



LUMO

where *motherhood* and *work* intersect

**DANGEROUS EXPECTATIONS  
& WHAT TO DO INSTEAD:  
Creating Intentional Agreements**

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Make Motherhood Work For You

Expectations are sneaky. They unconsciously run the show in the background of our minds, unspoken and uncommunicated. (i.e. “They’ll see the unfolded laundry and know it needs to be folded.” Or “I threw an amazing birthday party for my co-worker, so I am certain they will do the same for me.”) We create a picture of how it “should” go and then lean back and wait.

And wait.

And then, when our psychic messages aren’t received and acted upon to our precise specifications, we are en fuego (cue flames of anger!) and left wondering why no one understands us or loves us the way that we so superiorly love them. It’s an unfortunate and endless feedback loop that leaves us wanting, doomed to repeat that pattern forever and ever, amen.

Fear not, mothers, for it does not have to go this way! Here in this magical worksheet we will help you break the cycle and find joy, expression, peace, and (fingers crossed) folded laundry and fab prezzies.

What’s the trick? To notice our expectations and put them on loudspeaker. Once they’re out in the open and communicated to others, we can turn our expectations into requests, or even agreements. When you take responsibility and put your inner monologue on loudspeaker (with some sensitivity edits), people and the world around you will change. Is it magic? No, mama. It’s you, setting clear intentions and allowing others to know what you really need in order to feel loved and acknowledged.

**YOUR TURN:** Grab a pen and turn the page.

**Where in your life are you harboring unspoken expectations?  
Places to look: at work, with your partner, family relationships  
or friendships.**

**How has that played out? How have your expectations colored  
those relationships?**

**Are you in a relationship with anyone who expects you to psychically meet  
their needs? What is that experience like for you? What do you wish you could  
say to them?**

**Story time.** A few years back, LUMO CEO Sarah Olin was running a leadership retreat which had 25 participants, plus another 5 people on the support team. Sarah thought that hosting a dinner at her home on the Saturday night of the retreat would be fun. This was not a wise choice. That morning, as Sarah rushed around to get ready, she noticed the kitchen was destroyed. Her expectation was that her husband would clean the kitchen before the dinner that evening. When she returned home from a long day of training and the kitchen was still a disaster, can you guess what happened?

Sarah's husband got an earful.

She was upset, frustrated and disappointed. She assumed that her husband would clean the kitchen, which is essentially partnership via mindreading. Did she share her expectations with him? No. Sarah learned quickly that this was neither a powerful nor a successful approach.

When we act based on expectations, it's hard for us to win. And it's even harder for anyone else to win. We're making assumptions that the rest of the world is in sync with what's happening between our ears. This is a particularly easy pattern to fall into with those who know us and love us best, and if you're a person who's used to anticipating the needs of others, it's an extra dangerous conundrum. It leaves us thinking: "I am thoughtful of your unspoken needs, what the heck is wrong with you?!"

Once we accept that the rest of the world is NOT in sync with our unspoken expectations, we can be liberated from frustration, victimization, disappointment, resentment, jealousy... you know, all the spicy stuff that sets us up for failure again and again.

**What does this story bring up for you? Can you relate? Take a pen to paper here and do a data dump. Purge the demons of "Expectations Past" and free yourself so it can go differently in the future.**

**PRO TIP:** Start to notice when you find yourself frustrated, disappointed and otherwise pissed off at others or an experience. Become a scientist with your feelings instead of a judge. What are you curious about?

## INTENTIONS & REQUESTS (I Got the Power)

A few years ago, LUMO Chief Creative Officer Anna Conathan was having a cavity filled. Anna, like so many of us, doesn't love the prospect of dental work. Relinquishing her mouth to another is scary for her. However, she's an excellent communicator and went into her appointment armed and ready with what she wanted and needed from her dentist and hygienist.

She said to the hygienist: "I need you to hold my hand. I will be squeezing it." She said to the dentist: "I need you to tell me when you're going to give me the needle because I don't want to see it. Then, tell me when it's over so I can open my eyes."

Clear, right? Great; they're all on the same page. The hygienist held her hand, acknowledged Anna's firm grip, and the dentist told her what was happening and when to open her eyes. She was very happy; or as happy as one could be given the needle in-the-mouth situation.

When they were done she said, "Could you please tell me how brave I am and what a good job I did?" Anna and Dr. Valle are now very close pals. She likes to think he looks forward to her cleanings.

Anna's dental adventure is a great example of how to be intentional and make clear, even vulnerable, requests. When we shift from an expectation to an intention, we can articulate and actualize our end goal, share it openly with those involved, get in alignment and... <SHAZAM!> Mission Possible!

**Where in your life are you purposeful and intentional?**

**Where would you most like to create purpose and intention?  
Places to look: your partnership, at work, with friends, or with your kids.  
What is your higher purpose or intention in this area?**

**Action is the key to the Queendom, ladies. What action will you take?**

Being intentional takes thought and consideration. **It's about taking ownership and responsibility for your experience.** From this place, you are now in the driver's seat of your experience. You have your power back! Intentional people acknowledge themselves as the creators of their lives and become fully responsible for their experiences.

People who practice being intentional experience creativity, forward momentum, purpose, drive, vision, action, empowerment, joy, satisfaction, fulfillment and power.

This past year and a half has been a doozy, and though it hasn't always been pretty, we assure you, you have held a strong center as Chief Everything Officer of your home. By taking the time and effort to transform your unspoken expectations into clear agreements, you'll make life easier for yourself and your people. You've got this!

**And remember: LUMO will be here at the intersection of work and motherhood if you need us.**

**NOTES:**

# Thank you!

## About LUMO

We are a collective of certified life and leadership coaches and trainers: a company for mothers, run by mothers. We use the tools, principles, and philosophies of leadership coaching to empower women around motherhood, their careers, their relationships, and any other areas of their lives where they are feel disempowered or not living up to their full potential. We believe that when women become mothers, their natural leadership skills are enhanced and they are poised to create meaningful cultural change. At the intersection of motherhood and work, LUMO provides solutions that address the obstacles women face in today's career landscape, and the struggles their employers face in supporting and retaining them.

Visit us at [lumoleadership.com](https://lumoleadership.com) to learn more about our training and leadership programming and executive coaching opportunities. Sign up for our LUMO newsletter to get weekly scroll-worthy content on Leadership, Understanding, Motherhood, and Opportunity, and follow our adventures on LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook.



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