposefully.

I am so grateful that this became a year of building deeper foundations and of supporting humanity to thrive. In preparation for writing my letter each year I read a book over the holiday season. The books always choose me, this year that book was *The Myth of Normal* by Gabor Maté. He explores trauma's devastating impact on people and our society – and what we can do to reverse the damage.

The book, much like society, life and business itself was compassionate, compelling, disturbing, insightful and deeply moving. A perfect accompaniment to setting the scene for the year ahead, Maté's book showed how mental illness is on an unstoppable rise, the size of chronic health problems worldwide and the need to rethink the way we live. Dr Maté dissects physical and emotional causes and connects the dots between our personal suffering and the pressures of modern-day living. He found that the common definition of 'normal' is false: virtually *all* disease is actually a natural reflection of life in an *abnormal* culture, as we grow further apart from our true selves.

Maté also shows us the pathway to reconnection and healing and gives hope that true health is possible - if we are willing to embrace authenticity above social expectations. Mirroring my own professional pursuits and life mission, his book is an invitation to participate in the greatest adventure in human history — **conscious evolution.**

"The same goes for us: no emotional vulnerability. no growth."

— Gabor Maté, *The Myth of Normal: Trauma, Illness and Healing in a Toxic Culture*

If there is one lesson I've learnt through my yoga therapy teaching it is that the body, people, teams, cultures and countries are self-healing mechanisms when we cultivate the right environment. When we are in a state of peace and love, living and working in a peaceful environment, only then we can heal. No matter how disheartening it was to witness tragedy happening in organisations and around the world, as a custodian of the land, a facilitator of leadership transformation and an initiated lore woman I felt the weight of my responsibility to my teachers, elders, life purpose and lineage to use my training, tools and practices to support a thriving world.

I spent the year focused on how to help leaders and organisations create thriving peaceful environments all the while continuing to plant trees and regenerate a rainforest in the Valley of Joy. My days spent from the boardroom to the bush it was all was aligned with this focus. I was consistently inspired by the spirit of humanity, of kindness of love, of support and of value. I was grateful for my collaborators, quiet allies, my constant supporters, my rocks and the way showers here and in spirit. I was heartened to see that good always finds a way to shine on. I'm so glad I spent the year participating in humanity's conscious evolution.

Throughout 2024 I kept things simple – my theme for 2024 was:



"Don't compete. create. Be gentle."

I'm so glad I stepped boldly into the light knowing that the light inside each and every one of us is what matters. I focused on creating in a gentle way, creating content, service offerings, hobbies, gardening and writing all without burnout nor fatigue. I felt satisfied and spent without exhaustion or drain.

I focused on building a sustainable investor mindset, building more regenerative wealthy, growing a larger rainforest and empowering more leaders for the future.

I discovered we are never alone, we are never an island and we are never without choices. In 2024 my life included more support and help from my team, more leverage of my resources, more hobbies, more road trips such as to Melbourne, an inspiring trip to Fiji masterminding, more tree planting and more family time.

I focused more on inputs and what I could control and less on the outcomes and what I can't control. Through my work with leaders and with the Thrive Stars initiative I took to building my skills, serving more, and helping more than 2000 leaders. I realised I could be busy or I could be productive. I became more conscious of how I invested my time, energy and attention and essentially had three core focus areas:

1. The development of my character
2. The development of my relationships
3. The development of my skills

In the spirit of sharing collective growth, I was thrilled to announce the birth of several transformative programs that emerged from the lessons in 2023:

- The manager to leader career shift program
- The 10 degree shift program
- Executive shift retreats in the Valley of Joy
- In house corporate culture healing

All in all supported those who lead others to come home to their true selves. A pathway for career progression that includes reconnection and healing and true prosperity that allows individuals to thrive authentically. 2024 was a year of being true to myself and to those I love and honour. It was deep, grounded and profound.

*the joy of being true to oneself. and the capacity
to shape one's own life from that truth is what matters most.*

Big love AJ – you did it!



My 2024

2024 = MORE

Gentleness

Friend time

Bushwalks

Laughter

Play

Love

Music

Calm

Cuddles

Road trips

Almond lattes

Motorcycle rides

