



THE REGENERATIVE GROWTH CAREER FRAMEWORK™

**A SUSTAINABLE MODEL FOR CREATIVE
LEADERSHIP AND MID-CAREER DEVELOPMENT
IN ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN**

Addressing burnout, restoring agency, and redefining
success through career alignment.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Executive Summary | 2 |
| The Six Career Pillars | 3 |
| Figure & Ground: Where Growth Happens | 7 |
| Case Study | 11 |
| Applying at the Team and Org Level | 13 |
| Implementation Pathways | 15 |
| About the Author | 16 |
| Industry Research | 17 |

Executive Summary

The Regenerative Growth Career Framework™ (RGCF) is a non-linear model created to help mid-career professionals in architecture and design grow in sustainable, purpose-driven ways. It was developed in response to rising burnout, misalignment, and stagnation among highly capable creatives who feel pressure to follow rigid paths that don't reflect who they are or how they want to lead.

Rather than pushing for constant achievement or external validation, the RGCF emphasizes reflection, alignment, and strategic integration of six *Career Pillars: Clarity, Confidence, Creativity, Visibility, Purpose, and Sustainability.*

The framework helps individuals design career paths that are deeply personal, creatively fulfilling, and built for long-term success, within or beyond traditional firm structures.



The Shift

Traditional growth models tell people to "climb."

Regenerative growth asks: What are you building, and how do you want to grow into it?

The RGCF helps people:

- Reconnect with what fuels them
- Break inherited patterns that lead to burnout
- Create careers that work with their values, not against them

This is not a quick fix. It's a mindset shift: a system that puts creativity, clarity, and energy back in the hands of the leader.

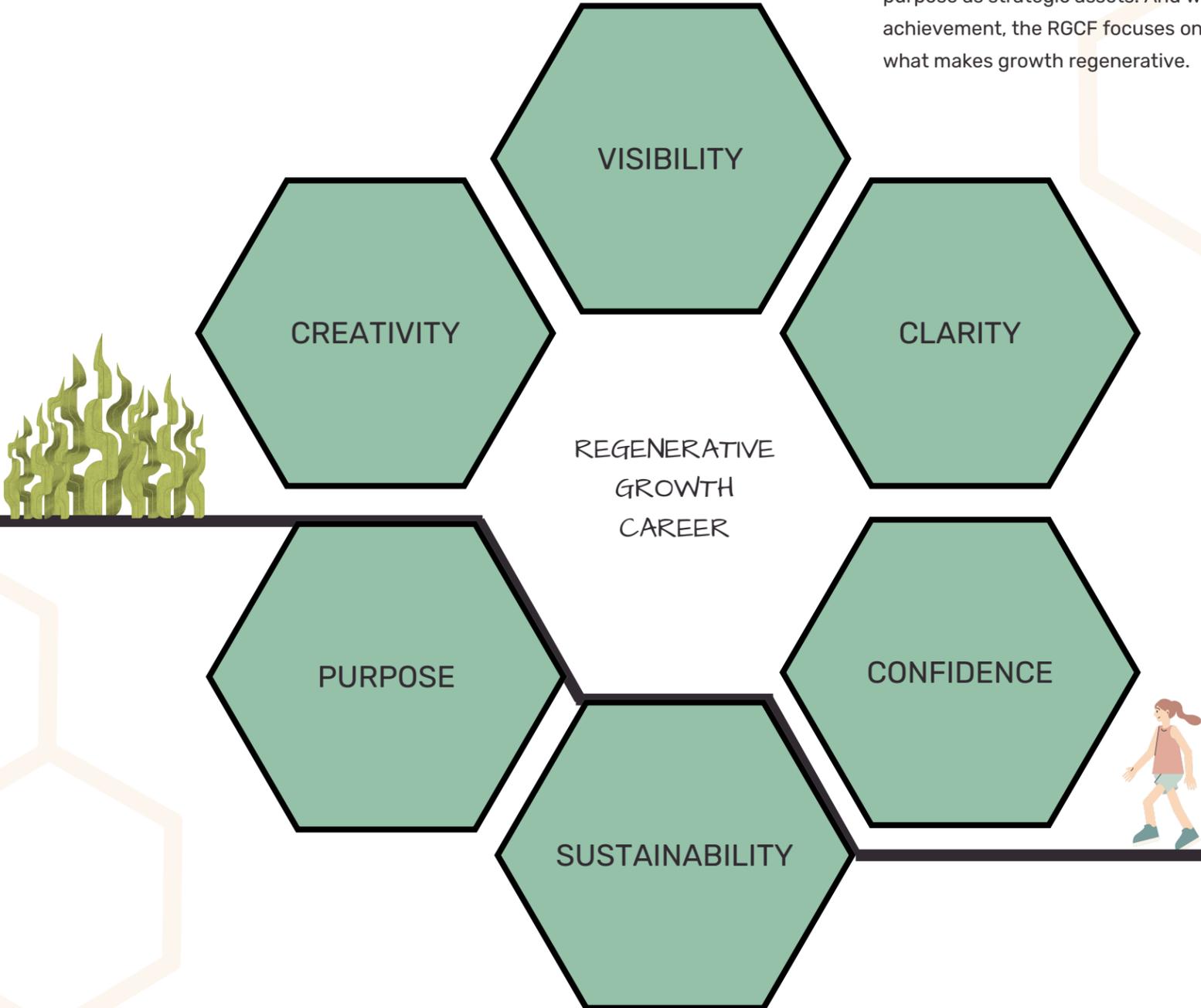
This framework recognizes that creative careers unfold at different paces and from different starting points. It invites people to grow in alignment with who they are, not who the system expects them to be.

The Six Career Pillars

The six Career Pillars of the Regenerative Growth Career Framework™ weren't chosen at random. They emerged through deep work with creative professionals across architecture, design, and adjacent industries. Each pillar represents a foundational capacity that, when nurtured, leads to sustainable, purpose-driven leadership.

These pillars draw from coaching psychology, adult development theory, and research on human motivation and performance. They address not just how we grow, but why we grow, what gets in the way, and how to make progress that lasts.

This framework doesn't separate "soft skills" from strategy. It sees your energy, clarity, and purpose as strategic assets. And while there are many career models that focus on external achievement, the RGCF focuses on internal alignment and transformation, because that's what makes growth regenerative.



The Six Career Pillars

These six pillars were selected based on research into what actually sustains creative professionals long term across industries, roles, and phases of growth. They're flexible, but comprehensive, offering a language for reflection, reinvention, and regenerative momentum.

CLARITY

Know where you're going and why it matters.

For creative professionals, clarity isn't about following a prescribed path. It's about reclaiming authorship of your own. This pillar helps you define success on your terms, make meaning from your work, and move forward with grounded vision, not just hustle.

→ Informed by Goal-Setting Theory, Career Construction Theory, and Cognitive Behavioral Theory

CONFIDENCE

Believe in your value and speak from it.

Confidence is often misunderstood in creative work. It's not loud or flashy – it's the quiet courage to stand behind your ideas, advocate for your worth, and stay aligned with your values in the face of doubt, critique, or comparison.

→ Informed by Self-Efficacy Theory, Imposter Syndrome Research, and Immunity to Change

CREATIVITY

Let your ideas lead.

Creativity is your greatest asset, and your greatest vulnerability. This pillar nurtures the experimental energy, curiosity, and autonomy that creative growth requires. It helps you move from burnout or stagnation back into flow, originality, and bold ideation.

→ Informed by Flow Theory, Divergent Thinking, and Intrinsic Motivation Theory

Be seen, heard, and known for what you do best.

Creative work is deeply personal, and often invisible unless you advocate for it. This pillar supports you in claiming credit, articulating impact, and ensuring your contributions are visible to the people and systems that shape opportunity.

→ Informed by Social Capital Theory and Leadership Identity Development

VISIBILITY

Connect your work to what really matters.... to you.

Purpose is more than passion. It's the throughline that connects your values, your impact, and the communities you care about. For creatives, this pillar is about aligning the work you do with the story you want to tell, and the life you want to build.

→ Informed by Self-Determination Theory, Logotherapy, and Values-Based Leadership

PURPOSE

Grow without burning out.

Creative professionals often give everything to their work, but that brilliance isn't infinite unless it's nurtured. This pillar helps you set boundaries, pace your energy, and redefine growth so it includes rest, reflection, and real longevity.

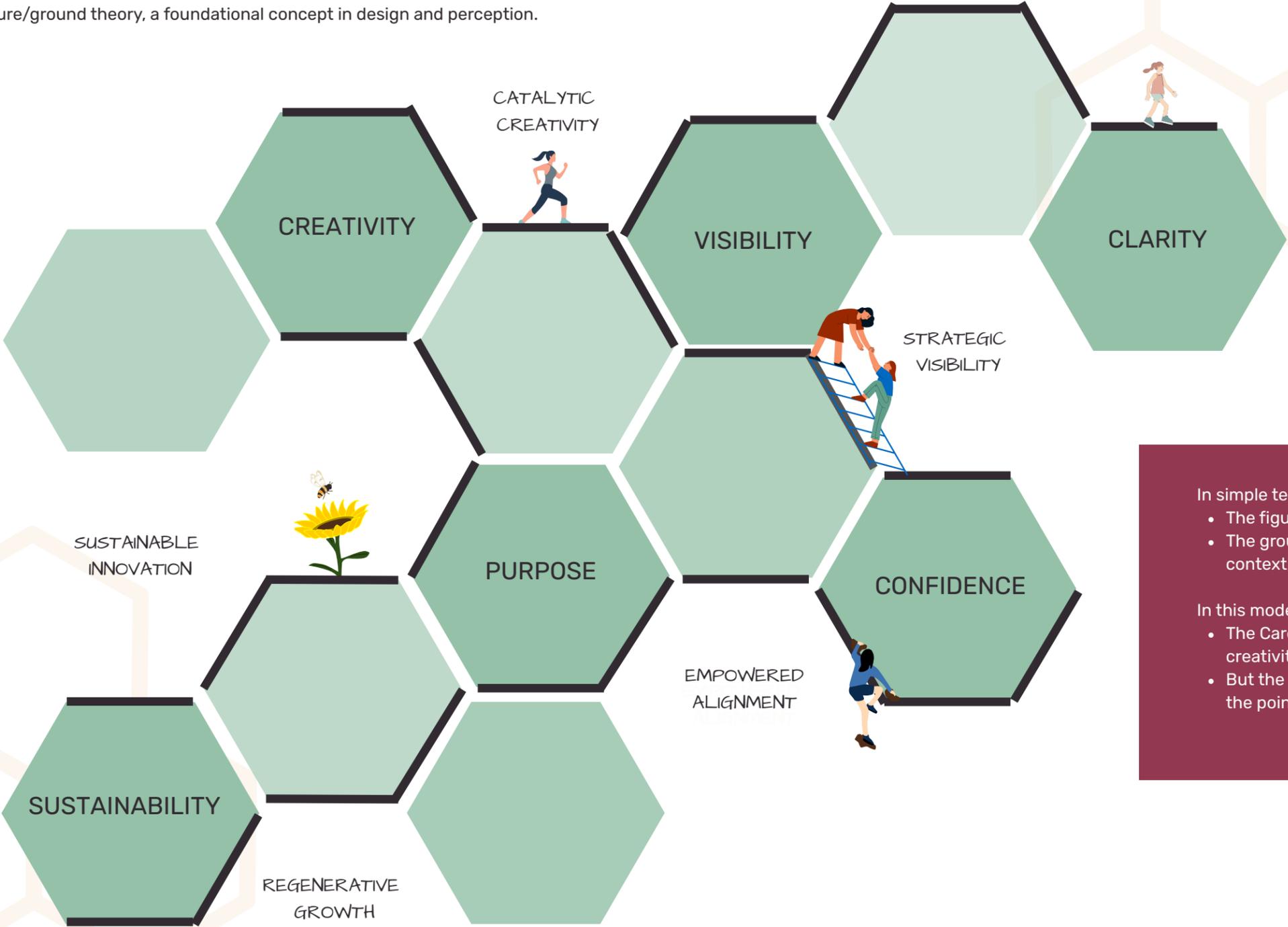
→ Informed by Burnout Research, Regenerative Systems Thinking, and Deliberately Developmental Organizations

SUSTAINABILITY

Figure & Ground: Where Growth Happens

In most career frameworks, success is seen as a series of steps: gain a skill, earn a title, move up. But in the Regenerative Growth Career Framework™, growth doesn't just happen in the Pillars, it happens in the Ground.

This idea draws from figure/ground theory, a foundational concept in design and perception.



In simple terms:

- The figure is what you focus on (i.e., the bold shape).
- The ground is what surrounds and defines it (i.e., the context, relationships, and patterns).

In this model:

- The Career Pillars are the figures— clarity, confidence, creativity, etc.
- But the real transformation happens in the ground— at the points where these pillars connect.

Why the Ground Matters

This "ground" is where tension lives, and where breakthroughs happen.

You might feel confident but lack clarity, leaving you directionless. Or you may be purpose-driven but invisible, causing your impact to go unseen. These aren't isolated issues...they're intersections of deeper patterns.

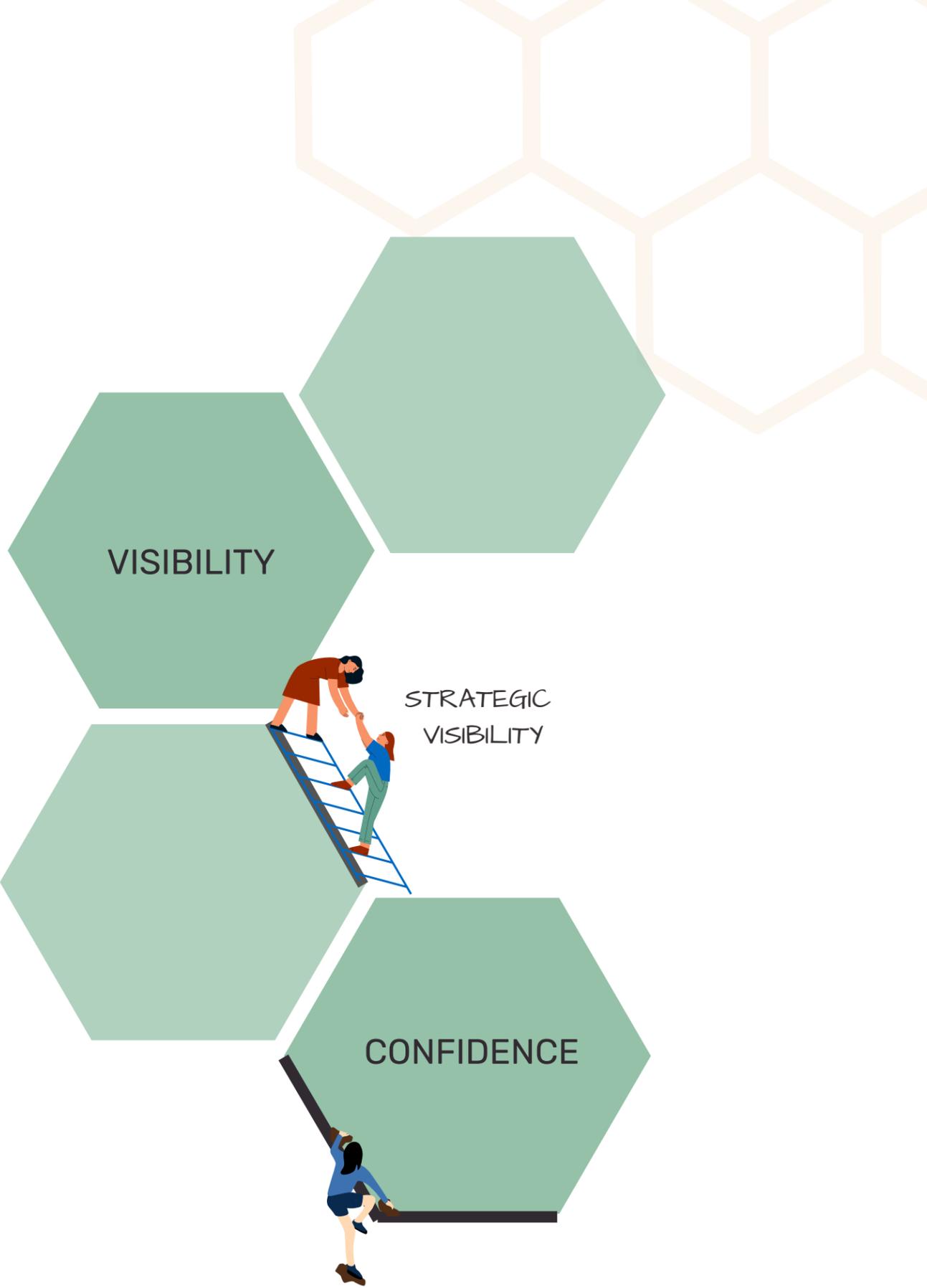
By working in the ground space, we not only impact a single pillar, but also impact the entire structure. Because each pillar is connected, shifting one ground element reverberates through the system, often unlocking clarity, confidence, or sustainability in areas that felt stuck.

The Hive Effect

Think of this framework like a hive: an interconnected system where every chamber strengthens the whole.

When we focus on one intersection, like Confidence + Visibility or Purpose + Sustainability, we're not just strengthening those two. We're reinforcing the structure, creating ripples of momentum and clarity throughout the entire hive.

This regenerative, relationship-based approach creates holistic development that isn't dependent on role, title, or company. It's a living system that evolves with the professional and helps them lead in a way that is sustainable, creative, and self-directed.



Case Study: From Stuck to Seen – Nicole’s Regenerative Career Shift

“I thought I had to leave the field or find a new firm to grow. But once I actually saw my worth, and others did too, the right opportunities started finding me.”

– Nicole, Interior Designer



SKIM THIS:

| BEFORE | RGCF IMPLEMENTATION | AFTER |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felt invisible despite 26 years of experience • No clear path to promotion or higher pay • Burned out by long commute and stagnant growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anchored her career vision through Clarity x Confidence • Built strategic visibility through Confidence x Visibility • Tapped into regenerative growth through Purpose x Sustainability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruited for a senior-level role • Invited to teach a class for homeless youth • Rekindled industry connections and influence |

The Full Story:

Context:

Nicole, a mid-career interior designer in Seattle, carried 26 years of professional experience, but only 6.5 of those within design. Despite mentoring junior staff and independently managing projects from concept to construction, she felt stalled. She lacked a senior title, a competitive salary, and, most of all, a clear path forward. Burned out from a two-hour commute and unsure whether to stay or go, she was ready for change but didn’t know where to begin.

The Challenge:

Nicole didn’t need more credentials or experience. She needed a new way of seeing herself and being seen by others. Her work spanned all six Career Pillars, but progress in one wasn’t translating into real career momentum. What was missing? The *ground*: the hidden intersections that make growth regenerative, not just linear.

The RGCF in Action:

Nicole joined a 1:1 coaching engagement grounded in the Regenerative Growth Career Framework™. Together, we explored her career not as a checklist of milestones, but as a system, where movement in one pillar influenced and was influenced by the others.

Her growth ignited at the intersections:

- **Clarity x Confidence → Anchored Vision:**
 - She reframed her career path and articulated her hybrid expertise as a strength, not a gap.
- **Confidence x Visibility → Strategic Visibility:**
 - Together, we crafted power stories and practiced live scripts, helping Nicole show up to her performance reviews and unexpected recruiter calls grounded and articulate.
- **Purpose x Sustainability → Regenerative Growth:**
 - Reconnecting with her values led to unexpected fulfillment, like being invited to teach design to homeless youth in her community and redirecting her career towards roles that fueled her, rather than depleted her.

Results (after 3 months):

- ✦ Called in for a senior-level role after years of career stagnation
- ✦ Acknowledged by her firm for her innovative skillset and strong client relationships, leading to her selection as the company’s representative for an industry organization
- ✦ Selected to teach a community-centered design class due to her industry visibility
- ✦ Reconnected with her industry network and began planting seeds for future leadership
- ✦ No longer felt the pressure to abandon the firm or the field because she felt rooted in agency and possibility.

Why RGCF Made the Difference:

Nicole’s transformation didn’t happen by stacking up one pillar after another. It happened in the ground, where the Career Pillars intersect. That’s the regenerative edge: each insight created a reverberation across her entire ecosystem. Progress in one area catalyzed growth in others. Her development became holistic, visible, and self-sustaining.

“It’s crazy how I met you, got started with you, and then I feel like so many things have snowballed just in the time that we’ve been working together.”

– Nicole, Interior Designer

Applying RGCF at the Organizational Level

While the Regenerative Growth Career Framework™ was originally designed for individual growth, its full potential unfolds when applied at the team and organizational level.

Where Traditional Models Fall Short

Most firms rely on tools like:

- Leadership Circle – insightful, but often top-down and focused on individual traits
- MBTI / DISC / StrengthsFinder – great for awareness, but rarely applied after the workshop
- 5 Dynamics – powerful for team flow, but doesn't evolve with career growth

These tools are valuable, but they freeze the picture. RGCF moves the picture.

It gives teams a shared language and living structure for development that grows with the individual and with the organization.

| TRADITIONAL TOOLS | RGCF DIFFERENCE |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Labels who you are | Focuses on where you're growing |
| Static snapshot | Dynamic, evolving system |
| Trait-based | Context + identity + energy-based |
| One-time workshop | Long-term application model |
| Individual analysis | Whole-career + team structure focus |

“RGCF doesn’t just help you grow. It helps you understand where your growth is trying to happen.”

-Krystin Moody, Leadership Coach

By moving beyond static competency models, firms can use the Career Pillars and Ground Elements to foster a culture where development is:

- Self-directed yet supported
- Creative yet strategic
- Individualized yet interconnected

No need to replace your existing systems...though this method, we are regenerating them.

How Teams Can Use RGCF

| USE CASE | WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE | IMPACT |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Collective Growth Mapping | Map each team member's Career Pillars and Ground Elements. Use it to uncover hidden superpowers, shared struggles, and complementary growth zones. | Makes growth visible and shared. Reveals where individuals and the team are experiencing real transformation, not just skill-building. |
| Strategic Pairing for Development | Staff project roles or stretch assignments based on growth intersections (e.g., Purpose x Visibility, Creativity x Confidence), not just task fit. | Projects become developmental containers. Builds trust, energy, and mentorship within teams. |
| Regenerative Reviews | Use Ground Element language to shape conversations: “What intersections shaped your quarter?” “Where are you noticing tension?” | Reframes reviews from evaluation to alignment. Encourages self-awareness, not just reporting. |
| Pattern-Aware Retention Strategy | Track team-wide growth friction (e.g., widespread Confidence x Visibility tension = systemic recognition, agency gaps, or psychological safety issues). | Moves culture from reactive to proactive. Helps organizations design interventions before burnout or attrition. |
| Ground-Level Leadership Development | Help rising leaders name inner career tensions, not just surface behaviors. Ex: Confidence x Purpose = leader unsure how to influence. | Supports leaders in developing sustainable, self-aware influence, not just tactical performance. |

Implementation Pathways

The Regenerative Growth Career Framework™ isn't one-size-fits-all, and that's the point. Below are a few ways to begin integrating it with your team, your culture, or your own leadership path:

Pillar Mapping Workshop

A hands-on session to identify individual and team pillar strengths, gaps, and intersections. Especially powerful during retreats or team resets.

1:1 Leadership Coaching

Support for mid-career leaders navigating visibility, confidence, burnout, or influence. Rooted in RGCF's whole-self growth model.

Team Growth Audit

Assess which pillars are thriving or underdeveloped across the org. Useful for identifying risks in retention, morale, or development planning.

Review Process Redesign

Ground performance conversations in career development rather than just deliverables, using the Ground Elements to guide feedback.

Pilot Program Launch

Introduce the RGCF with a single team or cohort to test the model and measure impact before scaling.

Most frameworks were built for predictability and efficiency.

But we're in a different season now – one that requires deeper roots, braver questions, and more human ways of growing.

Whether you're a team leader, a designer seeking purpose, or an HR partner ready to challenge the status quo, you're invited. Reach out for more info.

About the Author



Krystin Moody is a SHRM-CP, WELL AP, trained coach, and founder of Ourova, a consulting and coaching firm guiding individuals and organizations through transformational growth.

She blends over a decade of experience in HR strategy, leadership development, and organizational design, including her time working at a global architecture firm where she saw the struggles of growth from both sides of the table.

With a deep passion for creative professionals, from designers and architects to marketers, writers, and beyond, Krystin helps people reconnect with clarity, confidence, and purpose in work that matters. Her Regenerative Growth Career Framework™ has been used across industries to rethink career development as an interconnected, whole-human process.

Through coaching, workshops, and strategic advising, she supports leaders and teams in making bold, sustainable changes that ripple through culture, retention, and personal fulfillment.

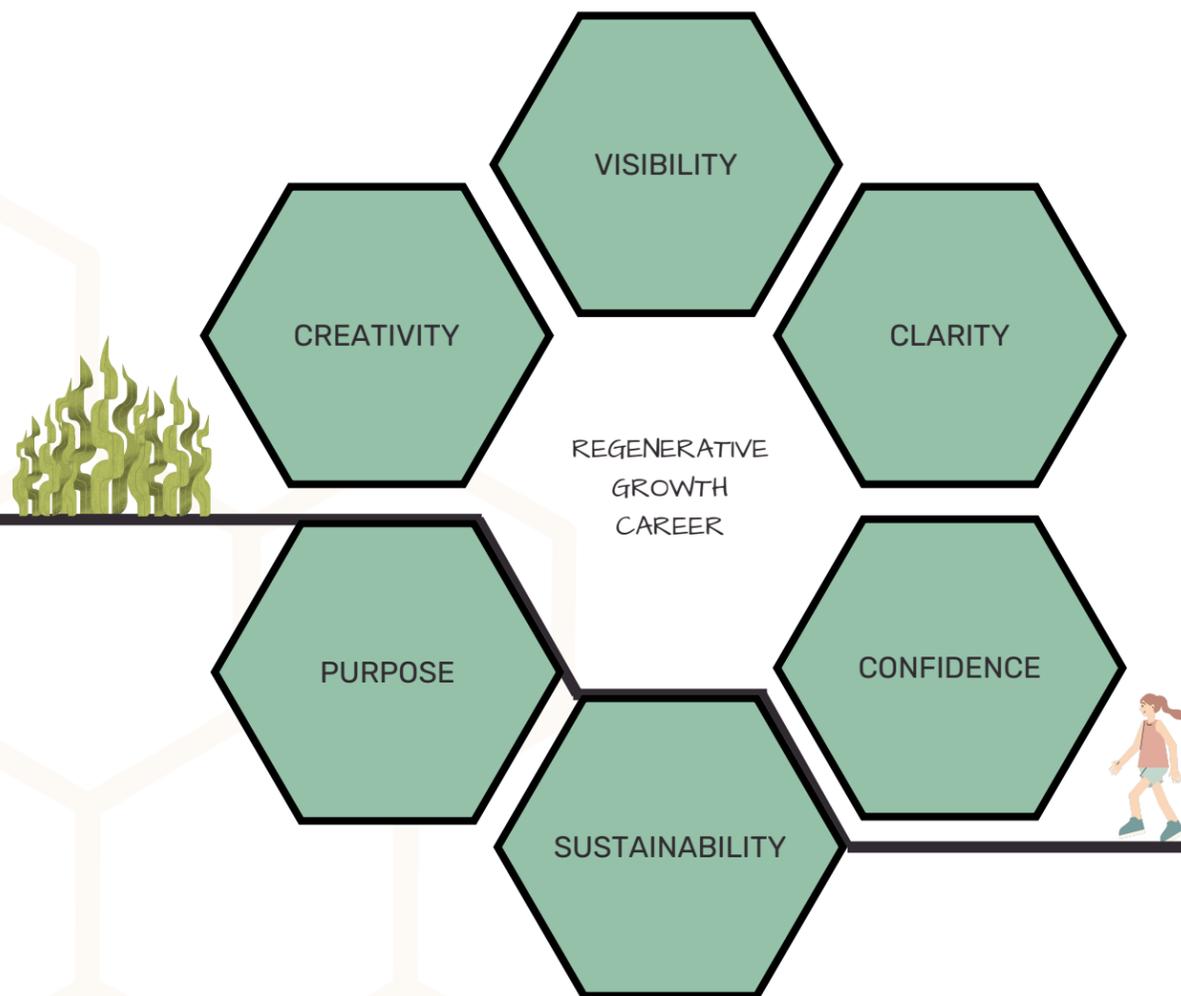


Industry Research & Context

“Mental Health in Architecture: 11 Key Takeaways from Archinect’s Survey,” Archinect, 2024.
<https://archinect.com/features/article/150454720/archinect-s-2024-mental-health-survey-results-11-key-takeaways>

“2024 Architecture Salary Survey,” Harper Harrison, 2024.
<https://www.harperharrison.com/newsroom/harper-harrison-launches-us-architecture-salary-survey-for-2024>

“The Future of Work in Engineering & Architecture,” Engineering Management Institute, 2024.
<https://engineeringmanagementinstitute.org/future-work-engineering-architecture-2024>



Theoretical Influences by Pillar

| CAREER PILLAR | THEORIES REFERENCED |
|----------------|---|
| Clarity | Goal-Setting Theory (Locke & Latham, 1990) Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 2005) Cognitive Behavioral Theory (Beck, 1964) |
| Confidence | Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1977) Imposter Syndrome Research (Clance & Imes, 1978) Immunity to Change (Kegan & Lahey, 2009) |
| Creativity | Flow Theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) Divergent Thinking (Guilford, 1950) Intrinsic Motivation Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) |
| Visibility | Social Capital Theory (Bourdieu, 1986) Leadership Identity Development (Komives et al., 2005) |
| Purpose | Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) Frankl’s Logotherapy (Frankl, 1946) Values-Based Leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2010) |
| Sustainability | Burnout Inventory (Maslach, 1981) Regenerative Systems Thinking (Sandford, 2017) Deliberately Developmental Organizations (Kegan & Lahey, 2016) |

The RGCF also resonates with contemporary ideas in regenerative systems design, values-based leadership, and psychological safety, offering a modern lens grounded in timeless human patterns.