



## **Be The Leading Lady of Your Own Life**

"You're supposed to be the leading lady of your own life" from The Holiday

I love Christmas, and I must confess I am one of those people who starts watching Christmas films in November. Okay, full disclosure: I start watching them in October, but I don't put my decorations up until December.

Like many, I have watched The Holiday countless times. But during Christmas of 2024, I cried so hard when I truly heard a line in the film for the first time. There's a beautiful scene where Kate Winslet's character opens up to the wise, old screenwriter, and he tells her:

"You, I can tell, are a leading lady. But for some reason, you are behaving like the best friend... You're supposed to be the leading lady of your own life."

Reflecting on these words, I realised that throughout my married life, I had unwittingly cast myself in the role of the supporting actress. As a devoted wife, I spent decades ensuring my husband shone brightly, often at the expense of my own light. I was so focused on his accolades and achievements, believing my sacrifice was for the betterment of us, that I completely lost sight of myself. In my efforts to support the leading man in our shared life's movie, I forgot how to shine on my own.

I must add that he never asked this of me he always supported and advocated for me. Unfortunately, the only "wife model" I had to follow was my mum, who was raised in a different era where that's what women did. Remember the saying, "Behind every successful man is a strong woman"?

This epiphany was a wake up call. After years of feeling lost following my husband's departure, spiralling into depression, and grappling with anxiety, I recognised that my

children leaving home wasn't the only change I needed to face. I needed a change in my role from a background player to the leading lady of my own life story.

This realisation deepened my understanding that without investing in my happiness, I would continue losing sight of who I am. I had become controlling in an attempt to maintain happiness around me, believing that was my purpose. This behaviour led me down a path of bitterness, resentment, and exhaustion a shadow of the vibrant, fun loving woman I once was the girl he fell in love with and married.

#### Reflection Prompt

Now, I invite you to reflect on your own life movie:

- Are you feeling overshadowed and overlooked?
- Have you set aside your own childhood dreams and ambitions as life and responsibilities rewrote your script?
- Are you supporting and enabling other people's dreams and careers at the expense of your own?

The following exercise is designed to help you remember the person you were and then rewrite your life movie with you as the leading lady.



### **Journaling Exercise – Be the Leading Lady in Your Own Life**

Journaling is a personal experience, so feel free to write, draw, or do a bit of both. The choice is yours.

#### 1. Reconnect with Your Childhood Dreams:

Sit quietly and recall the things you dreamed of as a child. What fired your imagination and made you excited?

I always wanted to be a singer or an astronaut. I wanted children and a family, just like the Waltons. As a tomboy and a risk taker, I would always accept a dare, no matter how foolish or dangerous it was. I did get scared, but I never let fear stand in my way.

What about you? Record your images, ideas, or feelings in the first film strip. You may even choose to include photographs from your past.

**2. Identify Barriers:**

Circle the words or phrases that represent the barriers that have stood in the way of your dreams or changed who you were. Feel free to add your own words and phrases.

**3. Rewrite Your Script:**

Now it's time to rewrite your script don't hold back. If all these barriers were removed, what would your future movie look like?

Sit quietly with your future self and experience how it feels to be the leading lady.

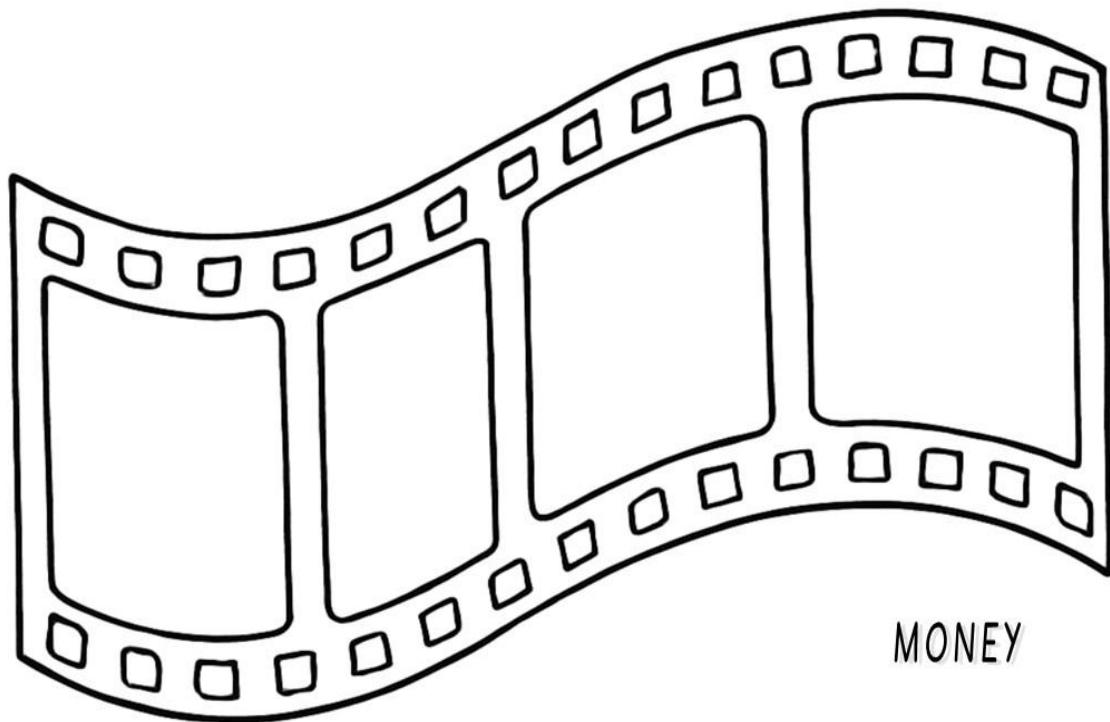
**Taking Action**

Unfortunately, simply imagining an Oscar winning future won't make it happen. The barriers must be removed, and you have to do the work.

This is where I needed a Life Coach and a community of like minded people to support me. I was lucky enough to find the talented Coach Sue, who deeply listened, showed empathy, and then challenged me to act. I also joined a wonderful online group for women where I made so many new friends and acquaintances.

Through this group, I began wild swimming and even tried axe throwing. My children thought their mum had gone mad. Little did they know I was just becoming me again.

Now, I invite you to find your tribe and start the next chapter of your life. I'm here right behind you, cheering you on.



FEAR

COMMITMENTS

TIME

