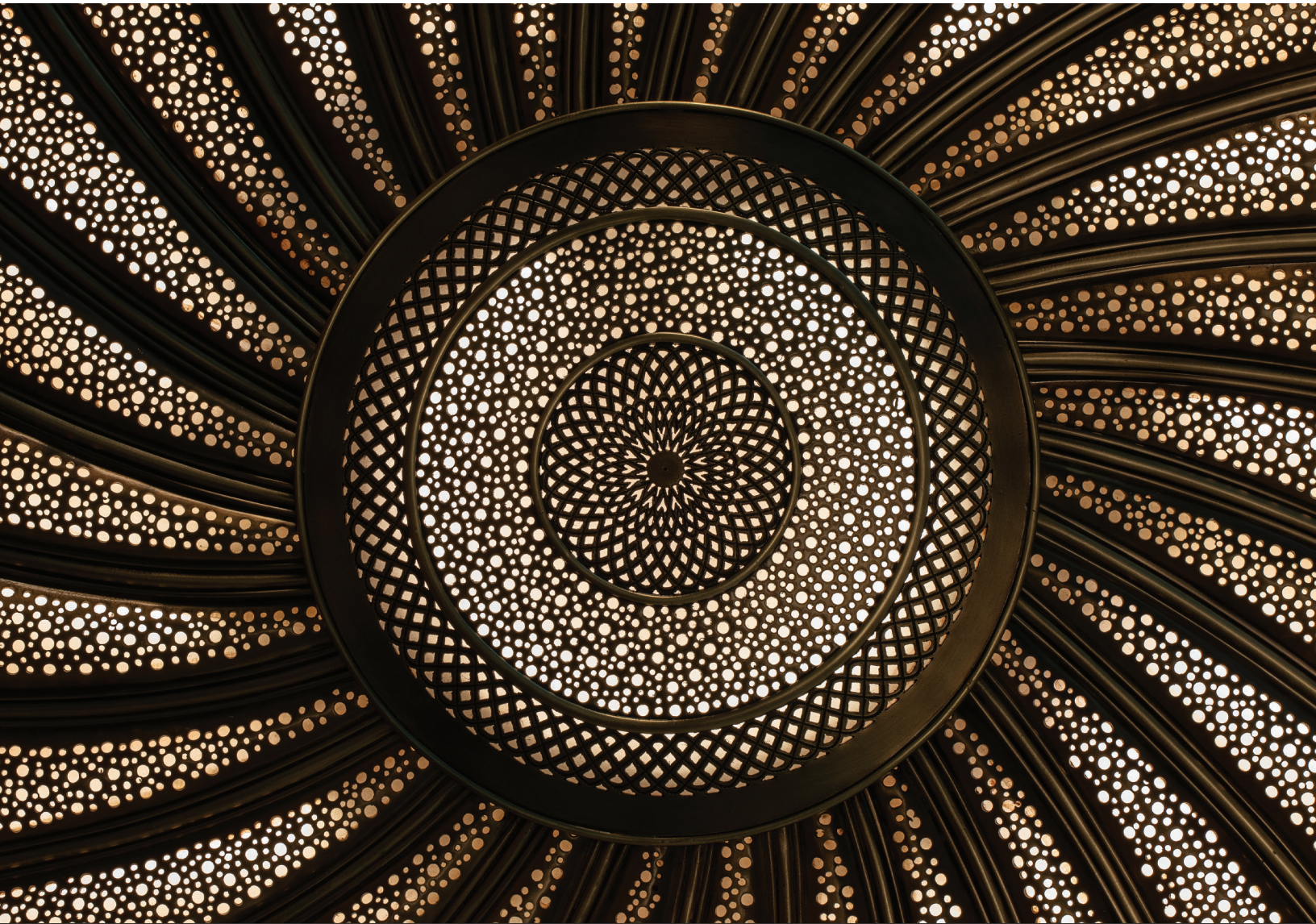


A PUBLICATION FOR LEADERSHIP PROFESSIONALS

where best practice meets next practice

THE MOBIUS STRIP

2023



COSMIC SPIRAL BY FEATURED ARTIST, YAHYA



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Dear Friends

Welcome to the 2023 edition of our transformational leadership magazine *The Mobius Strip*. We are honored to share just-published scholarship alongside a collection of timely book excerpts from our extended community.

This edition includes excerpts from Mobius Senior Expert Professor Amy Edmondson's new book *Right Kind of Wrong: The Science of Failing Well* and *Attuned: Practicing Interdependence to Heal Our Trauma – and Our World* by Mobius Master Transformational Faculty member Thomas Hübl. Both titles were published this September. Amy's book continues her landmark approach to establishing psychological safety as the foundations for teaming, innovation and organizational health. Thomas' latest groundbreaking offering, shares profound insights about core relational competencies we seek to develop as practitioners. Both books offer a roadmap for the emotional intelligence, authenticity and trust we are cultivating in our leadership programs both for executives and the organizations they lead.

We are delighted to showcase book excerpts from Mobius Senior Expert Professor Hitendra Wadhwa, Mobius Transformational Faculty member Joe Weston, and Mobius Master Transformational Faculty member Dr. Shai Tubali and important contributions from Mobius Friends: authors Laura Watkins and Vanessa Dietzel; Jacqueline Brassey, Aaron de Smet and Michiel Kruijt; Nicolai Chen Nielsen and Lars Tvede.

This issue also includes three related papers on the craft of transformational facilitation from Mobius Transformational Faculty member Robin Alfred on transformational fields, from our friend Heather Plett on the art of holding space, and the article based on my keynote address at last year's Annual Gathering where I first introduced Heather's work in the broader context of why we gather each year as a global community of practitioners devoted to the work of refining ourselves as instruments of vertical development and healing.

Our featured artist whose work can be found in a special centerfold of the magazine, is Yahya, a designer and artist whose gorgeous pieces are all hand-created in his Moroccan workshop and have been, or are currently, exhibited in Paris or Marrakech. We hope this precious beauty might inspire you to donate to the recovery effort after the tragic earthquake there in mid-September. We provide more information about donating on page 4.

Finally, we include a collection of professional development opportunities from Mobius and our alliance partners which we hope you will consider in the months ahead.

We welcome you to share the digital version of the magazine – available on our website under the Next Practice Institute, with friends and colleagues.

We hope you enjoy our magazine and look forward to seeing many of you in October at this year's Annual Gathering of the Next Practice Institute where we continue our journey together.

Warmest best,

Amy Edmondson Fox

The Annual Gatherings of our global practitioner community are sponsored by the professional development arm of our organization, Next Practice Institute. NPI has been established to codify the disciplines of transformational leadership, spread thought leadership in its interrelated fields of study, and professionally develop a generation of facilitators, coaches, mediators, consultants and team interventionists deeply skilled in the arts of transformational change. For more information about Next Practice Institute programs and thought leadership, please visit our website.

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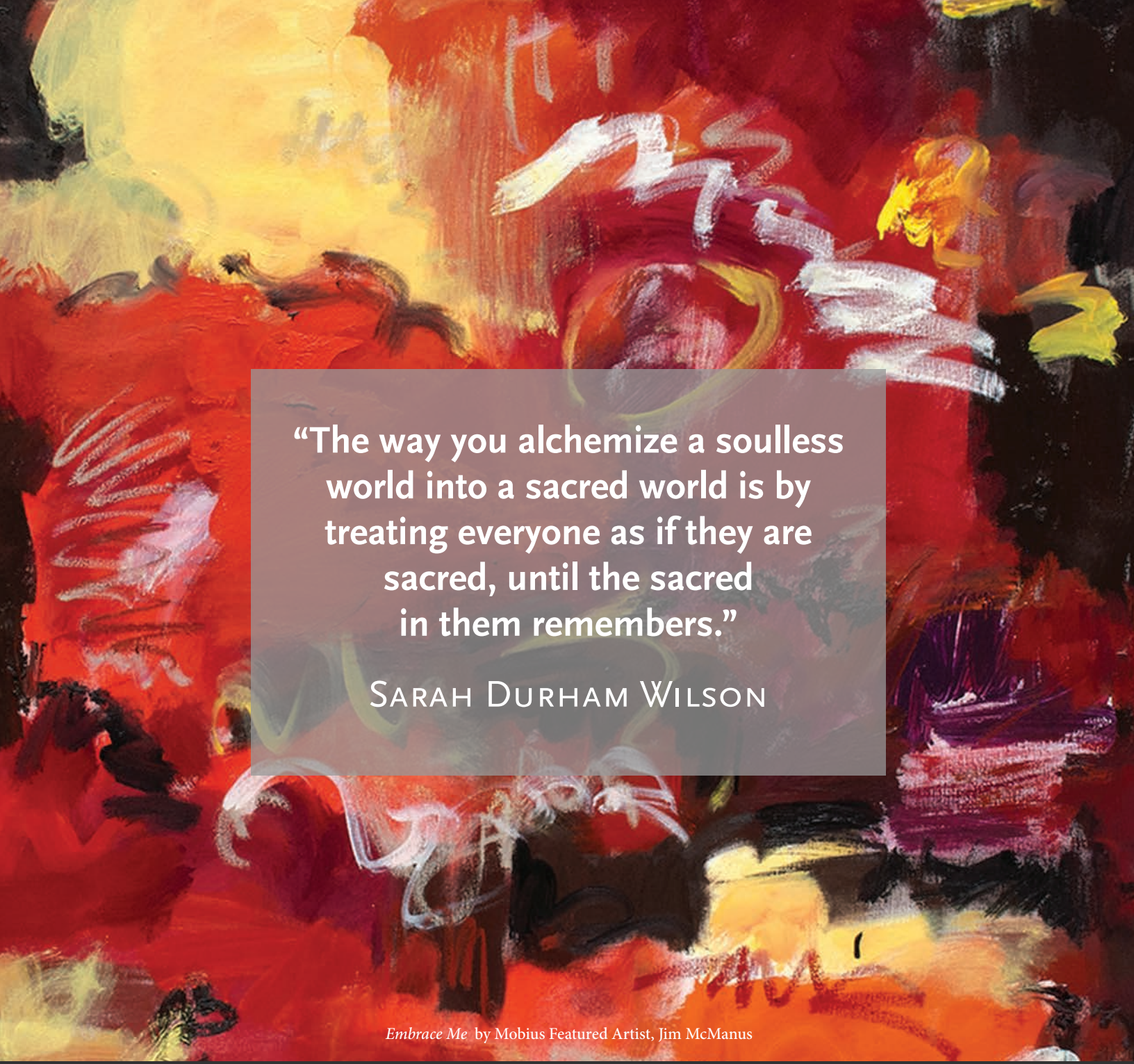


FEATURED ARTIST YAHYA

Fascinated by the effect of light and shadow, Yahya delicately evokes emotion and atmosphere creating intricate patterns by projecting shadows from hidden sources of invisible light. The lighting pieces are functional but also for decorative and ambient use.

They bridge the gap between tradition and modernity and East and West whilst being difficult to classify, sometimes they are considered design pieces, other times artworks...





“The way you alchemize a soulless world into a sacred world is by treating everyone as if they are sacred, until the sacred in them remembers.”

SARAH DURHAM WILSON

Embrace Me by Mobius Featured Artist, Jim McManus

As we go to print, Morocco has been devastated by an earthquake with immediate rescue efforts struggling to reach the epicenter. Irrespective of when you are reading this edition, we would encourage anyone who can to donate. Since 2002, Global Giving (globalgiving.org) is a nonprofit platform that supports other nonprofits operating around the world, on-the-ground to get much needed cash and emergency relief that works to those in tremendous need. With the mission to transform aid to accelerate community-led responses, this is an excellent opportunity to make a direct donation or give someone else a charitable gift card according to regions and relief projects operating globally. Alternatively, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), also known as Doctors Without Borders remains an excellent organization to support.

Right Kind of Wrong

The Science of Failing Well

A book excerpt by Mobius Senior Expert and the Novartis Professor of Leadership and Management at Harvard Business School, Amy Edmondson



We are delighted to publish this excerpt from Professor Edmondson's just-published book.

“We used to think of failure as the opposite of success. Now, we’re often torn between two ‘failure cultures’: one that says to avoid failure at all costs, the other that says fail fast, fail often. The trouble is that both approaches lack the crucial distinctions to help us separate good failure from bad. As a result, we miss the opportunity to fail well.

After decades of award-winning research, Amy Edmondson is here to upend our understanding of failure and make it work for us. In *Right Kind of Wrong*, Edmondson provides the framework to think, discuss, and practice failure wisely. Outlining the three archetypes of failure – basic, complex, and intelligent – she showcases how to minimize unproductive failure while maximizing what we gain from flubs of all stripes. She illustrates how we and our organizations can embrace our human fallibility, learn exactly when failure is our friend, and prevent most of it when it is not. This is the key to pursuing smart risks and preventing avoidable harm.

With vivid, real-life stories from business, pop culture, history, and more, Edmondson gives us specifically tailored practices, skills, and mindsets to help us replace shame and blame with curiosity, vulnerability, and personal growth.”

From the description of the hardcover edition

Excerpted from Right Kind of Wrong published by Atria, a division of Simon & Schuster, Inc. Copyright © 2023 by Amy Edmondson.

ROAD MAP FOR THE JOURNEY AHEAD

An excerpt from the Introduction

This book offers frameworks that I hope will help you think about, talk about, and practice failure in a way that allows you to work and live more joyfully.

Part one introduces a framework of failure types. The first chapter offers key concepts in failure science, followed by three chapters to describe the three failure archetypes: intelligent, basic, and complex.

Understanding this taxonomy will give you a deeper understanding of failure's mechanisms and of what it means to fail well. This will help you design your own experiments to stretch beyond limits, self-imposed or otherwise. I will share best practices related to each type of failure – for learning from them, as well as for preventing some of them. This survey of the failure landscape will help you truly welcome the good kinds of failure, while getting better at learning from all kinds.

Intelligent failures, the subject of chapter 2, are the “good failures” that are necessary for progress – the small and large discoveries that advance science, technology, and our lives. Pioneers doing something new will always face unexpected problems. The key is to learn from them, rather than to deny or feel bad about them, give up, or pretend it should have been otherwise.

Chapter 3 digs into *basic failures*, the most easily understood and the most preventable. Caused by mistakes and slips, basic failures can be avoided with care and access to relevant knowledge. Mistakenly sending an email meant for your sister to a boss is a basic failure. Yes, some might call it catastrophic, but it's basic nonetheless. Checklists are just one of the tools you'll learn about for reducing basic failures.

As pernicious as basic failures can be, *complex failures*, described in chapter 4, are the real monsters that loom large in our work, lives, organizations, and societies. Complex failures *have not one but multiple causes* and often include a pinch of bad luck, too. These unfortunate breakdowns will always be with us

due to the inherent uncertainty and interdependence we face in our day-to-day lives. This is why catching small problems before they spiral out of control to cause a more substantial complex failure becomes a crucial capability in the modern world.

Part two presents my latest thinking on *self-awareness*, *situation awareness*, and *system awareness* – and how these capabilities intersect with the three types of failure. This will be a chance to dig more deeply into tactics and habits that allow people to practice the science of failing well

at work and in their lives. Chapter 5 explores *self-awareness* and its crucial role in the science of failure. Our human capacity for sustained self-reflection, humility, honesty, and curiosity propels us to seek out patterns that provide insight into our behavior. Chapter 6 digs into *situation awareness* – and learning how to read a given situation for its failure potential. You'll have a sense of what situations present an accident waiting to happen so as to help prevent unnecessary failure.

Chapter 7 looks at *system awareness*. We live in a world of complex systems where our actions trigger unintended consequences. But learning to see and appreciate systems – say, family, organization, nature, or politics – helps us prevent a lot of failures.

These ideas and frameworks come together to help us answer the question, in chapter 8, of *how to thrive as a fallible human being*. All of us are fallible. The question is whether, and how, we use this fact to craft a fulfilling life full of never-ending learning.

**“Success is
stumbling from
failure to failure
with no loss of
enthusiasm.”**

WINSTON CHURCHILL

CONFUSION: NOT ALL FAILURE IS ALIKE!

An excerpt from Chapter One

Although “fail fast, fail often” has become a Silicon Valley mantra meant to celebrate failure, and corporate failure parties and failure résumés have become popular, much of the discussion in books, articles, and podcasts is simple and superficial – more rhetoric than reality. For instance, it's clear that no company should celebrate a plant manager whose automobile assembly line fails fast and often.

Context	Example	State of Knowledge	Uncertainty	Most common failure type
<i>Consistent</i>	Vehicle assembly line	Well-developed	Low	Basic failure
<i>Variable</i>	Surgical operating room	Well-developed knowledge, vulnerable to unexpected events	Medium	Complex failure
<i>Novel</i>	Scientific laboratory	Limited	High	Intelligent failure

Ditto for today's heart surgeons. No wonder we are confused!

Fortunately, this confusion can be reduced by understanding the three types of failure, and how differences in context matter. For instance, in some situations well-developed knowledge about how to achieve desired results makes routines and plans generally unfold as expected; for example, following a recipe to bake a cake or drawing patients' blood in a phlebotomy lab. I call these *consistent contexts*. Other times you're in brand-new territory – forced to try things to see what works. The pioneering cardiac surgeons we met at the start of this chapter were clearly in new terrain, and most of their failures were intelligent. Other examples of *novel contexts* include designing a new product or figuring out how to get protective masks to millions of people during a worldwide pandemic.

Failures are more likely in novel than consistent contexts, so we don't get upset about them, right? Wrong. Your amygdala – that small part of your brain responsible for activating a fight-or-flight response – detects a threat no matter the context. Relatedly, you might be surprised to discover that your negative emotional reaction to failures, regardless of the level of *real* danger, can be surprisingly similar. But, a simple typology for distinguishing failures can help us make healthy attributions about them, counteracting the amygdala hijack.

In addition to novel and consistent contexts, all of us frequently find ourselves in *variable contexts* – those moments in life when knowledge exists to handle

that particular type of situation, but life throws you a curveball. For example, doctors and nurses working in a hospital emergency room, no matter how seasoned or experienced, may encounter patients presenting a cluster of previously unseen symptoms, as in the early days of the COVID virus. Pilots must be prepared to fly through unexpected weather patterns. In our daily lives, we face situations where we have extensive prior knowledge but still face meaningful uncertainty. The most experienced teachers never know in advance what challenges a new class of students will bring. If you move to a new place or take a new job, you can never be sure how you might or might not fit in – even if you've talked to people there and tried to learn what you could about its culture. Until you arrive, you have an informed prediction, not a guarantee, about what it will be like.

Over the years I've studied people working in manufacturing assembly lines (consistent context), corporate research and development labs (novel context), and cardiac surgery operating rooms (variable context). I've noticed that different organizational contexts set the stage for different expectations about failing, as depicted in the table above. Yet even though common sense dictates that people should be less allergic to failure in a lab than in a production line, it's not always true. Nobody likes to fail. Period.

Most of us don't stop to challenge our spontaneous emotional responses to the events in our lives. But you can learn how to do this – and it's a crucial skill to bring more learning and joy into your life. ■

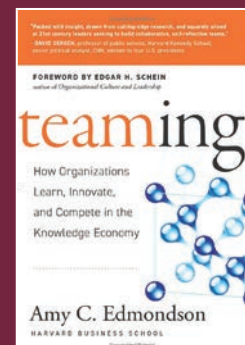
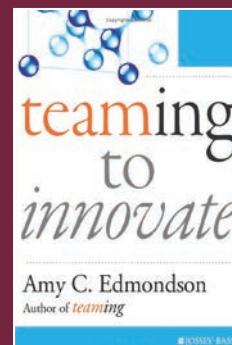
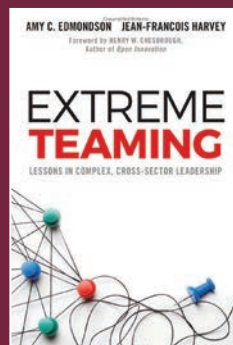
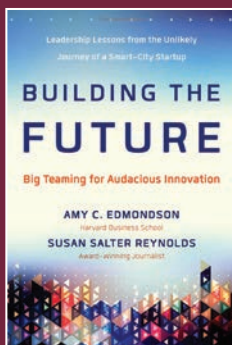
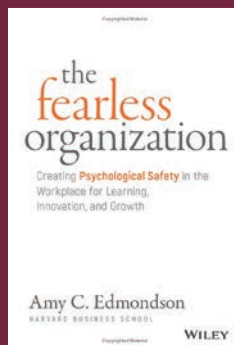


AMY C. EDMONDSON is a Mobius Senior Expert and the Novartis Professor of Leadership and Management at the Harvard Business School, where she studies people and organizations seeking to make a positive difference in the world through the work they do. She has pioneered the concept of psychological safety for over twenty years and was recognized in 2021 as number one on the Thinkers50 global ranking of management thinkers. She also received that organization's Breakthrough Idea Award in 2019 and Talent Award in 2017. In 2019 she was first on HR Magazine's list of the 20 Most Influential International Thinkers in Human Resources.

Professor Edmondson's research has been published in *Harvard Business Review* and *California Management Review*, as well as in academic journals such as *Administrative Science Quarterly* and the *Academy of Management Journal*. Her most recent prior book, *The Fearless Organization* (Wiley & Sons, 2018), explains psychological safety – what it is, why it matters, and how to build it – and has been translated into fifteen languages. In addition to publishing several books and numerous articles in top academic outlets, Edmondson has written for, or her work has been covered by, media such as the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Financial Times*, *Psychology Today*, *Fast Company*, and *strategy + business*. Her TED Talk on teaming has been viewed more than 3 million times.

Before her academic career, Edmondson was director of research at Pecos River Learning Centers, where she worked with CEO Larry Wilson to design and implement change programs in large companies. In this role she discovered a passion for understanding how leaders can build organizations as places where people can learn, grow, and contribute to making a better world. In the early 1980s, she was chief engineer for the legendary architect and inventor Buckminster Fuller, who, not incidentally, was a strong advocate of learning from failure. Edmondson received her PhD in organizational behavior, AM in psychology, and AB in engineering and design from Harvard University.

She lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with her husband, George Daley, a physician/scientist intimately familiar with the science of failing well, and relishes all visits from their twentysomething sons.



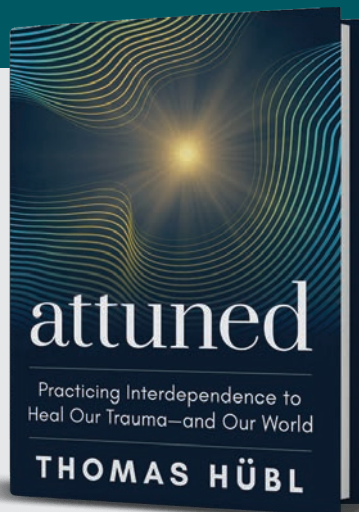
Attuned: Practicing Interdependence to Heal Our Trauma – and Our World

A book excerpt by Mobius Master Transformational Faculty member Thomas Hübl's visionary guide for tapping into our collective human consciousness to help heal our traumatized world.

SUMMARY

We are all connected – and we are all dependent on each other and the world we live in. Yet even though technology has allowed us to virtually share our lives with more people than ever, the result has been a growing pattern of personal isolation, alienation, and division. Why is this? “We are seeing the manifestation of collective trauma,” says luminary Thomas Hübl. “The profoundly complex challenges we face demand a new level of human collaboration.”

With *Attuned: Practicing Interdependence to Heal Our Trauma – and Our World*, Thomas shares a bold and empowering guide for anyone committed to the healing



of our struggling world. He gives a compelling exploration of the “relational field,” through which we transmit and receive experiences, hopes, fears, and dreams within the collective. In this book, Thomas offers practical ways to process individual, ancestral, and cultural trauma; draws on deep resources for resilience; and uses the multifaceted tool of “transparent communication” to enliven and deepen our relationship with all beings.

By embracing our interdependence, we can activate what is needed to respond and evolve through the challenges of our age.

“It may take only a small number of us to establish a new level of collective coherence – to share our light, heal our wounds, and realize the unawakened potential of our world.”

– THOMAS HÜBL

Perhaps, rather than finding ourselves alive in a time of exponential, unstoppable decline, we will discover the power to awaken and initiate newer, higher, evolutionary gifts. Though, to accomplish any or all of these things, I believe we must do them together – not separately, but in relation.

THE ART OF ATTUNEMENT

An excerpt from Chapter 3

An essential proposition of transparent communication is that every human being is comprised of a vast living library filled with all possible information; nothing is left out. The ancestral wisdom of our most primordial ancestors resides in our DNA and in every cell of our bodies, brains, and nervous systems. This living library is intricately patterned on all that has been learned by life over countless millennia – much the way your web browser contains records of all of the websites you visited today and every other day since the last time you cleared or integrated its content. If you want to know everything you could about how you have spent your life or what people and events have impacted you and how, you need only take a look in your inner library.

Nothing gets deleted; everything is stored right inside you. The moment you were conceived, the day you were born, your first-time crawling or walking, your first and last kiss – everything you have ever learned, felt, or experienced is all safely filed away.

This library contains many levels and tiers, each of which stores the knowledge and wisdom you acquired at every stage of your physical and psychological development, plus all that has been passed down to you from your ancestors. When you are in relation with a highly attuned person – someone who is attentive, available, curious, and aware – they can review many of the “files” that are housed within you. Are you intellectual? Are you highly social? In what ways are you intuitive? Did you experience a childhood trauma at age three? Or perhaps at age ten when your parents

divorced? All of this is readable at the subtle level and is accessible within your subtle body or energy library.

Attunement, like listening, is essential to authentic relating. By practicing attunement with others, you grow in relational wisdom – the facility to see others more clearly, to feel (and feel with) them more deeply, and to connect in altogether richer, more authentic ways.

To extend the library metaphor, imagine books on a shelf. If you went looking for a certain book but decided to jog past all the shelves, you’d have a hard time reading any of the titles. In order to select the right book, you need to slow down and tune in to absorb the information before you. The same applies when attempting to connect with another person. Mature relationality requires you to slow down and tune in. It’s about learning to adjust your “speed” to the other person’s so you can better meet and connect. It’s about developing the capacity to align your frequency to their frequency, your perception to their perception, your biofield to their biofield.

Every person we meet is a particular movement or arrangement of energy, like a piece of music. Only through deep listening – by attuning and receiving – can we adjust the speed of our movement in order to meet and receive the other deeply and well.

We have all heard the axiom that two heads are better than one. It speaks to the higher intelligence of attunement, a cornerstone of relational wisdom. Whether you notice or not, each time you meet eyes with someone – a stranger, a coworker, a dear friend – a full-body transmission of energy/information is exchanged.



Body and Soul by Mobius Featured Artist, Jim McManus

The body-mind is the system with which I relate to others and to my world; it is my instrument. By developing the subtle capacities of my instrument, I learn to tune in – to hear, feel, sense, and see – to any unresolved energies in myself or others, such as the shock and fear felt by the child. I could track the location of these energies in his body by tuning in to my own body and reading the information it conveys. This is all done gently, subtly, quietly. Yet, for the other person, it creates a powerful feeling of being seen, or what Dr. Daniel Siegel, clinical professor of psychiatry at UCLA School of Medicine and founder of the field of interpersonal neurobiology, describes as “feeling felt.” It is intrinsic to the nature of children (and all people) that feeling felt is experienced as positive feedback. Feeling felt is a function of relational safety and belonging, and it allows a growing child to open and express even more of who they are. Put simply, *feeling seen* encourages the human will or soul to continue to flower.

This is very important: only when we are grounded and in tune with ourselves can we feel connected and in tune with another person. Using higher attunement, you can connect more fully with yourself and make yourself more available to the other person. Without grounded co-relation (in which both parties are embodied, attuned, and intentional in their interaction), you might find yourself activated or triggered by something in a

friend’s story. Or if your fear remains unconscious and unfelt, you might try giving them advice that is coming from your fear. However, if you are in true relation with the other person, you will be able to host her within you. With grounded presence, you will begin to notice subtle details that had been invisible to you before.

Being truly present with another person is among the most precious gifts you can offer. After just a short time together this way, your friend will start to feel a little more grounded and relaxed too. Your grounded, relaxed nervous system has a co-regulatory function for their nervous system. By consciously choosing to stay open and

connected to what you are feeling or sensing, you provide an unspoken but very real support for others who are connecting with you.

Our task then is to anchor ourselves in the authentic process of listening: to connect with the other person’s mental energy, to witness and host his emotional energy, to be present with his physical form. When we are more retracted and energetically closed, the amount of energy and higher intelligence that can flow through us is likewise restricted. We cut off the valve to emergent wisdom, to future flow. Rather than feeling connected with others and open to what is present, we exist in relation to the past. But by consciously practicing grounded attunement, we make ourselves more available to the process of being and becoming. Grounded attunement raises our capacity to respond to our experiences and enhances

***Feeling seen
encourages the
human will or soul
to continue to
flower.***

our resilience. It increases our ability to intelligently respond rather than react. These are all important ways that we accept *response-ability* for our lives, allowing us to live more deeply into the “wake up, grow up, clean up, and show up” directive described by American philosopher and integral theorist, Ken Wilber. Really showing up takes commitment and practice.

Of course, we may set out to be grounded, intentional, and embodied as we relate with others, yet find our interactions uncomfortable or even difficult. I’m often asked, “What do I do when I encounter resistance from the other person?” If your intention is to be in a space of healthy relation, then the answer is quite simple: be with it. Be with the resistance. Notice it, feel it. After all, if you have set a precondition that the other person must be fully open throughout your exchange, you have already limited the interaction! Any resistance you feel from them will cause you to contract, to pull away. You may have shown up to the experience with a yes, but when you felt the other’s no, you quickly expressed a no to match it. Meeting resistance with resistance is rarely effective at sustaining connection. Bringing awareness to the process is the point; awareness enhances coherence, which increases space and clarity and opens the door to healing relation.

By creating a daily, ongoing awareness practice, we cultivate mature perspective and the capacity to relate with others, which is an ongoing process – one that requires humility and a willingness to stay open to the new and to accept not knowing. ■



THOMAS HÜBL, PHD, is a teacher and author who works within the complexity of systems and cultural change by integrating modern science with the insights of humanity’s wisdom traditions. Since the early 2000s, he has trained thousands of people in the US and Europe, and serves as an advisor and guest faculty for universities and organizations. In addition to *Attuned*, he is the author of *Healing Collective Trauma: A Process for Integrating Our Intergenerational and Cultural Wounds*, which was listed in Oprah Daily as one of “10 Books to Help with Old, Painful Traumas.”

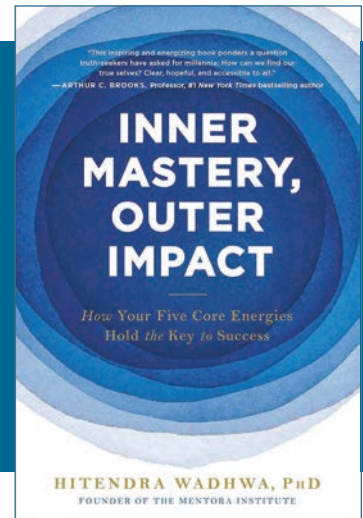
For the past several years Mobius has been privileged that Thomas has guided many of our practitioners in the professional development of state-of-the-art healing practices and trauma-informed approaches to executive development. Through the Next Practice Institute, Thomas offers workshops, supervision groups/hyper-learning circles, and study groups exploring mystical principles.

You may wish to consider joining our supervision/hyperlearning circles led by Thomas with a small group of dedicated practitioners. Our supervision circles are intended as both a profound healing resource and professional development immersion for our global practitioner community and our alliance partners. These groups are process-centric opportunities offering intimate access to Thomas as you undertake your own healing and integration work for personal, family, collective and ancestral trauma. Participants learn through first hand experience his unique way of supporting this transformative process. For more information about joining a group please write to NPI@mobiusleadership.com

Inner Mastery, Outer Impact

How Your Five Core Energies Hold the Key to Success

A book excerpt from Mobius Senior Expert and Professor of Practice at Columbia Business School
Hitendra Wadhwa, Ph.D.



WHAT IS OUR “BEST”

An excerpt from Chapter 2

How can you bring out your best? What is your “best”? One way to approach the question is by compiling a list of qualities that you should master – qualities that experts will tell you are critical to success in life and work, qualities that successful people exhibit. Here are some that are often cited:

- **Be adaptive!** The world is changing fast, and you must change with it. And be **tenacious** too! Have the grit to keep fighting the good fight.
- **Be an extrovert!** When you project warmth and energy and enthusiasm, you draw people toward you. And be an **introvert** as well! Listen mindfully, empathize with others, and understand them.
- **Be a risk taker!** Innovate, embrace failure, step out of your comfort zone. Don’t stay stuck in the same groove. And be a **risk manager** too! Do not bet the farm. Anticipate problems and be prepared for them.
- **Be a visionary!** Take giant leaps and have your head in the skies. And be **pragmatic** too! Keep your feet planted firmly on the ground.

- **Be decisive!** Don’t let hesitancy or paralysis prevent you from taking timely action. And be **patient** as well! You can’t pluck the fruit without first sowing the seeds and watering the plant.
- **Be connected!** Gather ideas from others. Build your network. Don’t eat lunch alone. And **disconnect** too! Practice solitude and reflection – that’s what the great ones do.
- **Be agreeable!** Listen to others and find common ground with them. Be **assertive**, too! Have the courage to express uncomfortable truths and stand your ground.

This isn’t even a complete list, for we could keep going on and on. To put it simply, to succeed in our fast-paced, ever-changing, uncertain, and complicated world, you need to be *everything* – *and the complete opposite*. The right behavior totally depends on the situation you are in.

The idea of being everything and the complete opposite may sound inauthentic and unachievable. And yet I have found that those who have left a luminous mark on history have practiced this seeming contradiction, changing their behavior from moment to moment, embracing complexity and paradox, holding

opposites in balance within themselves. Josiah Holland, one of Abraham Lincoln's earliest biographers, wrote, "The writer has conversed with multitudes of men who claimed to know Mr. Lincoln intimately; yet there are not two of the whole number who agree in their estimate of him. The fact was that he rarely showed more than one aspect of himself to one man. He opened himself to men in different directions." Holland goes on to recount the different qualities people attributed to Lincoln: "A very ambitious man." "Without a particle of ambition." "One of the saddest men that ever lived." "One of the jolliest men that has ever lived." "The most cunning man in America." "Has not a particle of cunning in him." "A leader of the people." "Always led by the people." "Cool and impassive." "Susceptible to the strongest passions."

Everything – and the complete opposite. When we pause to think about it, the concept starts to make

sense. Lincoln was president at a time when his nation was in crisis. He needed to display an acute understanding of the different high-stakes situations he was thrust into and adapt his behavior accordingly, without letting his personality or predilections limit his effectiveness.

But something else was also operating in Lincoln. His friend and law partner for twenty years, William Herndon, observed, "His pursuit of the truth was indefatigable. Lincoln loved truth for its own sake. He saw all things through a perfect mental lens." Lincoln operated from a steady Core within. He leaned into outer chaos from a place of inner harmony. And that is the thesis I want to offer you – that when you have mastered your inner game, you become free to play your best outer game. The key to success lies within – in operating from your Inner Core.

Your Inner Core brings the clarity of mind you need to analyze issues objectively and make enlightened choices. It frees you from habitual modes of thought and from confining personality traits and attachments, so your choices can be guided not by ego or insecurity but by your commitment to your purpose and values. It creates a space between the triggers you experience – the disappointing email, the challenging question from a colleague at a meeting – and your response to those triggers, empowering you to act with intention rather than instinct. It grounds you on the inside and then empowers you to act in the most impactful way on the outside. You bring out your best when your behavior is the outer expression of your Core Energies: Purpose, Wisdom, Growth, Love, and Self-Realization.

And if this is true of you, it is true of everyone. To get the best out of others, you need to help them activate their Core. When you are operating from your Core and they from theirs, together you form a Common Core. In that moment everyone experiences a deep resonance, not just in what they are saying or doing but in what they are feeling, thinking, and valuing on the inside. Reflect on moments like this – when you and another individual, you and your family, you and your team, you and an audience felt a kind of fusion of spirit, as though there were only one heart beating in the room. Such occasions may be rare, but they are real. And magical.

YOUR INNER CORE

What is your true self? I offer that it is your Inner Core – the space of highest potential within you, your best self. When you operate from your Core, you are free from ego, attachments, blinding beliefs, limiting habits, and insecurities. You are at peace with yourself. It reflects the purest part of who you are and your noblest intentions.

If you're like most of us, you sometimes operate from your Core, sometimes drift away from it, and sometimes (sigh) veer far, far away. And yet that part of who you are is always there for you to come back to and connect more deeply with.

You may have heard or used phrases like "I like Peter's energy" or "That individual just didn't bring the right energy to the meeting." Everything we do – our thoughts, emotions, speech, and behavior – is fueled by our energy. My research has revealed that all of us possess, in that space of highest potential within, five Core Energies. We experience a powerful shift when we start to activate and express these energies in everything we do.

Usually, when we strive to do well at something, we assess ourselves by asking, “Am I saying the right thing, doing the right thing?” Our speech and action are the outer metrics we use to measure our performance. But there are inner metrics we can use as well.

Inner Performance Metrics

Ask yourself:

- How Committed am I to my Purpose?
- How calm and receptive am I to the truth? (Wisdom)
- How curious and open to learnings that help me further activate and express my Core in all I do? (Growth)
- How connected with all who cross my path, and all I serve? (Love)
- How centered am I in my tranquil and joyful spirit within? (Self-Realization)

Getting to this level of mastery may seem intimidating. But there’s much to be optimistic about. When we sift through findings across a range of scientific fields – positive psychology, the psychology of ultimate concerns, emotional intelligence, cognitive behavioral therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, altruism, neuroplasticity, gratitude, influence, motivation, self-esteem, self-efficacy, mindfulness, empathy, growth mindset, and more – the conclusion is clear: within each of us lies vast, untapped potential to rewire our brains over time, to become more and more anchored in our authentic self, and to help others get there too.

Instead of pursuing myriad paths to learn how to be “everything and the complete opposite,” I invite you to translate your quest for success into one simple goal: to learn to operate from your Inner Core in all you do.

How Can We Excel at Leadership?

For many years, I puzzled over how the people I’ve researched – Gandhi, Eleanor Roosevelt, Steve Jobs, Lincoln, Mother Teresa, and others – became good at leadership. After all, they held remarkable sway over people. Well, first, let me tell you how they *didn’t* get there.

YOUR FIVE CORE ENERGIES

- ▶ **Purpose:** Pursue a purpose-driven path in life, paved with values, with goals as your milestones.
- ▶ **Wisdom:** Uncover and embrace the truth in all matters, and direct your emotions and thoughts in the service of your Purpose.
- ▶ **Growth:** Each day, grow your inward connection with your Core and your outward expression of it in all you do.
- ▶ **Love:** Take joy in others’ joy, and find success in their success.
- ▶ **Self-Realization:** Be centered in your tranquil and joyful spirit within.

Lincoln had only one year of schooling. Eleanor Roosevelt’s education didn’t advance beyond high school. Mother Teresa joined a nun order at the age of eighteen. Jobs dropped out of college. Mandela and Gandhi obtained law degrees, but both were, of their own confession, indifferent students. Quite evidently, these people didn’t take any leadership classes or executive workshops. And perhaps that isn’t a bad thing, for the reason I now explain.

Experts have organized the discipline of leadership into competencies, and then developed classes to teach each competency to aspiring leaders. *How to have difficult conversations. Build trust. Give feedback. Coach others. Inspire others. Change others’ behavior.* And more.

But this approach to teaching leadership frequently leads to the “learning-doing” gap. Participants attend a class, get some training on a competency, but then aren’t able to effectively translate their intellectual understanding into an embodied practice in real life. Experts have believed that to close this gap they need to develop better training or get learners to be more motivated. But my research shows that this approach

has some fundamental limits, and is in need of a major upgrade. Here's why.

In the conversation that Babette, the chemist, had with Gordon, her boss, [described below], she gently turned his mood around and won him over to helping her improve the research paper so they could send it

BABETTE'S STORY

Babette, an organic chemist, was doing drug research at a lab. Her boss was a well-regarded scientist but also a very temperamental man. After taking some coaching from a renowned psychotherapist, Dr. David Burns, on how to engage better with her boss, Babette one day walked into his office to find out what he thought of a research paper they were co-authoring. He told her that he had thrown it in the wastebasket because it was the "worst piece of rubbish" he'd ever seen. The paper represented months of arduous research. Babette replied,

Gordon, I'm not a bit surprised that you thought the paper was rubbish. To be honest, I had the exact same feeling when I was writing it. I felt like I was rambling on and on. I'm always amazed when I read your papers because they're so incredibly clear and lucid. That's actually one of the reasons I wanted to work with you and why I was so excited when you offered me a position last fall. The results of our research could be extremely important, and I know that if the paper were well written, it might make a tremendous impact. The paper may be beyond repair, but I'm wondering if you might have any suggestions about how I could make it better. I want to learn as much from you as I possibly can.

Gordon's mood seemed to instantly improve, and he pulled the paper from the wastebasket. As he looked it over, he pointed out problems that needed to be addressed and offered ideas about other fixes Babette could make. Subsequently she not only was able to publish the paper in a top journal in her field, but also received a major award for their research.

In this situation, who was leading, and who was following?

out for publication. Take a moment to read what she said. Then tell me this: In that dialog, was she having a difficult conversation with him? Building trust with him? Giving him feedback? Coaching him? Inspiring him? Influencing him? Changing his behavior?

Wasn't she doing all the above? And that, too, in a mere thirty-five seconds!

So then does it make sense to see these as separate competencies? If Babette had taken a separate class on each of these skills, read a different book, or consulted a different expert, well, then, which toolkit or book or expert would she have pulled out to guide her conversation with Gordon? If you approached your growth as a leader one competency at a time, you're unlikely to get to a place where you fully embody the discipline. And even if you acquired mastery over multiple skills, you'd never be able to execute seven of them in a half-minute exchange the way Babette did. This competency-based approach was a practical first step to take in the twentieth century as we started to understand and map out the domain of leadership, but now we know a lot more about the science of human nature. So it is time to give this approach a graceful burial.

Lincoln once said, "That some achieve great success is proof to all that others can achieve it as well." The fact that some people with limited formal education have been able to figure out the equations of leadership on their own means that a radically simple and intuitive approach to leadership must exist – we just need to find it. Let me show you where I believe it's been hiding.

The Missing Core

When we find that we're not good at handling difficult conversations, or influencing others, or inspiring a team, perhaps these aren't as distinctive a set of challenges as they appear but are symptoms arising from the same root cause. *The root cause is an inability to activate the Core in yourself or others.* Our research at Mentora reveals that this is what great leaders are adept at: forming a deep, resonant bond with people by activating one or more of the five Core Energies in themselves and others in all situations. You can do so as well.

The first step is to activate one or more of the Core Energies in your own self. The more you

operate from your Core, the more freedom you will have to choose how you show up in every situation. Instead of being locked in by your impulses, habits, emotions, distorted thoughts, limiting beliefs, personality, or ego, you will be committed, calm, curious, connected, and centered.

Core Energies are infectious, so when you activate them in yourself, others around you will get stirred as well. That is why when people were in Gandhi's presence, they felt very calm. In Mother Teresa's presence, very compassionate. In Steve Jobs's presence, very creative. In Churchill's presence, very courageous. In Mandela's presence, very conciliatory. Inner mastery engenders outer impact.

Once you're anchored in your Core, you can then focus on helping others anchor in theirs. But there's something even more foundational you need to do first, and it relates to the greatest leadership lesson I've learned from Steve Jobs.

Steve entered a world where high-tech products abounded with features but had poor design and usability. Think of a personal computer with a thick user manual, or a mobile phone with thirty buttons. Businesses at that time believed that technology couldn't be made easy to use or elegant in design,

and that consumers only cared about features and low price. Steve took a contrarian position, obsessing over the simplicity and design of Apple products and then offering them at premium prices. His vision showed early promise, but then came crashing down when Apple floundered. In 1994, while he was out of Apple, he was asked in an interview with *Rolling Stone* magazine if he still believed in the limitless potential of technology. Jobs answered, "Oh sure. It's not a faith in technology. It's a faith in people . . . that they're basically good and smart, and if you give them tools, they'll do wonderful things with them." Jobs said he believed that people "care about things that are beautifully conceived and well made."

Jonathan Ive, Apple's chief designer, later reflected on a conversation he had with Jobs close to the end of Jobs's life – about whether they had been successful. "I think Steve felt a vindication. It wasn't a vindication of 'I'm right' or 'I told you so.' It was a vindication that restored his sense of faith in humanity. Given the choice, people do discern and value quality more than we give them credit for." In another reflection, Ive has shared how he believes consumers "will sense the care that went into [making beautiful products]. I do believe [people]



Tempest by Mobius Featured Artist, Jim McManus

are capable of discerning far more than [they] are capable of articulating.”

Steve Jobs was able to peer into a certain nook within our souls. There, he saw an appreciation for simplicity, perfection, beauty, and creativity. Many of us may not have been aware that these qualities existed within us, which is why he wasn't interested in using market research to ask people what they wanted. But unlike most business owners of that era, he had faith that when the time came, people would intuitively gravitate toward products that express these attributes. His faith in us has today transformed the world, much beyond Apple, as businesses embrace design thinking – a commitment to going beyond features and price to designing products in the most appealing and intuitive way.

The most critical work we can do after anchoring ourselves in our Core is to, quietly in our heart, recognize the Core in everyone. Even if they don't yet see it in themselves, or if they have drifted far away from it, we see it in them, and we strive to draw it out of them. Because, like Steve Jobs, we have an unquestioned faith in the ennobling qualities present in every individual's deepest self.

Once we start to recognize the true self in others, we need to find a way to activate it in them. Over the last ten years, Mentora's research team and I have analyzed more than a thousand conversations, speeches, meetings, and other interactions that inspiring leaders have had with their colleagues,

audiences, opponents, partners, friends, family, and more. We've discovered something remarkable: rather than using elaborate frameworks, toolkits, or checklists, these leaders use simple actions to activate the five Core Energies in others.

In Babette's brief response to Gordon, for example, she used five actions:

1. **Disarm (to express Wisdom):** She started by agreeing with Gordon on something. She did not agree with him that the paper was useless – only that the writing was not at his level. Finding something to agree with disarms an individual.
2. **Appreciate (to express Love):** She shared her admiration for Gordon's writing. This helped her foster a warm, positive emotional energy between them.
3. **Fuse opposites (to express Wisdom):** Even while accepting that the writing was subpar, she got Gordon to recognize that the research they had done was excellent.
4. **Appeal to values (to express Purpose):** She highlighted how the paper would have a great impact on the scientific community if it were well written – something she knew he would value.
5. **Create a growth partnership (to express Growth):** She asked Gordon to guide her on how she could improve her writing.

LEADING FROM YOUR CORE

1. Choose the Core Energy you want to activate in yourself and others. Pick a suitable action to express the energy. An action isn't an elaborate behavior; it's often something you can execute in a few seconds.
2. Execute the action from the very essence of your being. Make sure that what you think, feel, and intend on the inside are harmonized with what you say and do on the outside.
3. Stay keenly attuned with what is unfolding around you and within you. Choose your next action based on your intention and on how you see people acting and reacting.
4. Experiment and learn your way into which actions to use and how to execute them, paying attention to the effect they have in different situations. Add new actions to your repertoire over time.

The more you strive to operate from your Core in this way, the more authentic you will feel on the inside, and the more agile you will be on the outside.

These are *simple* actions. After all, it took Babette an average of seven seconds to execute each of them (thirty-five seconds, five actions). Perhaps that is why inspiring leaders have never needed formal leadership training. Warren Buffett once shared, “You don’t need to have extraordinary effort to achieve extraordinary results. You just need to do the ordinary, everyday things exceptionally well.” Although these actions are “ordinary,” to have the right impact they need to be done “exceptionally well.” For instance, take Babette’s second action, appreciate. Imagine if while she was appreciating Gordon’s writing abilities on the outside, she was feeling and thinking something quite different on the inside, like, “He’s so pompous about his writing!” Or “Why does he care so much about the writing? This isn’t a college textbook. It’s a research report!” Or “What a grouchy man! We’ve gotten such great results over this last year, and all he cares about is the grammar!”

If that were the case, then it’s quite possible that Gordon would have sensed from her tone of voice and facial expressions that her appreciation was not genuine. Even if she’d fooled Gordon into believing that she meant it, if a disconnect between what she was saying on the outside and what she was thinking and feeling on the inside became a regular thing for her, she would over time have started to feel increasingly disconnected and unfulfilled at work. So, to appreciate Gordon, Babette first had to look inside herself to find something she genuinely admired him for. Only then

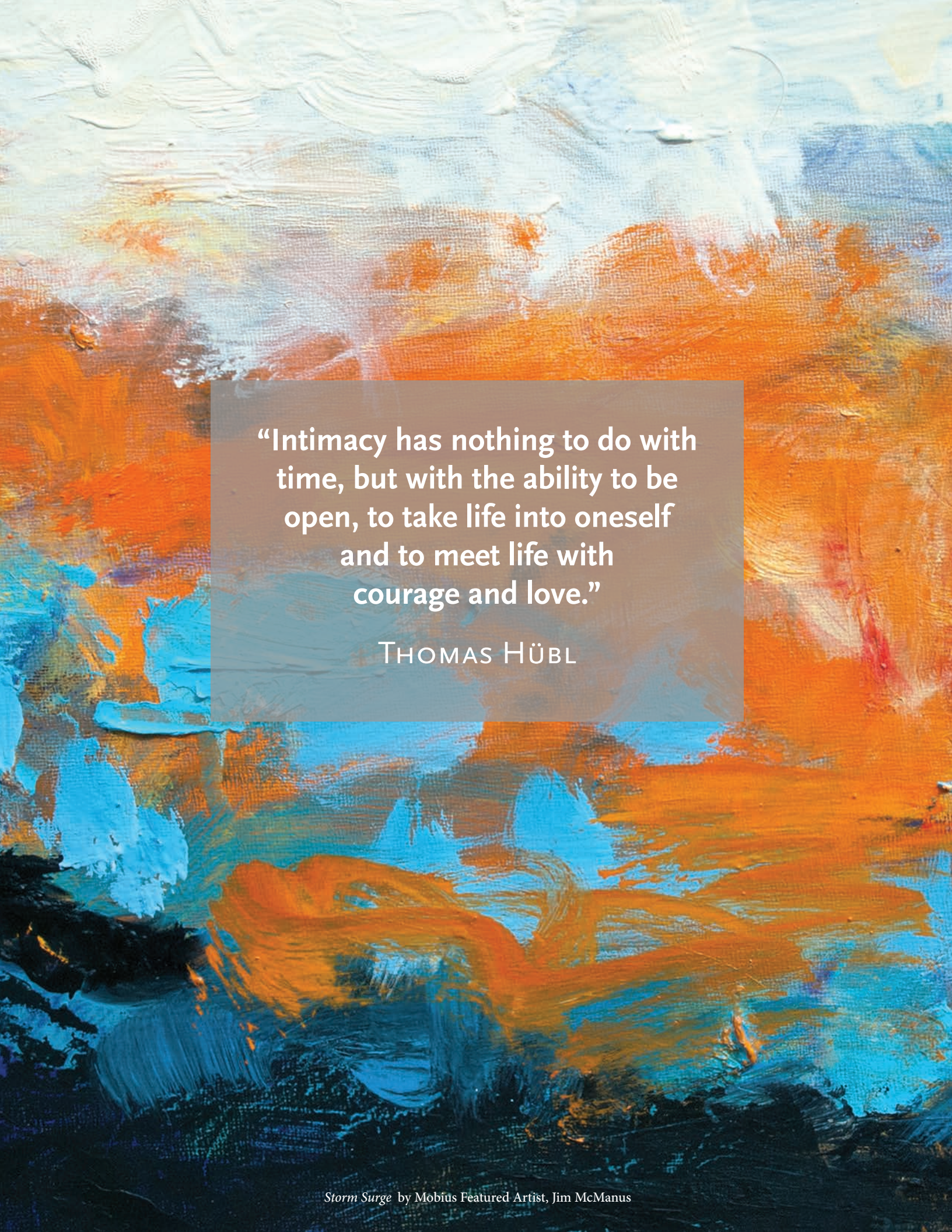
did she earn the right to appreciate him on the outside.

In this way, your every action starts by first being an inner action. You have to activate the right energy on the inside by moving your feelings, thoughts, and intention to the right place, anchored in your Core. Once you’ve achieved this, you can more naturally express the same energy on the outside, as an outer action, to help move the other party’s feelings, thoughts, and behavior to the right place. Leadership thus becomes a series of inner and outer actions to bring out the best in ourselves and others. In the past, leadership training has essentially ignored the inner action that has to precede the outer.

In putting your five Core Energies into action, do not lean on any expert to give you a fixed, definitive guide to which actions to use and in what sequence. You will want to choose for yourself which energies to express when, and which actions to use to express those energies, because there are factors in the unique conditions you face that no expert would have knowledge of: your goals in a given situation, your past history with the other party, the level of urgency you face, the mood in the room, your personal style, who else is listening to the exchange, what the other person responds well to, and so on. The wisdom we need to become great at bringing out the best in ourselves and others resides within each of us, and it can be accessed through the four steps outlined in the box on the previous page, “Leading from Your Core.” ■



Professor at Columbia Business School and Mobius Senior Expert, **HITENDRA WADHWA** won the Dean’s Award for Teaching Excellence for his teaching on Personal Leadership & Success. He is the founder of the Mentora Institute which is dedicated to helping build exemplary leaders and inspired organizations. He is also the founder of the Mentora Foundation which is building a fellowship of changemakers across disciplines for today’s pivotal times. Previously, he worked as a strategy consultant at McKinsey & Company, and was the founder and CEO of a Silicon Valley startup, Paramark. Hitendra received an MBA and PhD in Management Science from MIT’s Sloan School of Management. As the author of *Inner Mastery, Outer Impact: How Your Five Core Energies Hold the Key to Success*, his mission is to discover, codify and teach the laws of success in life and leadership.

An abstract painting featuring thick, expressive brushstrokes. The color palette is dominated by vibrant orange and blue, with white and dark blue accents. The texture is highly visible, suggesting the use of heavy paint and a coarse canvas. The composition is non-representational, with colors and textures layered and blended in a dynamic, energetic manner.

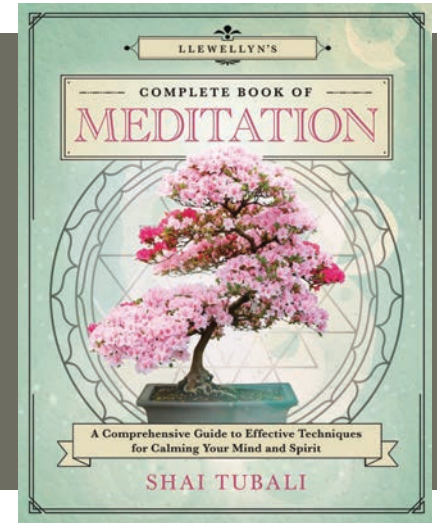
**“Intimacy has nothing to do with
time, but with the ability to be
open, to take life into oneself
and to meet life with
courage and love.”**

THOMAS HÜBL

Llewellyn's Complete Book of Meditation

A Comprehensive Guide to Effective Techniques for Calming Your Mind and Spirit

A book excerpt from Mobius Master Transformational Faculty member Dr. Shai Tubali



MEDITATE ON THIS: RECLAIMING THE LOST POWER OF ATTENTION

An excerpt from Chapter 6

The greatest power in the universe, at least as far as we are concerned, is something we take for granted: the power of our attention.

In many respects, the process of meditation is the discovery that we don't know what attention is, and that we certainly don't know how to use it. But our meditative insight into the heart of attention goes even deeper than that. At first, we learn to acknowledge the value of this tool, but at a later stage, we come to realize that attention is what we are. To avoid awkward language in this text, I will use phrases such as "when you use your attention" or "direct your attention." But in reality, I mean that attention is what you are. So, what is attention and why is it the greatest power in the universe?

Attention consists of two elements. The first is awareness. Right now you are turning your attention to these words. Attention, in this sense, is like the light of awareness. In its purest meditative form, it is just awareness, but attention in action includes a second element: choice. When you turn your attention to these words, you do so because of a choice you have made; you have chosen to endow this book with

meaning. In the same way, you could choose to pay attention to the mental chatter that goes on in your head. If you choose to do that, your mental chatter will become meaningful, and my words will recede into the background.

So, attention is a combination of awareness and choice.

However, as it is right now, what we call attention is almost completely conditioned and automatic. Therefore, the process of meditation is the beginning of deconditioning and freeing our attention. Second, in terms of choice, we are unable to redirect our attention at will. Being able to do so is actually a great achievement; it's a genuine feeling that we can freely decide how to direct our attention. We can say that this is the beginning of inner freedom and true will: if you are able to guide your attention at will, you will be able to disengage from all the elements you are not longer interested in focusing your attention on.

Your Attention Is Stronger than Any Thought or Feeling

Presently, the process of directing our attention is so automatic that we are not even conscious of it. We are not aware of the gap in which we can make a conscious choice. For this reason, we experience

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many types of thoughts and feelings, like sexual fantasies or fears, that we believe are just too powerful and overwhelming to overcome. We tend to think that when a given thought or emotion takes over us, we are powerless. We say things like “This thought gives me no rest” or “This desire ruins my life.” We experience being taken over by emotional storms, panic attacks, and destructive thoughts. But what does it mean for a desire to ruin your life? How can the desire do anything to you? Does it force itself on you? Why do we speak of these things as if we have absolutely no choice?

Now, what would happen if you were aware of this choice and could therefore consciously choose? That would give you the greatest power in the universe, because nothing – no inner force or energy – could ever take over you again. This is what has been traditionally captured in the term *Buddha*: becoming master of your own attention. You are then able to control the chain reaction that rapidly follows the choice of giving attention to something. To better grasp this chain reaction, we should understand an important law called the law of attention.

The Law of Attention

The law of attention consists of at least four aspects.

1. Between your attention and any thought, emotion, or feeling, there is a gap.

The reason we don't feel we have a choice is that we are unable to notice there is a difference between us

and the thought or emotion. We are not aware of the existence of a gap. Why? Because in the past, when we still had a choice but were unaware of it, we decided to direct our attention to certain internal forces and, convinced of their reality and their being a part of us, we made the choice to give them our attention.

Attention is like the food that mental and emotional entities, such as self-destructive thoughts or fears, require. In the same way that our body needs water and food, these energies feed on attention. The very nature of attention is to act as the light that shines on something. When attention shines on something, it instantly becomes a reality.

2. Whatever attention focuses on becomes a reality.

Now, this is an immensely powerful principle, because it implies that things are not real unless you focus on them and decide to accept them as a part of yourself. It is only your decision that can make them real. In actuality, thoughts, desires, or emotional turmoil cannot do anything to you if you don't accept them as a part of yourself. If attention looks at these things and is not convinced of their reality, these energies disappear for the simple reason that they can no longer feed on your attention.

The chain reaction works like a closed circle: we turn our attention to a thought, emotion, or interpretation of reality, and immediately it appears to be our reality. Then we begin to feel – physically, mentally, emotionally, and energetically – according to the reality we created through our attention.

**When you think about it, this is our true source of trouble:
the thoughts we believe and give power to.
Everything else is quite manageable.**

For example, I may encounter the thought *I hate myself*. This thought sounds quite convincing, especially since it uses “I” and “myself,” which makes it appear personal and intimate. People suffer from this kind of thought all over the world. It is not a small matter: this is the reality of many. Then they find so-called reasons to hate themselves. As soon as they decide that this thought is a part of their being and identity, it becomes a reality. Now this thought becomes like a toxin that infiltrates the body, and as a result, a complete emotional reality and self-destructive behavior begin to emerge.

Thus, in reality what we suffer from all the time is thoughts – thoughts that pretend to be reality. We make them our reality, and then we begin to respond to them and to feel according to our response. When you think about it, this is our true source of trouble: the thoughts we believe and give power to. Everything else is quite manageable.

When you don’t have thoughts, interpretations, and reactions to situations, the situations are pretty manageable. In Byron Katie’s words, “Reality is always kinder than the story we tell about it.” Reality is easier to handle without thinking: you encounter a situation, you face the situation, and that is all. This is

what seeing things as they are is really all about.

When you detect a thought or an emotion, start experiencing the gap. Ask yourself: What would happen if I identified and embraced this thought or feeling? What would I feel right now? What would my

body feel like? Imagine what it would feel like if this became your reality. And then, after realizing what it would feel like, choose whether or not to focus your attention on it to a degree that it becomes a reality.

Realizing that your principal suffering is caused by thoughts is a tremendous power – more precisely, not even by thoughts, but by your *reactions* to thoughts. After all, it is not that we need to control these thoughts; in fact, we cannot control them. We are not meant to control fear or

desire and make it go away. Any attempt to control these elements will only get you caught in another conflict. The only thing you can control is your attention, which means owning your own mind and not letting anything in. If you start being convinced by any of these elements, they will enter you and become a part of your mind.

So, this is one of the first things that meditation does for us: it teaches us that our attention is separate

THE LAWS OF ATTENTION

1. Between your attention and any thought, emotion, or feeling, there is a gap.
2. Whatever attention focuses on becomes a reality.
3. Whatever attention identifies with, it becomes.
4. We don’t always have to focus on objects and identify with them.



Strata-Let I by Mobius Featured Artist, Jim McManus

from all thoughts and feelings, and that consequently, it always involves a choice. In meditation, we begin to create a gap, and then we train ourselves to maintain this gap and to even remain in it for a while. If you are able to do this consistently, you can then return to life and decide, on the basis of your newfound freedom, what you are going to choose as your reality.

The Next Step: Remain as Awareness

The deeper layer of meditation is the discovery of the freedom of awareness itself: a place where you can just *be* attention.

BOOK CONTENTS

(also available on in audio)

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Connect to Universal Reality

All day long we turn our attention to objects. Right now your attention is turned to the understanding of my words. We constantly turn our attention to objects and make these things our reality. But there is a third component of the law of attention.

3. Whatever attention identifies with, it becomes.

This means that if you constantly focus on something and identify with it – if you decide that something is a part of you – at a certain point, it becomes you.

This third component is the reason most people cannot even imagine that there is a difference between their core identity as attention and all the things that they identify with: their thoughts and emotions, their body, life circumstances, life story, and memories. Everything they think they are is, in reality, something they have consistently focused on, identified with, and therefore become.

This third aspect of the law of attention, however, points at a magnificent reality: it shows you that in a sense, you are already free. This is because there is already – right now – an inherent separation between attention and everything that you have ever identified with. Right now, as you are reading these lines, you are, at the core of your being, pure attention. All your past conflicts and stories are just things that you have decided to attach your attention to. The two have become so glued to one another that they now appear to be inseparable.

The solar plexus chakra meditations evoke and enhance the sense of “I am” as pure presence that precedes anything else. Prior to “I am hungry,” “I am sick,” and “I am going to have a baby,” there is “I am,” a primordial self-presence. Allowing yourself to be pure attention in meditation is no different from this sense of pure presence.

Ultimately, being wide attention with no object is the essence and purpose of all meditation. And this is what the fourth component of the law of attention tells us.

4. We don’t always have to focus on objects and identify with them.

There is absolutely no reason to focus on thoughts, emotions, and objects all day long. We can do

what meditation suggests we ought to do: keep our attention unfocused. Unfocused means pure attention. It means that you are fully attentive, but not attentive toward anything in particular. The result is that attention becomes a concentrated energy, an awake presence, because it is not wasted on focusing, identifying, and making anything a reality. In a way, this means that attention returns to its original state, before it became identified with or focused on anything.

If you meditate in this way and truly free your attention – or rather, free the attention that you are – from any focus, you can later return from this state to life and choose to redirect your attention at will. At present, our attention is extremely narrow because it is exclusively focused on the needs and wants of the body and mind. As a result, all that it perceives and notices in space and time are those things that correspond to the wants and needs of the body and mind. It has become highly selective, picking from life's magnificence only those elements. Life has been divided into two: whatever the body and mind like, and everything else they don't like.

Being so focused in this way, your attention has become extremely limited. But when attention returns to pure attention and regains its choice of focus and identification, it becomes not only awake but also sensitive. It notices so many other things in life. It is available. It is vast.

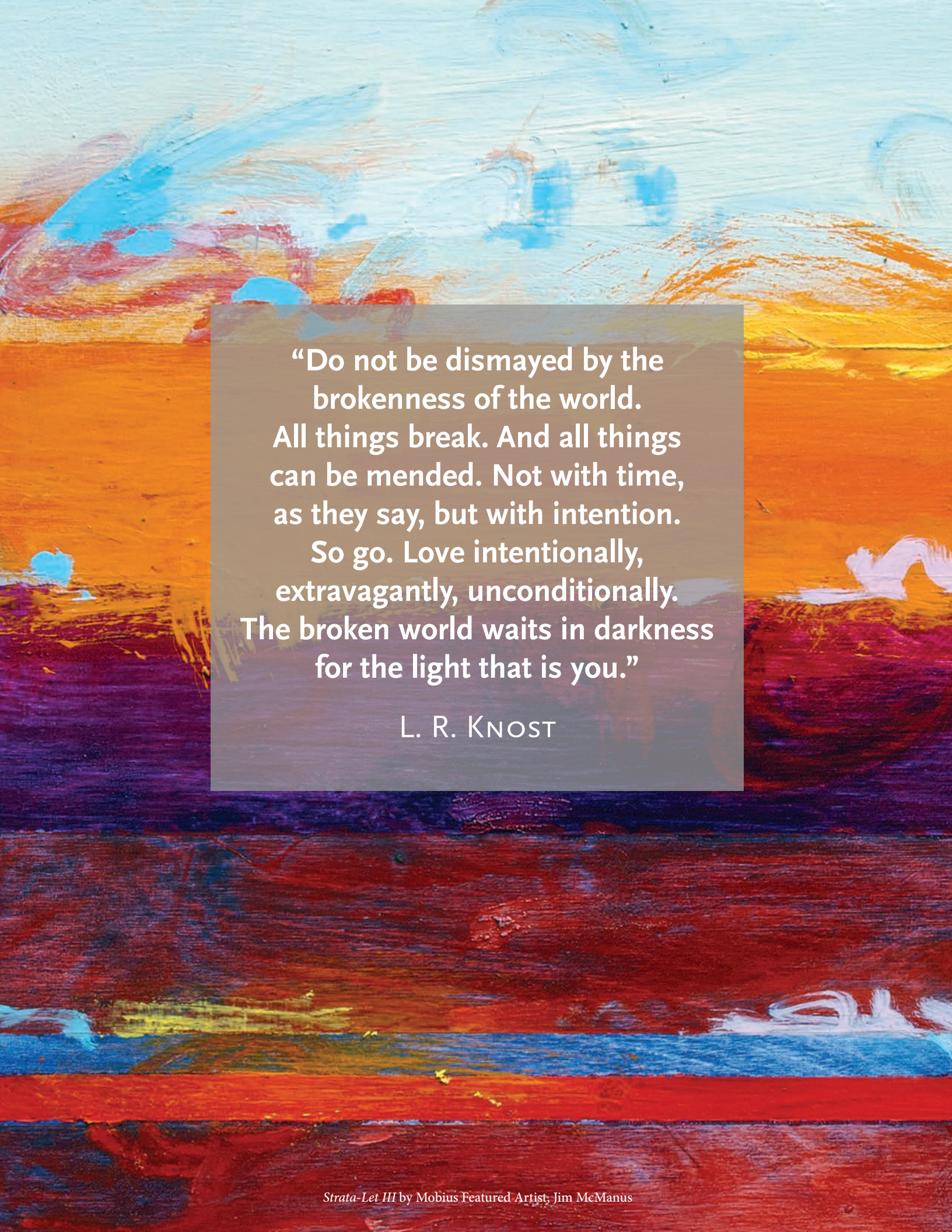
This is an even deeper layer of meditation: when your attention becomes this wide and spacious, it finally relaxes into the ocean of consciousness. Consciousness is like the mother of attention: attention sprang from it. Consciousness is what permeates the entire universe, while attention is like a drop of consciousness. And when this drop is reabsorbed into the ocean, your meditation obviously reaches its fulfillment.

So, attention is not just a capacity of your mind. It is the power that determines who you are, who you

become, what your reality is, and whether you suffer or not. This is the key: if you understand the law of attention, you can be free from suffering – and only you can free yourself from suffering, because *you are attention*. ■



DR. SHAI TUBALI is a member of Mobius Master Transformational Faculty. He is an academic philosopher, speaker, and author specializing in mysticism, self-transformation, and Eastern thought. In his writings and teachings, he combines Western philosophy and psychology with Eastern philosophy and practice to create powerful processes of inner transformation. Shai is also the developer of several meditation-based coaching and therapeutic methods. His numerous books have appeared internationally for the past three decades in twelve languages. His most prominent writings have been published by major publishers, and two have won awards in the United States and Israel. Several of his books have become bestsellers, inspiring tens of thousands on their inner journeys of mental, emotional, and spiritual evolution.

The background is an abstract painting with a rich, textured surface. It features broad, horizontal strokes of color, including deep reds, oranges, yellows, and blues. The colors are layered and blended, creating a sense of depth and movement. The brushwork is visible, with some areas showing more intense, saturated colors and others appearing more washed out or blended. The overall effect is one of dynamic energy and emotional intensity.

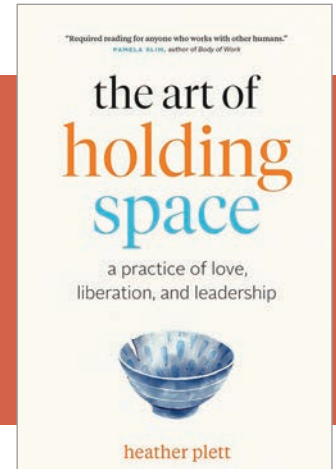
“Do not be dismayed by the
brokenness of the world.
All things break. And all things
can be mended. Not with time,
as they say, but with intention.
So go. Love intentionally,
extravagantly, unconditionally.
The broken world waits in darkness
for the light that is you.”

L. R. KNOT

The Art of Holding Space

A Practice of Love, Liberation, and Leadership

A book excerpt from Mobius Friend Heather Plett



Mobius CEO and co-founder Amy Elizabeth Fox introduces the work of Heather Plett in *The Case for Deep Inner Work* on page 69 of this magazine issue, where she demonstrates how, in interesting ways, Heather's model mirrors Mobius pedagogy of transformational change. In this excerpt from Heather's book, the author shares some of her personal journey, the origins of holding space conceptually, and the nature of liminal space.

THE INTRODUCTION

An excerpt

THE FIRST TIME I heard the term “holding space” was at Authentic Leadership in Action (ALIA) Summer Institute in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in June 2010. I arrived at this gathering feeling a complex mixture of brokenness, despair, fear, longing, and hopefulness. I was hungry for healing, connection, inspiration, and relief.

At the time, I was the director of resources and public engagement for Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a national non-profit whose byline was “A Christian Response to Hunger.” I ran a national team of seventeen staff and volunteers responsible for the fundraising, communication, education, and public engagement work for the international development organization. It was a challenging and demanding job with a team that was equally complex and (sometimes) challenging. I was burnt-out and on the verge of quitting.

A month before I attended ALIA, my husband and I had decided it was finally my turn to quit my job and launch my business. Years prior, when he quit his job to go to university, we had made an agreement

that once he had stable work, it would be his turn to be the major income-earner. It took him longer than expected to find a stable job, but he was finally in a term position that looked as if it would lead to something more permanent.

However, only a week after making that decision, my husband went into an emotional tailspin because of something that happened at work. Depression and anxiety set in and he couldn't work. He'd dealt with mental illness throughout our marriage, and this was a repeat of an episode that had taken place earlier, just before I gave birth to our first child. As then, it ended with a suicide attempt that landed him in the psych ward at the hospital.

As a result, he lost his term position and we went back to where we'd started, with me stuck in a job that had begun to suck the energy and optimism out of me. With a mortgage to pay and three kids to feed, I had few options.

That's how I arrived at ALIA. I convinced my boss to let me attend, partly because I needed to go somewhere that would take my mind off my

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overwhelming life and partly because, if I had to stay in this job after all, I needed something to inspire me so I could recommit my energy into good leadership.

At the dinner on opening night, Michael Chender, one of the founders of ALIA, got up to speak. His opening words were, “This is the kind of place where you bring your fears, your pain, and your brokenness.” I started to cry. With those words, he opened a release valve on the pressure cooker that my life had become. I could finally breathe. He went on to say that ALIA was a place for vulnerability and truth telling, where each of us agreed to do our best not to sit in judgment of each other.

I don’t know if Chender used the term “holding space” in his talk, but he was certainly describing what later became my understanding of it. I *do* know I heard the term elsewhere that week, and it cracked my life open in a way I could never have anticipated. Those who spoke of it were talking about something I’d craved my whole life but didn’t know how to express. I’d even offered it to others but didn’t know how to give it to myself.

I made a lot of friends that week who remain some of my favorite people. These were people who spoke my language, wrestled with the same questions I wrestled with, and chose authentic, open-hearted lives. It was an environment like I’d never experienced before, where people were intentional about how they hosted conversations, how they asked big questions, and how they sat with brokenness and discomfort. I felt as though I had finally come home.

Before I left that gathering, I knew I had found the kind of work – and the kind of people – I wanted to dedicate the rest of my life to.

Four months later, I finally walked away from that job. Our life was not yet stable (my husband still didn’t have a permanent job), but I couldn’t wait any longer. I cashed in my retirement savings, hoping and praying that the new work I was about to create, which felt closer to a calling than anything I’d ever experienced, would eventually sustain me and my family.

A week after I left my job, I travelled to Ontario to learn The Circle Way with Christina Baldwin. When I’d read her book ten years earlier, I’d felt as if she lit a candle in a dark place for me at a time when I was in an even more soul-destroying job with the federal government, coping with a toxic leadership environment. As I told her when we met, I knew that the circle held a key to the work I needed to do for the rest of my life.

That week with Baldwin solidified the experience from ALIA and took me even deeper into what it meant to hold space. There was no turning back – I was fully invested. Just as I expected, the circle changed my life.

Since that time at ALIA, I’ve probed deeper and deeper into what it means to hold space. I don’t know its exact origins, but most people I ask point in two directions.

The people I met who used the term at ALIA point in

HOLDING SPACE is not something we can master overnight, nor can it be adequately addressed in a list of tips like these. Holding space is a complex practice that evolves as we practise it. It’s unique to each person and each situation. Here are some of the things we can do to hold space for people in our lives:

- Give people permission to trust their own intuition and wisdom. This is not about arbitrary protocols.
- Give people only as much information as they can handle.
- Don’t take their power away.
- Keep your own ego out of it.
- Help them feel safe enough to fail.
- Give guidance and help with humility and thoughtfulness.
- Create a container for complex emotions, including fear and trauma. We cannot hold this space if we are overly emotional ourselves, if we haven’t done the hard work of looking into our own shadows, or if we don’t trust the people for whom we are holding space.
- Allow them to make different decisions and to have different experiences than you would. Holding space is about respecting each person’s differences and recognizing that those differences may lead to them making choices we would not make.

the direction of Harrison Owen. Owen is a teacher and facilitator who developed the concept of Open Space, a facilitation practice where participants have autonomy and control over what is discussed, what direction the agenda takes, and how they will participate. Rather than controlling or directing the conversation, facilitators in this practice “hold space” for what wants to emerge from the group. Facilitation of an Open Space dialogue requires the facilitator to have a lot of trust in themselves and in the group. It’s not something that can be done well if you are nervous or too control-oriented.

In his book *Open Space Technology: A User’s Guide*, Owen describes holding space as one of the roles of the facilitator:

The job of holding space and time does not fit neatly within a precise job description or linear specification of tasks. It is an opportunistic role, depending upon a close reading of the meeting environment, a clear sense of self and purpose, and a capacity for sensitive and innovative response. Done well, the role manifests what I see as the essential qualities of a good facilitator: total presence and absolute invisibility. Holding space and time requires that you be in that space and time as fully present, available, open, truthful, and having no agenda of your own, except that the time and space be held and honored.

When I reached out to Owen recently to let him know I was naming him in the lineage of the concept, his brief response was, “Actually I think it might go back to 1200 B.C. in China. Tao Te Ching... or whatever.” In other words, he has no interest in claiming it.

Others in the education field point to Donald Winnicott. He first spoke the words in his book *The Child, the Family, and the Outside World*, so it’s possible that Owen’s work was influenced by Winnicott. Winnicott did, however, normally speak of “holding” rather than “holding space,” so perhaps it was a precursor. In Winnicott’s work, “holding” is what teachers and parents do when they create safe and supportive environments for children to learn while not jeopardizing the autonomy and individuality of those children.

Winnicott and his wife used the term “holding” to refer to the supportive environment that a therapist

creates for a client. The concept can be likened to the nurturing and caring behavior a mother engages in with her child that results in a sense of trust and safety. Winnicott believed that this “holding environment” was critical to the therapeutic environment and could be created through the therapist’s direct engagement with a client. Winnicott also believed that antisocial behaviors developed from a person’s having been deprived of a holding environment in childhood and from feelings of insecurity.

Though I have less knowledge of Winnicott’s work than I do of Owen’s teachings, I think it’s valuable to reflect on the influences of the educational field on this concept. An educational thread in the tapestry implies that the act of holding space is not just about backing away while a person stays stuck in one place; it’s about creating a healthy environment where growth and development can naturally occur. When we see this as part of the equation, it can change how we show up, and where we’ll place limitations and boundaries if no growth is evident.

As we’ll see in the coming chapters, the concept of holding space is like a tapestry with many threads that each tell a story. It can be both a very simple concept (i.e., I hold space for you when I listen deeply to your story) and a very complex concept (i.e., holding space for systemic changes or in situations of racial injustice). It’s something you can do for yourself, for a friend, for a community, or for a crowd of thousands.

When I approach the concept of holding space, I approach it as an inquiry rather than an expertise. It’s not something to be mastered, but rather something into which I will inquire for the rest of my life. It is multi-layered, and I trust that everyone who also inquires into it will add a layer to the collective understanding. Just as I may bring nuances to it that Owen or Winnicott didn’t include in their works, you will bring nuances that I haven’t yet encountered in my work.

We are weaving this tapestry together, bringing our stories and ideas to the conversation to add contour, depth, color, and clarity. I may have arrived here before you, but you may take it further. This is evolving work and it is my hope that this book will open new doors for its continued evolution.

Let us begin our weaving...

LIMINAL SPACE

Excerpt from Chapter Two

The figure below is a diagram I developed to help us better understand the journey through liminal space. In the diagram, you'll see that the passage through liminal space is never linear or direct. Instead, it's a *spiral* pathway through a complexity of emotional states and experiences. (In truth, I am even more fond of the path of the labyrinth, with its way of moving you close to the destination and then, with a simple turn, taking you far away from where you think you're meant to be. But that's harder to demonstrate in a two-dimensional image.)

The first spiral is the "releasing" (or, as suggested in the caterpillar story below, the "surrender"). It's a time of letting go, of admitting we do not have control of the outcome. There is much resistance in the releasing. It's a time when we fantasize, with fondness, of the way things used to be. Weren't things simpler back then? Wasn't I happier? Can't I go back and reclaim what once was?

A person can get stuck in resistance and spend much of their life there. They can also be influenced by leaders and friends who want to keep them stuck. (The forty-fifth president of the United States speaks to those resisters when he promises to "make America great

again.") A resister doesn't want the world to change, even if there is significant evidence that it needs to.

Beyond being a path that individuals get stuck on, there are also institutions – and even countries – that resist evolution. Consider the religious organizations, for example, that hang on to old doctrines that no longer make sense in the modern world. Consider the resistance to same-sex marriage or to the transgender community, for example; these social structures don't make sense to many in the religious world, and so those people most entrenched in the religion's old doctrines fight against the new and unknown. They want to return to what they thought was a binary world, where there is only male and female, and marriage is defined only as a union between these two. Stepping over the threshold into the unknown space – where gender is a spectrum and love has no limitations – feels like giving up your caterpillar skin without knowing that butterfly wings are possible.

No, surrender is not easy. It can be a time of chaos and conflict, shock and grief. We risk a great deal of loss when we surrender. We may lose important relationships with people who don't want to see us change. We may lose status and position within our community. We might have to walk away from jobs

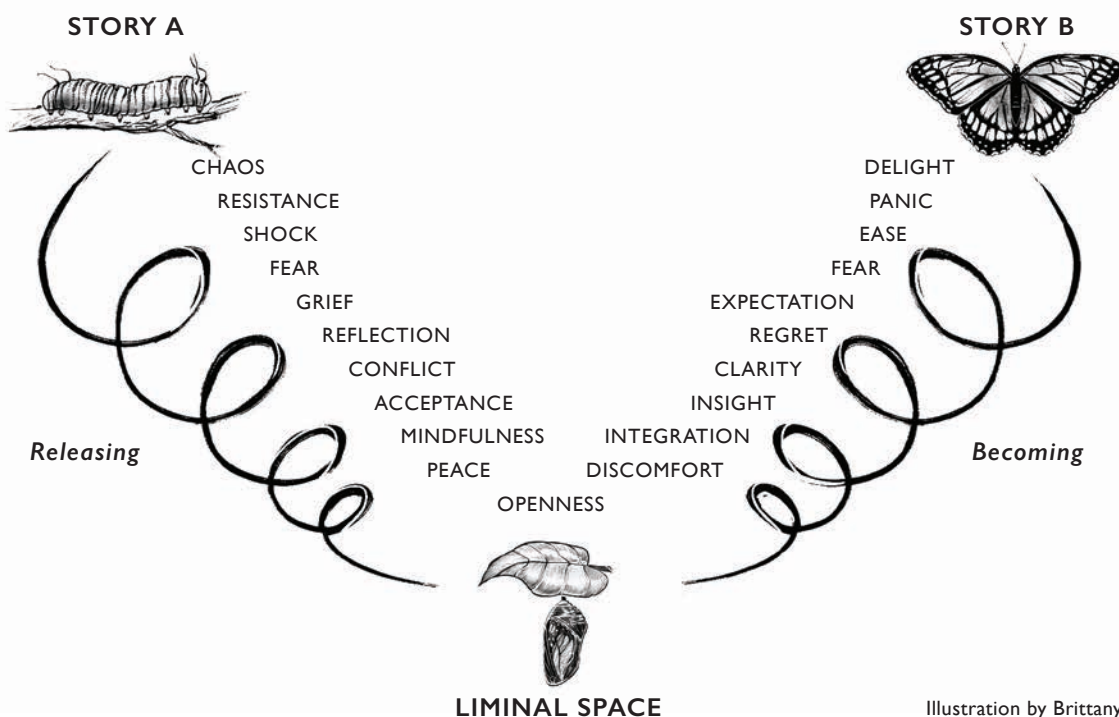


Illustration by Brittany Marino

The challenges we now face – including climate change, out-of-control consumerism and economic growth, increased conflict, the threat of extinction, and the rise of patriarchy and white supremacy in response to movements that challenge it – see us being thrust into a liminal space journey that leaves us frightened and disoriented. If we don't evolve, we risk extinction.

We must figure out how to walk through the chaos of this liminal space together in order to emerge into the next spiral of human existence.

that no longer feel right, or we might even get fired for no longer accepting the status quo.

I once listened to a podcast where a few pastors who'd lost their faith were being interviewed. At the time of the interview, these pastors (who were speaking under cover of anonymity) were still leading their faith communities but speaking from the pulpit of things in which they no longer believed. They'd entered their own personal liminal space but hadn't yet "come out of the closet" with their truth, because the people they led expected them to stay where they were and offer a comfortable, familiar faith.

These pastors expressed the anguish of the positions they were in. They loved the work of leading and counselling their communities – it was the only work they were trained to do – but they were no longer teaching from a place of integrity.

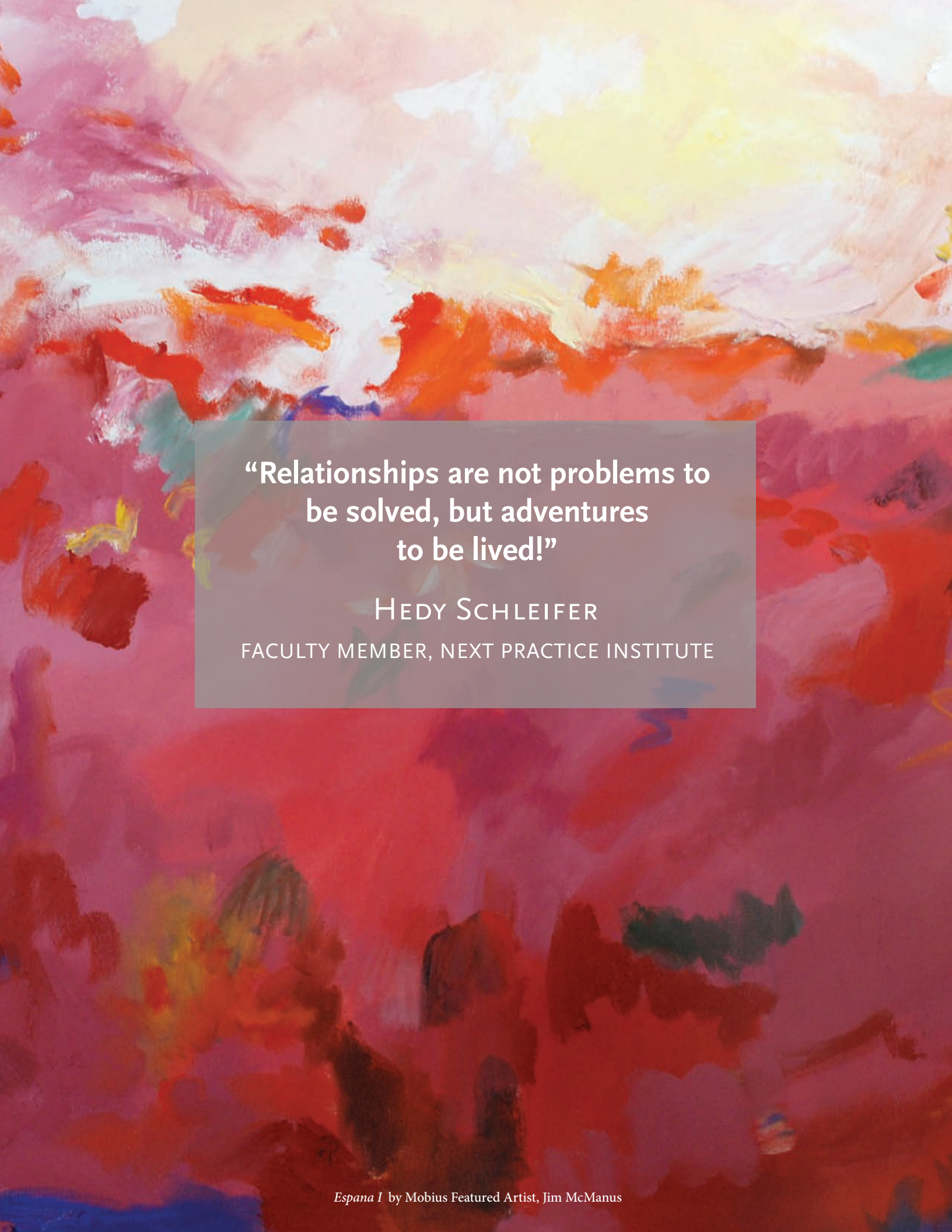
Those of us who've stepped over the threshold into liminal space can understand some of the anguish these pastors must have experienced. It's hard to speak of your experience to those who've not yet found themselves in the chrysalis. It's hard to accept the risk – and the loss – that can come of that.

The time we spend in liminal space can also be much longer than we expect or want. We want to rush through it, to get back to a place where the ground feels solid under our feet. But rushing through will only short-circuit the process. If you try to force a butterfly to emerge before it's ready, it will die and never discover the beauty of flight. ■

HEATHER PLETT is the co-founder of the Centre for Holding Space and the author of *The Art of Holding Space: A Practice of Love, Liberation and Leadership*. She is also the author of the upcoming book, *Where Tenderness Lives: On Healing, Liberation, and Holding Space for Oneself* (to be released in January 2024).

As a leading global expert on the topic of holding space, Heather travels all over the world teaching workshops and speaking at conferences. She recently sold her home in Canada to spend eight months living as a digital nomad in Europe and Central America – a trip she called her Tenderness and Liberation Tour.

Earlier in her career, Heather worked in director-level positions in government and non-profit, but the most important teaching she has received in the art of holding space was at her mother's deathbed and in the hospital when her stillborn son was born. Heather is the proud mom of three grown daughters who are all launching themselves into interesting and meaningful lives.



**“Relationships are not problems to
be solved, but adventures
to be lived!”**

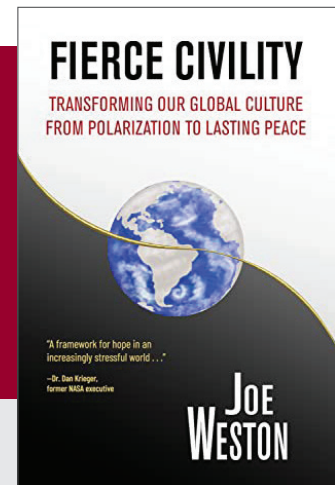
HEDY SCHLEIFER

FACULTY MEMBER, NEXT PRACTICE INSTITUTE

Fierce Civility

Transforming Our Global Culture from Polarization to Lasting Peace

By Mobius Transformational Faculty member and Executive Coach, Joe Weston



“The Fierce Civility 'Pathway of Hope' is exactly the primer needed of our times. Joe Weston is one of the most profound practitioners of de-armoring and the relational skills required for productively addressing conflict that I know. Sourced from his decades of practice as a coach, mediator and transformational facilitator, this book offers clear, practical and incredibly useful guidance on how to navigate the most important conversations in our lives. At the same time, it provides a template for addressing the searing divisions in society and helping to rewire the social fabric and cultural architecture from polarization and division to one of hope and innovative possibilities. I cannot imagine a more powerful, timely and life-changing book to read at the micro or macro level in this time of healing that is needed now.”

– Amy Elizabeth Fox, CEO of Mobius Executive Leadership

INTRODUCTION

How do we cope with our current volatile, disruptive and extremely polarized world situation?

This is something I contemplate every day when I'm bombarded – as we all are – with images of our precious forests burning, neighborhoods being washed away by floods and storms, extreme levels of vehement rhetoric in our politics, people tragically dying, and lives being uprooted worldwide – either needlessly because of fear and anger, or sadly because of a lack of access to necessary resources, medicines and care.

As the rich get wealthier and the impoverished get poorer, policies and laws continue to be implemented that disempower many and reward few. The result is escalating levels of “uncivil” unrest that further

polarizes the ways in which we engage with one another. Our global heart – in other words, the human family – is not well.

Despite all of this, somewhere in the deepest alcove of my own heart, hope still lingers – though it doesn't come easily these days. More often than not, it takes all of my stamina, daily practices and personal disciplines to remain optimistic in the midst of the messiness. What gives me hope?

I believe that yesterday, somewhere in the world, someone risked danger to pull a person out of a burning car and save a life. I believe that this morning, somewhere in the world, someone brought breakfast to a neighbor whom they know is struggling to pay their bills. I believe that in the middle of the

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night, somewhere in the world, someone texted a severely depressed person in despair, thereby pulling this individual from the brink of suicide. I believe that tomorrow, somewhere in the world, someone will choose to not flush their toilet that one time, conserving two gallons, or 7.5 liters, of fresh water. I believe that at any given moment, somewhere in the world, someone will muster the courage to say to another in the heat of an argument, “Now that I can see this issue from your perspective, I’m willing to consider shifting my viewpoint.”

I have no proof of any of this... and yet I still believe. Why?

First, I trust the odds. With nearly eight billion people on the planet, the probabilities are favorable that at least *one person every day* performs an act of kindness like the ones mentioned above. By far, more of us are naturally considerate of others than careless and cruel; it’s how we’ve managed to survive.

Second, I have faith in the resilience of the human spirit, which gifts us with the capacity to adapt and grow. Despite what seems like an escalation of violence, hate, divisiveness and disregard for those whom we may perceive as being different, I have faith in the persevering force of what I consider to be our highest common guiding principles of respect, dignity/being valued, belonging, freedom and collaboration (which we will closely examine throughout the book).

Thirdly, I believe that enough people on this planet – despite their biases and blind spots, indignation and impulse for self-preservation, trauma histories and personal interpretation of world events – still prefer to see the human family achieve some sense of lasting

peace, along with relative economic and social freedom and equity for all. This critical mass of individuals sincerely wants effective solutions to address the rising forms of extremism, and a global effort to change the trajectory of earth’s climate shifts – if not for themselves, then for their children and grandchildren.

These ideals may seem like wishful thinking, especially when we follow what’s in the news. The corporatized media keeps us in a perpetual spin cycle of anxiety and confusion for the sake of ratings, power and profit. Now that the polarization seems to have reached nearly irreparable proportions, many individuals who I come in contact with have given up the notion – based on what they see on their televisions and social media, or how laws and policies are implemented, changed and rescinded – that there is a peaceful solution to the volatility. Yet a critical question of our time is, “Who is in control of our story?”

I also come across others who, like me, hold fast to that unrelenting inner hope that affirms we are not beyond repair . . . but, rather, that we need a new plan, a bold approach, a better strategy and, most importantly, a new shared narrative.

Crafting a New Story of Hope

In order to write and live a new human chronicle of hope, we must first break free from the causes of the stagnant gridlock of extreme polarization in all areas of life – within ourselves, with family and friends, at work, and in our local, national and global communities. It exists whenever stubborn forces impose their views on one another. Like rams

Policing each other’s use of certain words in our discourse may actually be contributing to our inability to have effective conversations.

incessantly locking horns, we exert tremendous amounts of time, emotion and effort trying to be right and win. Heroes are anointed and losers declared. Yet the more we force our agendas, the greater opposition we create from the other side, which only continues to keep us stuck. Instead of getting somewhere meaningful, we simply exhaust ourselves, our resources and our sense of confidence. All the while, the problems persist or increase, thereby creating ripe conditions for opportunistic, harmful forces to gain power while we remain distracted.

What if the rams pivoted a bit, shifted their perspectives even slightly, and took some distance from the gridlock . . . at least long enough to explore different strategies that could lead towards bridging the divide? What if we could find new ways to communicate and interact that honor our individual agency, while enhancing our capacity to collaborate in the quest to find common ground and inspire new solutions?

I hear so many people express that they would love to see this happen but wouldn't know where to begin, or even if there's any point in doing so. It seems that our current strategies are no longer able to stand up to the level of animosity and distress we are facing. Well, after years of testing out theories and practices, starting in the form of my first body of work, *Respectful Confrontation* (a little more on that later), and now evolving into the current methodology you are reading here, I have witnessed that repairing the wounds that separate us is possible – and so is lasting change when enough of us are collectively engaged. Doing so requires us all to revise and upgrade our current skills and strategies of communication, collaboration, fortitude and resilience.

The body of work that I call Fierce Civility (both this book and the approach of the same name through which I teach and train others) lays out, in a comprehensive way, skills and strategies to support those interested in making the necessary pivots for transcending our biological, cultural and personal dysregulated impulses of survival – the fight-flight-freeze response – that lead to the breakdown of cooperation, “civil” civic engagement, personal agency and independent, critical thinking. It invites everyone into a broader conversation where we can ask relevant and urgent questions:

- How do we confront a bully without becoming one?
- How do we stand in our courage, speak our truth, get our needs met, and bring about beneficial change for all without getting harmed or harming others?
- How do we take care of ourselves at a time when it seems that external forces are less interested in offering basic care and security?
- How do we advocate for social and cultural transformation without adding to the polarization and animosity?
- How do we increase our greater capacity to stay in this tension, and continue to gain access to our own internal power and freedom, as we collaborate in effective, productive ways?

I have crafted the Fierce Civility Approach from my lifetime of exploring human behavior, personal development, basic neuroscience, and the patterns that cause conflict and peace. I have also studied and practiced a variety of martial arts, world philosophies, and religious and spiritual systems, including Taoist principles (particularly tai chi and other practices of cultivating internal power and energy) and Tibetan Buddhism. Most of my life, I've lived with people from various cultures and with diverse backgrounds and experiences. Through my decades of work as an international trainer, coach and consultant in communication, conflict resolution and conflict prevention, I envisioned a clear, step-by-step pathway that pivots us away from the stagnation of our extreme polarization. By doing so, it first sparks the renewal of the human spirit and personal fulfillment, and then implements norms and behavior that result in a mutually empowering organization or community, and ultimately, a global culture of lasting peace.

The Fierce Civility theories, skills and strategies that I have cultivated over the years are tested and proven, and, more recently, supported by a growing body of scientific evidence. My certified trainers, colleagues and I have observed that many individuals

heal and transform. People reconcile and build deeper, lasting relationships. Engaged citizens have lasting, beneficial impacts on their communities. Organizations create vibrant, mutually empowering work cultures. Where people or opposing groups might have thought there was no way out of dilemmas, I have seen the development of new solutions that are inclusive, innovative, sustainable and quite inspiring – and yes, inspiration reignites the spark of hope for our shared future.

I cannot claim that these strategies and techniques will guarantee successful outcomes every time. What I can say is that they will certainly support you in developing the resilience, grace, patience, skill and courage to stay longer in the tensions and twisting turns of challenging encounters and increase your probability of finding common ground and new solutions that are dynamic and resilient, not constricted and one-sided.

The Book's Key Concepts

In an effort to give this work an even greater wingspan and enable it to reach more people, I wanted to create a written version of this method. *Fierce Civility: Transforming Our Global Culture from Polarization to Lasting Peace* provides a pathway for those who feel called to usher in a renewed civil engagement that transcends outworn structures of separation, labels and performative displays of civility in our families, workplaces, communities and countries of the world.

The fundamental causes of our current dilemma won't be found or solved in only numbers and statistics. If that were the case, we would have already solved them. Before we can begin to course-correct ourselves, we must address two underlying core reasons for our inability to realize the emergence of new and lasting solutions: *Because of the debilitating effects of our chronic personal and collective trauma, our nervous systems keep us in a constant state of perceiving anything that is different as a threat. This has, over time, shut down our hearts.* Until these issues are addressed and resolved, we will continue to lock horns, deluding ourselves that we are actually making progress.

That's where the Fierce Civility Approach comes in. Its integral, human-centered strategies and embodied practices foster the lifelong pursuit of – and dedication

to – cultivating resilience, meeting challenges with compassion, and deescalating tensions before they rise to conflict. For me, being in one's heart is not some saccharine-sweet greeting card sentiment. It is a strategic way of being, supported by a comprehensive set of skills, that challenges us to embody courage, wisdom and patience in order to artfully and respectfully engage with those who are different from us.

So, what specifically is the Fierce Civility Approach? It is an extensive and intensive program modeled after sports and marital arts trainings that is designed to support practitioners and readers in embodying and harnessing skills and strategies of the heart. Doing so enables them to become more effective communicators, bridge-builders and win-win solutions advocates.

This book lays out the Approach's key concepts in three fundamental phases.

In **Part One: The Journey of Transition**, I set the context for what has led us to our present predicament, as well as what our current global wake-up call is demanding that we do to answer it. Here you will be introduced to the six-step Pathway of Hope, as well as a new definition of civility that provides the fierceness needed to meet the challenges of our polarized world.

Part Two: Skills-Building for the Journey introduces terminology that we will be using throughout the book (and that you can use ongoing), including the essential Power of the Pivot.

Now equipped with these foundational skills, **Part Three: Strategies for the Journey** outlines the Fierce Civility Approach's actual methodology for how to navigate the challenges of any conversation or situation. It moves us through the six-step Pathway of Hope – from stagnant polarization to new, inclusive innovations and lasting peace.

In each chapter of Parts Two and Three, I weave in an aspect of our current personal and cultural polarizing stagnation and present a way to pivot out of this rigidity. No longer locked into old patterns, these pivots open the door to utilizing the skills and strategies being presented to better navigate these challenges.

At the end of most of the chapters, I offer a practice or contemplation focused around the theme of that chapter to assist you with integrating each skill or

Main Skills of the Fierce Civility Approach

1. **The Power of the Pivot:** quickly identifying and shifting out of stagnation and opposition.
2. **Cultivating Inner Balance:** practices to keep your nervous system in a somewhat regulated state in order to accurately assess any situation.
3. **Meeting the Other Where They Are:** a roadmap to track change and transition (and the anxiety that it brings) in order to create a space of safety and trust.
4. **Shifting from Defender and Aggressor to Nurturer and Protector:** overcoming the fight-flight-freeze response from attacking, defending or submitting to nurturing and protecting.
5. **Non-Judgmental Critical Thinking:** utilizing courageous self-reflection to objectively gather all the necessary data in any given moment to take appropriate action.

These skills have the potential to rewire our very minds, hearts and bodies away from polarization and opposition. They help us build new alliances and deescalate conflict. From there, we can cultivate more aliveness that leads to respectful, inspiring relationships with those who are different. Once that potential is unlocked, we become part of the solution and spontaneously, as nurturers and protectors, contribute to the stewarding of a world system that has an equal balance of technological and spiritual nourishment.

strategy into your thoughts, words and actions. As you gain mastery of each exercise, you will discover that you can instinctively implement them in moments of stress. From there, you can make new choices when engaging in challenging situations and with those whom you perceive as different. You may not choose to do these practices when you encounter them in the chapters. If you decide to continue reading, I do recommend that you find time at some point to experiment with how they affect your physical, emotional and mental states of being. Experiencing these exercises is how you can put the ideas being presented here into practical action. And just like you'd do on any lengthy road trip, you may want to pause for a bit after each chapter to catch your breath, stretch your legs and digest what you've read before picking up and continuing on the next segment of your journey.

My hope is that you will read this book as if you are in dialogue with me. The ideas we will explore together will most likely make you feel uncomfortable and challenge some of your current beliefs, habits and patterns. If they don't, then I have not succeeded. Moreover, if I use words or terms that initially trigger

you, please recognize that policing each other's use of certain words in our discourse may actually be contributing to our inability to have effective conversations. My intention is not to create more opposition and harm, but to both civilly and fiercely cut through some of the confusion and patterns, however uncomfortable, that prevent us from creating conditions for the healthy, productive sharing of ideas. This work will resonate most if you recognize that bolder, yet respectful, strategies are needed to meet the challenges of our time.

FROM CHRONIC NICENESS TO FIERCE CIVILITY: REFRAMING CIVIL DISCOURSE

An excerpt from Chapter Two

Years ago, while living in northern California, I “served time” in a high-security unit of a state prison – not as an inmate, but as a meditation teacher and spiritual guide. This four-year assignment tested me to the brink of my own learned skills and sharpened my lifelong training in the power of authentic connection and Fierce Civility.

The routine of entering the prison grounds was

always the same. After an extensive, sometimes grueling, process of going through security, I was brought to an open field where the inmates could play ball, relax and get some sun. I gathered with the group in this field until we were escorted to a separate empty building for our sessions. The guard would unlock the gate that surrounded the building then take us to a room where we would set up chairs, cushions, books and other supplies.

You can imagine my first time standing alone with these men as the guard departed and the gate clicked shut behind him. Anticipating the unknown, the fight-flight-freeze response from my sympathetic nervous system became activated. One of the inmates approached me and introduced himself as Sam. Checking his energy and posture, and that of the others, I established that Sam had been designated the leader of the group. As the other men were busy configuring the chairs and cushions, Sam began to share with me his experiences with these kinds of teachings. He gave me quite a rundown on how he'd "led" similar sessions in the past, and what a good job he had done teaching.

With my studies and practices in power dynamics, nonverbal communication, martial arts and conflict resolution, it quickly became clear to me what was occurring. With great respect and deference, Sam was establishing himself as the alpha and letting me know that this was "his show." Sensing his activated nervous system, I concluded that he perceived me as a possible threat to his power and the status quo.

When we were ready to start, Sam turned to me and said, "This is my spot here. You can sit over there."

His chair was at the front of the room, clearly distinguishing himself as the instructor. The chair he designated for me was situated near the rest of the group. The other men would be sitting on cushions. This was obviously not the way I would have chosen to organize the space. He was clearly playing a game of "who's in power."

The group awaited my next move. In Sam's world, where there could only be one leader, I wondered, *What should I do?*

I could have challenged Sam (fight) and told him that I'm making the decisions. But that could have gotten messy, and shaming him would have made it difficult to win the group's trust. I could have decided that this wasn't working for me, walked out of the building (flight), waited for a guard to show up, and requested to leave. Another option would have been to let Sam get his way (freeze) and sit where he wanted me to sit. This would have reinforced the dynamic that he'd be calling the shots from here on out, thereby making it difficult for me to claim my authority and earn the men's respect.

With my nervous system bouncing from fight to flight to freeze, I had to do something quick. So, I initiated the Power of the Pivot

(which I will introduce later). First, I observed that I was in stagnation. Then, by getting out of my head and into my heart and body, I shifted out of the stagnation. From a place of compassion, I considered that both Sam and I were seeking a way to feel powerful and survive. Ultimately, Sam had more at stake with these men than I did. Therefore, I needed to find a solution that would provide the best outcome for each of us – where I took care of myself, didn't compromise my values or betray my boundaries, but also didn't shame and discredit Sam in the eyes of his peers – and that also instilled the group's necessary trust in me and my process so they could benefit from the teachings.

As I pondered this, I felt my feet on the ground and took some deep breaths to decrease my heart rate, deepen my shallow breathing and focus my scattered thoughts. Doing so helped me to open my senses and get a clearer assessment of the situation and what my possible options could be. With this information, I did some on-the-spot decision making and strategizing.

"Hey guys, I'm Joe," I greeted. "I'm excited and honored to be working with each of you. I've heard a lot about what you've been doing together and

"He who loves others is constantly loved by them. He who respects others is constantly respected by them."

MENCIUS



Texas I by Mobius Featured Artist, Jim McManus

I appreciate your dedication to learning and self-development.”

I turned to address Sam and visualized connecting my heart to his, meeting him where he was in that moment. “I’m grateful to you, Sam, for being such an important force in the development of this group.”

He and the other men were visibly stunned into a deeper level of presence.

“I’m looking forward to working with you,” I continued, now addressing the entire group. “I hope it works out so that I can come on a regular basis and be of support. I have so much I’d like to share from my background and trainings. Not only do I enjoy offering these teachings, I would also like to practice them with all of you in the same way that I’ve learned them from my teachers. My desire is to give you the most authentic experience. Would you like that?”

The men nodded in unison.

I turned again to Sam. “Would you like that?”

“Yes, I would.”

I had buy-in.

“Okay, great. I’d like to slightly rearrange how we are sitting. Is that okay?”

They were open to this.

“I’d prefer that we all use the cushions and sit on the floor, but if any of you want to sit on a chair, that’s fine,” I explained, grabbing a cushion for myself.

A few of the men seemed confused. *The leader... sit on the floor?* I could feel that their hearts were opening in a new way as they stepped out of their habitual patterning and became curious about the new.

Reaching into my bag, I pulled out a compass and explained that I intentionally sit at the head of the group in a certain direction. (This was just a way to pivot the focus and literally turn the direction by 90 degrees away from where Sam wanted me to sit.)

Based on the compass reading, I claimed my spot, then walked up to Sam and said to everyone, “As you all take a spot, I would like to save the spot next to me for Sam.”

Sam’s state of confusion and flight-flight-freeze reaction seemed to immediately ease. I sensed that he was able to manage this seating adjustment and still feel a sense of authority. The others couldn’t necessarily place it, but I observed that their bodies relax into this new situation with ease.

The first session went beautifully. As I led the men through teachings and practices, I would turn to Sam every so often to ask for his thoughts on certain topics. This served a dual purpose: allowing him to feel acknowledged and seen for his experience, and also helping me gather information on what they had been learning before I arrived. From there, I could adapt my sessions to best serve them. Most importantly, it

gave them all an experience and example of respectful, shared leadership.

I didn't have to do any of this. I had the authority to run these sessions any way I wanted. However, getting oppositional or acting like a bully is not in alignment with my highest principles and it would have made my time with them miserable. In that one session, I created trust, safety and a deepening of relationship that created the conditions for so much growth. We eventually became like brothers and created an alliance that surprised us all. What a gift. What may have taken months to establish took 120 minutes!

This was the beginning of an awe-inspiring relationship with these men, sharing a lot of laughter, heartaches, challenges, frustration, mutual empowerment, and profound experiences. I knew that when I was with them, I always had to be authentic, powerful and vulnerable (all aspects of the same thing). And from their side, they knew that I wasn't going to let them slide on their commitment to themselves, to their practice and to each other. They appreciated (and sometimes were shocked by) my care *and* fierceness, my call to discipline *and* spaciousness.

I demonstrated how a man can be sensitive and loving, and still be respected.

This is the Fierce Civility Approach in action. In those moments of stress and possible conflict, I regulated my nervous system and monitored my reactive responses. Assessing my level of safety, I opened my heart and, as both nurturer and protector, took into consideration both myself and the others. I committed to acting in a way that would bring about the best possible outcome for everyone, with honor and respect, compassion and understanding. By pivoting away from the polarizing dilemma that was created (*either* he sits in his chair, *or* I sit in his chair), I shifted the attention to an alternate option. Most importantly, I avoided the typical pattern of taking an aggressive or defensive stance. Instead, I shifted from the need to be right, to demonize Sam or to win, and stayed focused on finding a mutually beneficial solution.

All of these actions helped get us to a benevolent, win-win outcome, a deepening of relationship and a skillful prevention or de-escalation of conflict. It is these “skills and strategies of the heart” that we will explore in the upcoming chapters. ■



JOE WESTON is an international trainer, a Mobius Executive Coach and Transformational Faculty member. With a career spanning more than thirty years in the fields of conflict prevention, leadership, stress management and communication, he is a highly sought-after facilitator for individuals, as well as corporations, government agencies and nonprofits around the world.

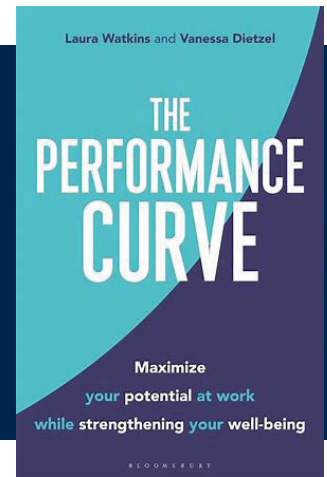
In addition to this book, he authored *Mastering Respectful Confrontation: A Guide to Personal Freedom and Empowered, Collaborate Engagement*. He has studied martial arts and contemplative practices as well as neuroscience, and communication models, to develop a unique approach to training that combines theory with somatic exercises. He is the founder and owner of the Weston Network, and in

2020, founded the Fierce Civility Project, a nonprofit to carry his programs and message across all sectors. His work with women's rights and other humanitarian organizations in the Middle East and U.S. focuses on empowerment and leadership. He has worked with various veterans' organizations in processes of integration and healing, and has volunteered for the Liberation Prison Project, teaching meditation and leadership to inmates. Joe has served as an adjunct professor in Georgetown University's Department of Government, Program of Conflict Resolution.

The Performance Curve

Maximize Your Potential at Work While Strengthening Your Well-being

A book excerpt from Laura Watkins and Vanessa Dietzel



How can we actively develop our performance, while also taking care of our well-being and life satisfaction? *The Performance Curve* is a ground-breaking guide to success and happiness in both work and life. Crucially, this book explores both how you can improve individual performance and how to build relationships and cultures that bring out the best in others. By interweaving individual and collective development, this approach is transformational for building leadership and organizational performance.

FROM THE INTRODUCTION

The Performance Curve offers you a path for developing your inner operating system to help you work and live better. As a consolidation of our combined work and life experience, it is underpinned by cutting edge neuroscience and adult development psychology, as well as more practical knowledge from experience-based traditions and therapies.

We have also conducted two dozen in-depth research interviews with remarkable individuals who we observe have made strides towards a broader vision of performance, where effectiveness and well-being form a virtuous circle. Their lives and ways of maintaining high performance are quite different, but they share a focus on developing their inner operating system to fuel their activities and accomplishments. We have selected ten of these individuals from different walks of life and corners of the globe to bring alive the ideas in this book.

This book lays out the three catalysts that help us be on the performance curve: wisdom, fuel and connection. Part 1, *the wisdom catalyst*, lays out the

core components of our inner operating system – mindsets, emotions and habits – and how to work with them. In Part 2, *the fuel catalyst*, we share how to sustain the continuous development of our inner operating system day-to-day and over the long-haul. And in Part 3, *the connection catalyst*, we cover how to build relationships and environments that bring the best out in ourselves and others.

We base the book on academic research, but keep it practical without straying into oversimplification or popularization of the science. We also build on the ideas of others who have focused on specific aspects of the performance curve. Some of what we cover in a page has had several entire books written about it. Instead of having to buy, digest and integrate these multiple books, we want *The Performance Curve* to be a one-stop-shop on performance. We provide references so you can delve further into topics if desired.

There is no single silver bullet for developing our inner operating system. Our modern world is too

On the performance curve, the rises in performance come from increasing our inner capacity to deal with challenges and complexity, so there is less strain on our brains and bodies compared to the crisis-fuelled uplifts of the boom-and-bust curve. Being able to take bigger steps on shorter routes to our goals demands fewer sacrifices and frees us up to take better care of our well-being.

complex, uncertain and diverse, and so are we as human beings. Our diversity can take many forms, including quite significant differences in our brain machinery. Furthermore, human growth is a messy process. All this means that what works for some people will not work for others. This book therefore provides a structure (through the three catalysts) for you to create your own developmental route map; so that you can take charge of your unique brain and life, to make them work for you.

PROTECT-EXPLORE MODES: WHO IS THAT BEHIND THE STEERING WHEEL?

Excerpts from Chapter 3

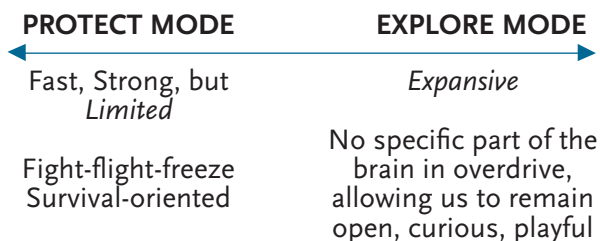
We humans can react very differently when facing challenge. We can fall prey to fear, overwhelm or rage. And we are also capable of extraordinary courage, growth and adaptability. Our brain activity reflects these different reactions, and it helps to think of this activity as along a spectrum between two alternative modes, protect mode and explore mode. Depending on where we are along this spectrum, the patterns of activity in our brain vary, as do the mindsets that gain energy in our inner operating system and the behaviors they give rise to. All this means that, at different times, we get drivers with different priorities

and capabilities steering our course of action. The ability to identify and manage where we are on the protect-explore spectrum is therefore fundamental for moving on the performance curve.

The ‘Hidden Drivers’ of Protect And Explore Modes

Hidden drivers are the elemental human goals, surfacing as needs and fears, that govern our behaviors and habits to keep us safe and confirm our self-worth. They are core to our personality and sense of identity and will be deeply worn into brain areas that store and process memories (e.g. the hippocampus) and generate emotions (e.g. the amygdala). As with other mindsets, these hidden drivers are not beneath the surface of our awareness because they are bad or need to be hidden. It is because automating important beliefs about what matters to us and how the world works helps our brains respond efficiently.

Regardless of how aware we are of them, hidden drivers matter. They can have strong influence over whether we are in protect or explore mode and how we respond to situations. This is why many psychologists will help their clients uncover their ‘core beliefs’, which usually incorporate their hidden drivers. The table overleaf shows a list of common hidden drivers.



Over our lifetimes, as we develop our inner operating system, how we experience our hidden drivers often changes. First, our deeply embedded hidden drivers start to feel less strong: we may experience that our sense of safety or self-worth can exist whether we meet our hidden drivers or not, and

therefore have more choice over when or how they drive us. Second, we start to embrace other hidden drivers more, finding fulfilment and balance from exploring them alongside our original stronger hidden drivers.

The iceberg figure on the next page shows how our hidden drivers sit at the very bottom of our iceberg. We can think of them as deep, general mindsets about ourselves and what matters. Because they are so fundamental, they feed into other mindsets, which are shown by the row of empty mindset bubbles layered over the hidden drivers. All the mindsets closely connected to a hidden driver can be called hidden driver mindsets. These mindsets are less general and more situational, but usually contain the hidden driver embedded within them. For example, take our

client Rachel, a CEO who had successfully steered the nationwide expansion of her family's media business but was struggling to define a new strategy when the business came under fire from a new entrant and sales declined. She began micro-managing and wasn't able to draw on her team's perspectives. Rachel's strongest hidden driver was **Strength**, and she summarised her hidden driver mindsets as *asking for help is a sign of weakness* and *I have more control when I get into the detail*. Those hidden driver mindsets might then spawn or be connected to other mindsets, which are further away from the hidden driver but nevertheless get energy from it (the upper row of tiny bubbles). In Rachel's case, this might be *strong leaders don't ask for help* or *I can only get into the heart of issues by going into the detail*.

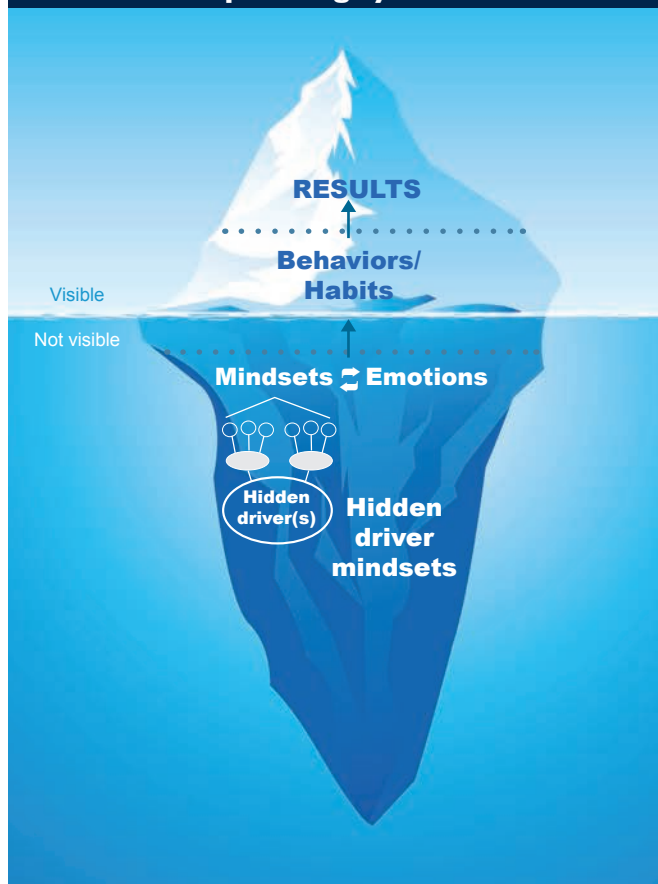
Whilst the drawing just shows a few for simplicity, in reality this network of mindsets will be quite

Table One: Common hidden drivers

HIDDEN DRIVER	COMMON NEEDS	COMMON FEARS
Virtue	Doing the right or good thing, being perfect or beyond criticism	Feeling or being seen as bad, defective, hypocritical or imperfect
Closeness	Feeling liked, getting and giving care and affection	Not being wanted or like, being rejected, or feeling disconnected from others
Value	Feeling valuable or recognized, impressing others	Not being needed or valuable, being overlooked
Authenticity	Being and expressing oneself, being seen as unique or special	Not being true to oneself, feeling or being seen as ordinary
Mastery	Understanding and knowing things, being seen as capable and competent	Not having things figured out, being seen as incompetent or uninformed
Security	Feeling supported, having certainty, clear direction or guidance	Not having support or direction, feeling rudderless or without structure
Freedom	Feeling free or stimulated, having options	Being held back, feeling bored or trapped, missing out
Strength	Being strong, being in control, seen as coping	Being controlled by someone or something else, feeling or showing weakness
Harmony	Feeling at peace, having a harmonious environment	Experiencing upset, confrontation or tension

This list is adapted from The Wisdom of the Enneagram by Donald Riso and Russ Hudson, ©1999. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Figure One: Hidden drivers in our inner operating system



extensive and interlinked for each of us, which explains why our hidden drivers manifest in our lives as uniquely as our fingerprint.

The good news is that hidden driver mindsets are less deeply wired and core to who we are than the hidden drivers themselves, so they are easier to change. Furthermore, because they get their power from being connected to our hidden drivers, working with these mindsets will also help us get more perspective on our hidden drivers and feel less in the grip of them. This means, if you want to sustainably change deeply engrained behaviours linked to hidden drivers, shifting hidden driver mindsets can be powerful. The rest of this chapter (abridged for this article) explains how to shift our hidden driver mindsets, so we can relate differently to our hidden drivers and have them support us in reaching our potential, rather than getting in our way.

Get Into the Driving Seat: How to Harness Your Hidden Drivers

1. Put yourself on the protect-explore map

Sometimes we are so deeply on autopilot that we only notice that we were in protect mode retrospectively. If we can sharpen our in-the-moment awareness of where we are on the protect-explore spectrum, we get a chance to reset and pave the way for learning more about our hidden drivers.

2. Identify your hidden drivers

Awareness of the personal hidden drivers that send us towards protect or explore mode is an essential part of taking charge of our brains and bringing our best. Knowing what is triggering a brain mode can help us feel more willing and able to do something about it. Had our client Rachel known about her hidden drivers at the time, she would have had a much better chance of unhooking herself. How might we find out what our hidden drivers are, especially if they are outside, or at the edge of, our conscious awareness?

- First, look again at Table One: **Common hidden drivers** on page 43. Look down the middle column. Do you spot any needs that feel particularly important to you? They might feel very good when they are met or motivate you to work towards them. Then look down the right-hand column. Do you recognize any of those fears in yourself? Which fears would you most dislike to come true for you? When we first show people this list, they will often see several of the drivers in themselves.
- Next, spot when you are in protect or explore mode, and dive to find out what is driving that. In protect mode, keep asking yourself questions such as: What am I most afraid of? What would be so awful about that? and What am I really trying to avoid feeling, or being seen as? In explore mode, ask yourself questions, such as What am I most drawn to or excited by? What would I find so rewarding about that? and How would I most like to feel, or be seen? You might need to ask these questions a few times to get to your

hidden driver(s). The key is to focus on personal consequences: either for how you feel, or how others see you.

3. Shift your hidden driver mindsets and loosen the grip of your hidden drivers

As mentioned, we are not suggesting you try to change your hidden drivers. This step is about identifying and shifting the mindsets that are connected to them, to loosen the automatic grip of your hidden drivers. A by-product of this process is that you will gain more awareness and a different relationship to your hidden drivers, which will also lessen their grip. For this step, you need to work with a specific situation in which you suspect your hidden driver(s) are holding you back.

- First, complete your 'from' iceberg, being sure to get to your hidden driver mindsets. Keep asking, What am I trying to avoid? and Why am I worried about that happening? to identify the mindsets closest to your hidden driver. Keep going until you have mindsets with a hidden driver embedded in them. For example, we summarize Rachel's hidden driver mindsets in the 'from' mindsets in Table Two.
- Next, get on the balcony to scrutinize those mindsets. Are the fears realistic? Look at what is really at stake, to calibrate the actual level of threat. What is the worst thing that could happen, how likely would this be and how could you respond if this happened? Even if your mindsets feel true, could you imagine seeing things differently?
- Finally, identify some alternative 'to' mindsets. As well as following the guidance from earlier in the book, try what we call the mindset pivot technique, to turn the hidden driver that is holding you back into a source of momentum. You take the energy inside the mindset (the hidden driver) and pivot it towards the direction you want to go. It is a yin-yang technique, because it recognizes that, inside the protect mode reaction, there is a seed of something strong you can redirect towards explore mode.

Table Two: Rachel's hidden driver mindsets

'FROM' MINDSET	'TO' MINDSET (after the pivot technique)
Asking for help is a sign of weakness	Getting help will reinforce and make me stronger
Strong leaders don't ask for help	Strong leaders pick when to ask for help
I have more control when I get into the detail	Balancing the big picture and the detail gives me more control
I can only get into the heart of issues by going into the detail	We can get into the heart of issues faster if we look at both the big picture and the detail

It is difficult to adopt a new mindset when in protect mode, which will affect our brain's ability to get perspective or regulate our emotions. Since suppressing or working against emotions simply increases protect mode, it is more effective to pay attention to emotions and their physical sensations by labelling them, which sets up our brain for mindset shifting work. Many people have told us how expressing their emotions safely frees up their thinking, for example channelling their anger into digging up the garden, a fast-paced run, or simply letting themselves cry.

4. Helping others bring their best by being in explore mode

The most important way of helping others be in explore mode and bring their best is to be in explore mode yourself. Being in protect mode may drag someone else into it as well, especially if they have not yet built strong muscles for managing their own brain modes and/or if you are in a more senior or authoritative position. In addition, you can do the following to help them strengthen explore mode:

- Plan how to approach difficult conversations to minimize others' sense of threat and maximize their sense of opportunity
- Notice when others are feeling threatened and give them a chance to reset

- Help others gain insight into their own triggers of protect-explore modes, for example when giving feedback, and create a safe space for doing so by sharing your own
- Work together to calibrate and manage threats and find opportunities.

We all spend time in protect mode as well as explore mode. If you feel at the mercy of, or frustrated by, your hidden drivers, remember they have helped you get to where you are today. We can move ourselves towards

explore mode by compassionately learning about ourselves in protect mode and our hidden drivers. They contain important pointers for our direction of growth when we can meet them with curiosity, openness and acceptance.

Our longer-term growth as adults is the focus of the next chapter: how we can develop our brains longer term to see and manage the complexities we face in our lives and the world around us. This is the second aspect of the wisdom catalyst for being on the performance curve. ■



LAURA WATKINS is a neuroscientist and leadership and organizational specialist. She brings a deep expertise in brain performance to her work in helping leaders thrive whilst getting results.

She began her career at McKinsey & Company, where she co-founded the leadership practice in Europe. She subsequently co-founded The Cognitas Group, a leadership and organizational consultancy, in 2008. She is the programme director for several long-running flagship leadership programmes, and supports organizations with culture change. Laura has a PhD in Cognitive Neuroscience from Cambridge University and an MA in Physiology and Psychology from Oxford University. She divides her time between London and Paris with her young family.



VANESSA DIETZEL is passionate about helping clients effect successful change, in particular through supporting the personal growth that underpins sustainable external achievements. She brings a unique blend of corporate experience, coaching, and teaching breathwork and yoga.

She started her career with Boston Consulting Group in London and Sydney and, for the past twenty years, has been working with leaders all over the world on their individual and organizational performance and well-being.

Vanessa has a BSc in International Relations from LSE and has trained in a range of personal and group development techniques. Originally from Germany, she has lived and worked on four continents and is based in the British seaside town Margate.



YAHYA

I first came across the stunning craftsmanship and artistry of the designer Yahya last year while visiting the magical Royal Mansour hotel in Marrakech where he has many of his remarkable pieces embedded in the palatial architecture. On my return this Spring I had the great joy of arranging to visit his studio and receive a firsthand tour through his remarkable process for producing these one of kind hand-crafted lamps, light fixtures, sculptures and furniture. I also had the enormous joy of sitting quietly with him and hearing of the multi-cultural tributaries that inform his design, his love for the creative process and his soulful way of walking in this life.

Yayha's private workshop employs over three hundred crafts people who are supported by a design studio of technicians, draftsmen and engineers. Each department has its own unique expertise and specializes in different aspects of his unique approach to craftsmanship, producing a diverse range of products from lighting, furniture, decorative accessories through to architectural elements and artwork. In-house production allows Yahya the freedom to design and create, whilst permitting complete control over every aspect of the production process, from research and development through to fabrication and finishing. This ensures the exceptional quality of craftsmanship and design which underpins his body of art. As you will see from our images herein the result is a mesmerizing, inspiring and utterly transporting effect.

I was so delighted that he agreed to allow us to publish a selection of his precious creations in this edition of the *Mobius Strip* and we are honored to share it with you here.

Timing conspired such that we are showcasing these gorgeous productions from his private workshop in Marrakech in the immediate wake of the devastating earthquake that took place in the days before this edition went to print. We hope, therefore, that our inclusion of his offerings will help guide you to explore his body of work as well as to consider a generous donation to support the people of Morocco to help restore their homes and lives, and the damaged antiquities.

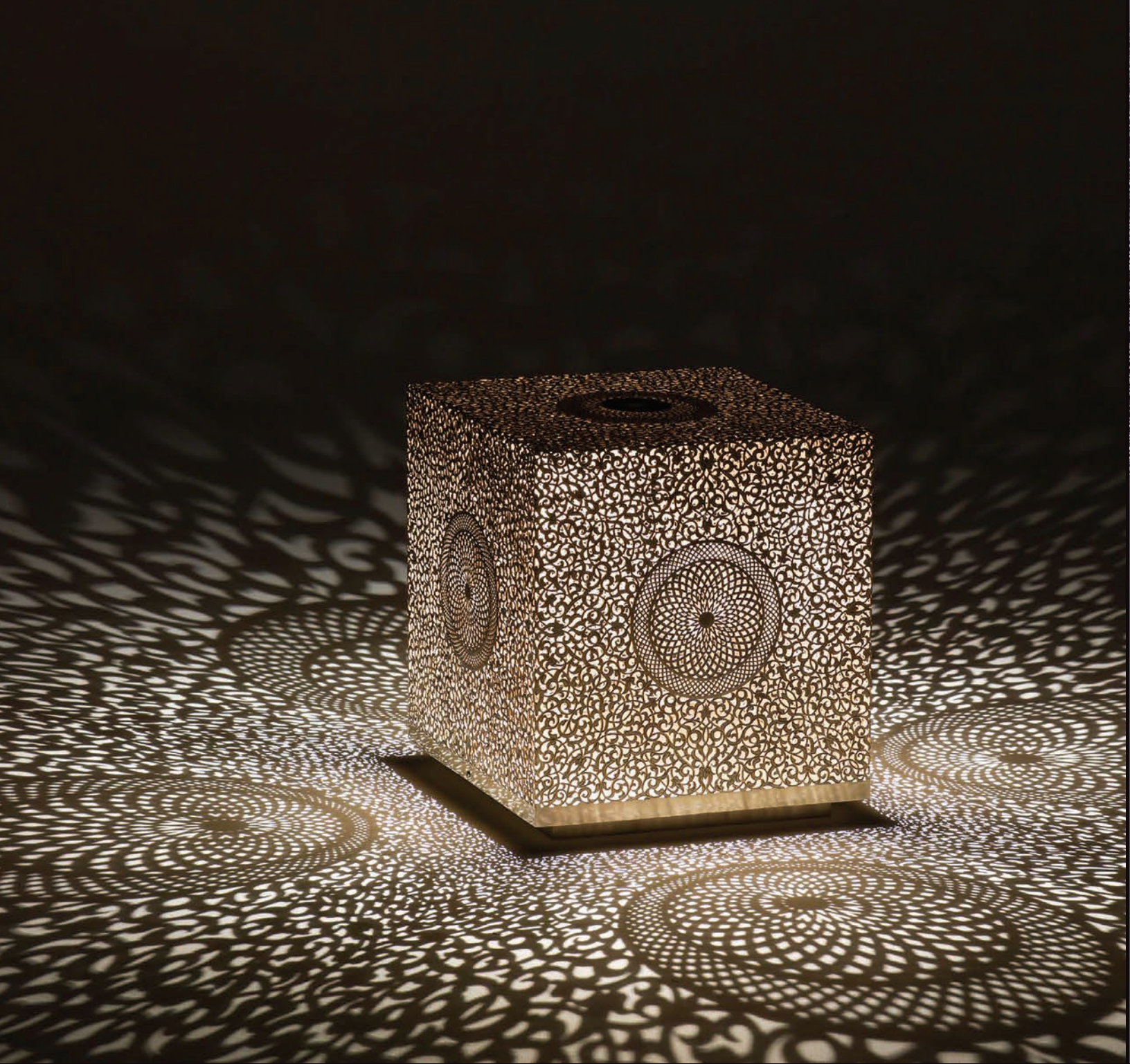
For more information about how to donate to the international relief response in Morocco, please see details on page four of this edition.

Amy Elizabeth Fox





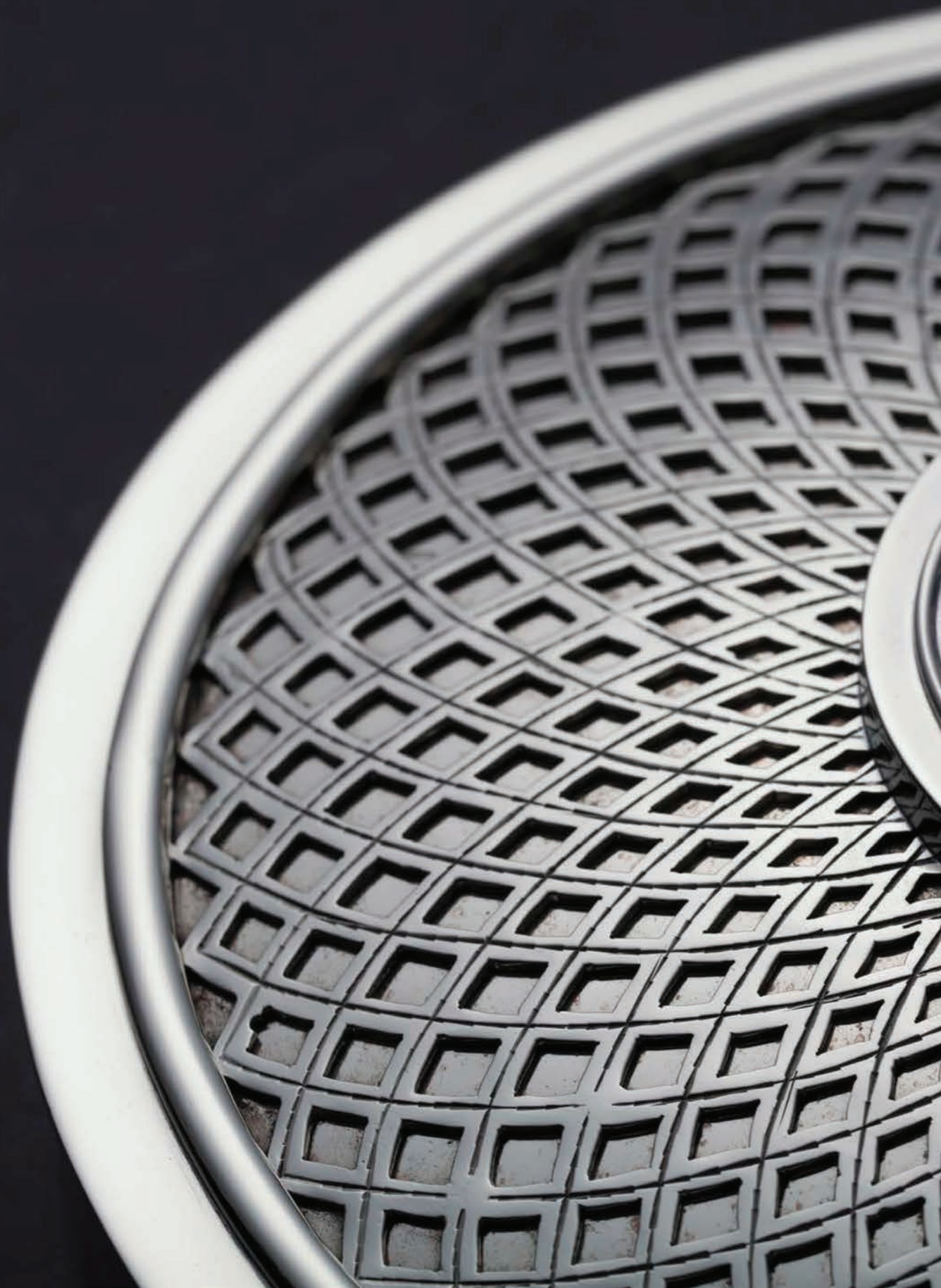
Yahya is a self-taught designer and artist who was born and raised in London and discovered the art of sculpturing light and metalworking on a trip to Marrakech. He later moved and settled there and opened a workshop and a gallery in 2005 to showcase his collections of lighting, furniture, accessories, decorative pieces, architectural elements and artworks. Today, his work resides in some of the most beautiful and prestigious private homes around the world.

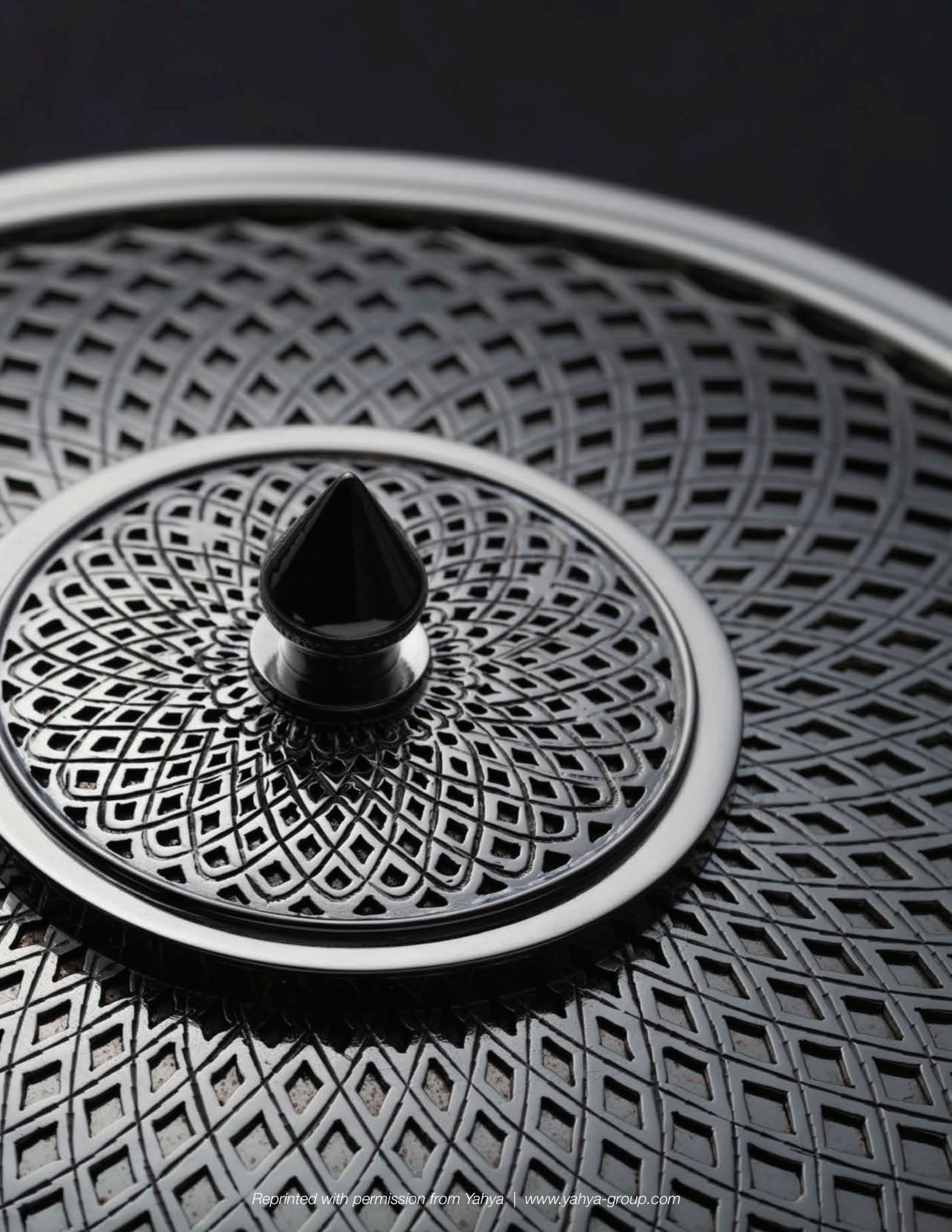


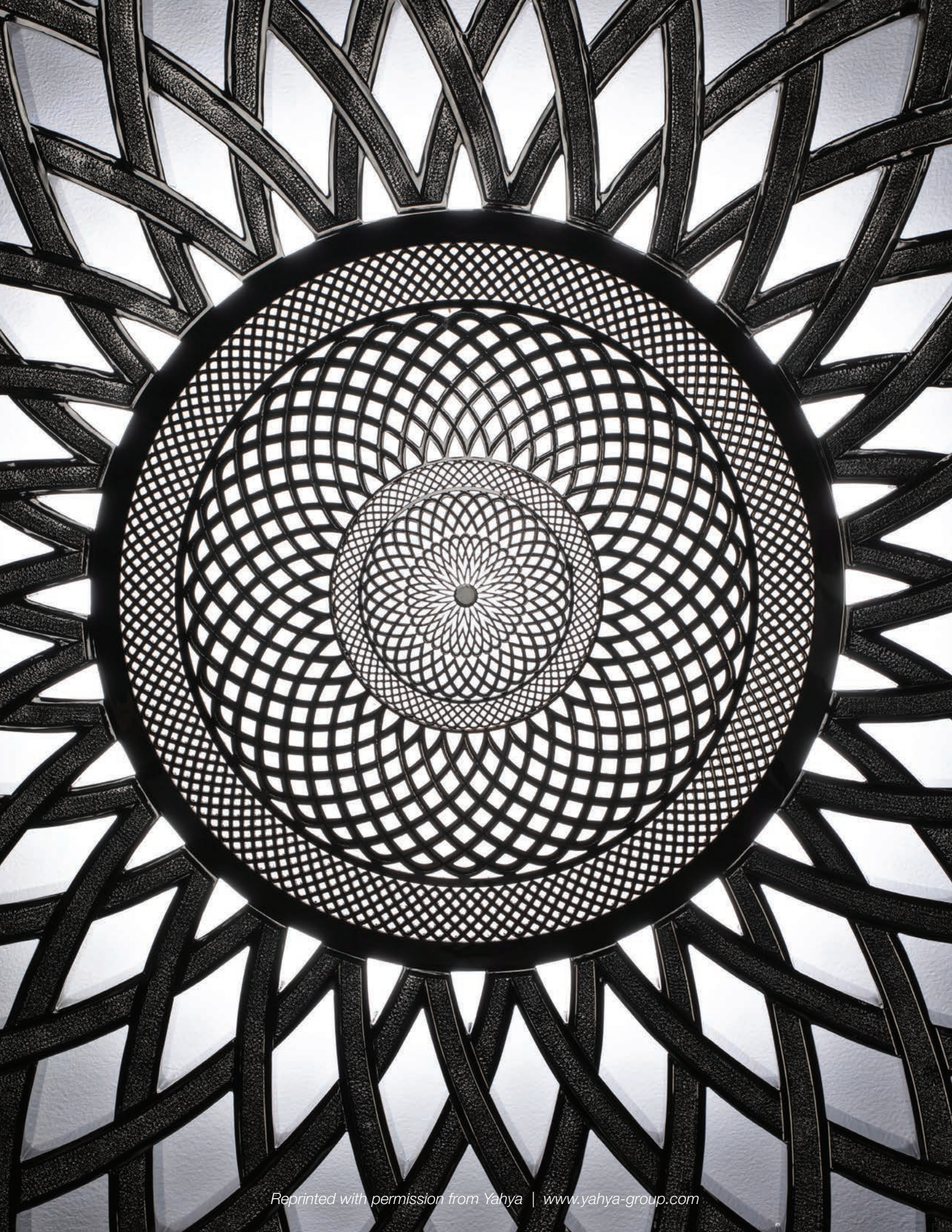
His art is characterized by contrasting yet complementary influences. It has been exhibited internationally and he is commissioned to produce exceptional pieces for public and private projects the world over. Difficult to classify, the works are a harmonious fusion of Eastern elegance and Western minimalism that blurs the boundaries between Art and Design.



Each Yahya piece is completely made by hand and is the result of a unique heritage and a tradition of forgotten ancestral techniques and exceptional savoir-faire, which is combined with an innovative approach to design which transcends fashions and is uncompromising in its quality. His work is characterized by a precision, and an obsessive attention to detail that translates from the smallest to the largest of his designs.



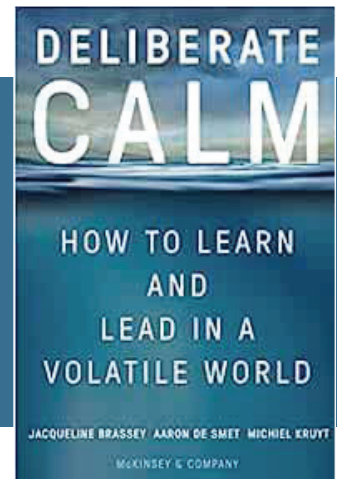




Deliberate Calm

How to Learn and Lead in a Volatile World

By Mobius Friends Jacqueline Brassey, Aaron de Smet, and Michiel Kruyt



RAISING TEAM AWARENESS

An excerpt from Chapter 9

In addition to having a foundation of psychological safety, teams that are in unfamiliar territory in one or more significant ways and are seeking novel solutions in an Adaptive Zone context can practice Dual Awareness in order to collaborate effectively and access a state of learning. This requires team members to gain individual and collective awareness of what is happening in their environment and how it is affecting their internal state and team dynamic.

Stop the Domino Effect of Protection

When the team arrives at their next meeting, they are surprised to see a chart on the whiteboard that Elizabeth has begun filling out. The columns contain their names, formal roles, mindsets about leadership and success, and traits they discussed at the Origin Stories dinner. There are blank columns titled “Trigger” and “Emotion/Protection Behavior.”

Once they are all seated, Elizabeth addresses the team. “Before we get to today’s agenda, I want to do an exercise that I call ‘The Domino Effect,’ ” she says. “We’ve talked about what happens when you’re in a state of protection, but what do you know about what causes you to shift into this state?”

Most of us are unaware of our triggers that shift us into protection. A trigger can be an event, a person, something that someone says, or anything that

our brain consciously or unconsciously interprets or predicts is a threat. It is incredibly valuable to gain awareness of these triggers, as well as how we typically react in protection. In a team setting, it is just as important to know what can trigger your team members into protection and how they react so that you can break this cycle by adjusting your own behavior accordingly.

On all teams, there is a dance that occurs as individuals dip in and out of protection and exhibit behaviors that push others in and out of protection as well. We rarely pay attention to what state we are in as individuals or as a team, even when we are making critical decisions, but it’s far more effective to make decisions and ask for commitments when the team as a whole is in a state of learning. If one of us is in learning but someone else on the team is in protection, the other person will not be open to what we have to say. In these cases, self-awareness is not enough. We must observe not only ourselves but our full teams through that skylight in the ceiling and notice the signs that they are in protection. Then we can take action to help them shift.

Elizabeth asks if anyone can name one of their triggers. Chad goes first. “It really bothers me when people show up to a meeting but then don’t participate or seem to check out,” he says. “When they stop listening and turn away or look at their phones, it feels completely disrespectful, as if everyone else’s

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THE FAMILIAR ZONE AND THE ADAPTIVE ZONE

As we face situations throughout our lives, we oscillate between different contextual “zones.” Broadly speaking, we find it helpful to group these into two main zones: the Familiar Zone and the Adaptive Zone. What is required of us in order to successfully navigate and thrive each zone is markedly different.

The Familiar Zone is exactly as it sounds – an external environment that is familiar and known. We are typically well prepared for the tasks and challenges that we face in this zone. We know the landscape and the “rules of the game,” we have built up a repertoire of responses, approaches, and behaviors that are appropriate for the situation, and we more or less know what we need to do in order to succeed.

The Adaptive Zone, however, is an external environment that is new territory or “uncharted waters.” Our context is unfamiliar, uncertain, or unpredictable in some important way. Once we find ourselves in this zone, the patterns, methods, and solutions that have worked for us in the past will likely be insufficient and in order to succeed we must learn something new. Here, we don’t know what it will take to achieve a good outcome or whether or not we are up to the task.

time and opinions don’t even matter.”

“Okay, great,” Elizabeth says as she writes “checking out” in the “triggers” column next to Chad’s name. “And how do you typically react when it seems like someone is checking out or ignoring you?”

Chad smiles. “Well, I’m sure it’s not the best,” he says, “but I get mad and usually just talk louder, be provocative at a loud volume. Like, maybe I can force them to hear what I’m saying.”

Elizabeth nods and writes it down. “Who else?”

“I get really flustered when people ask me things I don’t know,” Roberto says. “I feel exposed and uncertain, and think I should already have an answer. My behavior gets really defensive. I go on counterattack and challenge the person asking the question.”

“Oh, defensiveness is such a trigger for me,” Latha says. “I feel angry and frustrated when people are putting their own interests ahead of the interests of the team. When I see people getting defensive about their territory or people, I think they’re just concerned for themselves and not a team player.”

“And how do you react? What’s the behavior that goes with that feeling?” Elizabeth asks.

Latha sighs. “I usually just try to confront it and call it out. But there have definitely been times when it made the situation worse because the way I called it out was fueled by my anger and frustration.”

“Listen, there’s no shame in how we act when we’re in protection,” Elizabeth reminds them. “Of course,

we want to reduce those moments and gain the ability to choose a better response. But these are natural reactions. It’s all part of the process and is actually a sign that the situation we’re facing matters.”

Roberto gets triggered if you push him with a hard question that he doesn’t know the answer to. His protection response of defensiveness will trigger Latha, whose protection response is to confront him. But this will potentially push him even harder. Then their argument will trigger Giovanna to start feeling like she’s losing control of the meeting, and possibly Mark as well, when things start getting emotionally charged. Giovanna’s protection reaction of taking control and talking over people will further trigger Mark. He will shut down and disengage, if he hasn’t already, which triggers Chad to start getting loud. And on and on it goes in a *downward spiral of protection*. The business content is now almost irrelevant as your colliding icebergs derail the entire discussion. All it takes is for one person to get triggered to start the domino effect.

Help Each Other Shift into Learning

This type of domino effect happens in teams, families, and all sorts of groups. Each of us shifts into protection several times a day, and of course we are *most* often triggered by other people or our own

interpretations of their behavior. This is part of our human conditioning, and we should not be afraid or ashamed of it. In fact, just as our own protection moments are signals of opportunities for growth, in a team context they are signs that we have an opportunity for deeper understanding and mutual learning.

Awareness is key. Once we know that this is happening, we can take steps to change it. One thing we can do is find out what helps our team members shift out of protection and into learning. Then, when we notice that one of us is exhibiting protection behaviors, we can break the cycle by requesting a break and giving everyone a chance to cool down or by helping another person shift into learning by exhibiting the behavior that we know will help them. Elizabeth adds a column to the white board that reads “Helpful Behaviors,” and the team goes around and shares their thoughts about what actions help them shift into learning.

If everyone on the team agrees to it, it is also helpful to gently point it out when we notice that one or more people are shifting into protection. We call this a *skylight moment*. A team member can simply raise their hand and ask for a skylight moment. This is a cue for the team to take a few breaths, get a drink of water, and think about how the current team mindset and behaviors are or aren’t serving us in the moment.

It is often helpful for one team member to explicitly

Just like individuals, teams often have underlying limiting mindsets that can keep them from working together effectively and prevent them from reaching their full potential.

take on the role of observer to help raise the team’s awareness. According to psychologist David Kantor’s “Four Player Model,” developed as part of his theory of structural dynamics, people in a group take on one of four roles: *Movers* suggest actions or decisions around the content of the issue; *Followers* support a mover

and their move; *Opposers* resist or go against a move; and *Bystanders* are observers who take no position with respect to the content of problem or the moves people are making.

For example, if Giovanna suggests that she and Latha meet for coffee, and Latha says, “Yes, let’s meet up, but I don’t want to get coffee. Let’s take a walk, instead,” Latha is

following Giovanna’s move to meet up, opposing the suggestion that they meet for coffee, and making her own move that they go for a walk.

Individuals can move fluidly among these four roles. However, teams often get stuck in certain patterns. For instance, some teams with strong personalities can fall into a pattern of moves and countermoves, with everyone pulling in different directions and no one reacting to other moves by either following or opposing.

One of the most helpful things that someone on a team can do is to play an active bystander role. An unhelpful bystander will stay silent or check out or hold back, but active bystanders raise the team’s awareness by observing what is happening, noticing

One of the most helpful things that someone on a team can do is to play an active bystander role. An unhelpful bystander will stay silent or check out or hold back, but active bystanders raise the team’s awareness by observing what is happening, noticing patterns, asking curious questions, and pointing out relevant interpersonal dynamics and habits.



Land I by Mobius Featured Artist, Jim McManus

patterns, asking curious questions, and pointing out relevant interpersonal dynamics and habits. In particular, the bystander can ask questions that point the team toward double loop learning.

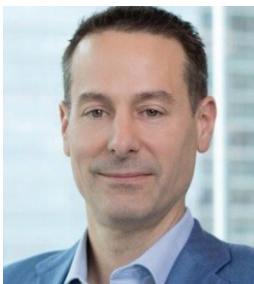
In our current team, Elizabeth has been playing the role of bystander. She has no point of view on the content of the problem itself. She is simply observing and making suggestions about the team process. But we do not actually need an outsider for this, as long as

we make sure that we are each effectively playing each of these different roles at different times. Sometimes we make a move, sometimes we explain why we are opposed to a course of action, sometimes we voice our agreement and actively follow the decisions we support, and at other times we step out of the content and notice the broader dynamics of the situation and the team from the skylight as an active, constructive observer. ■



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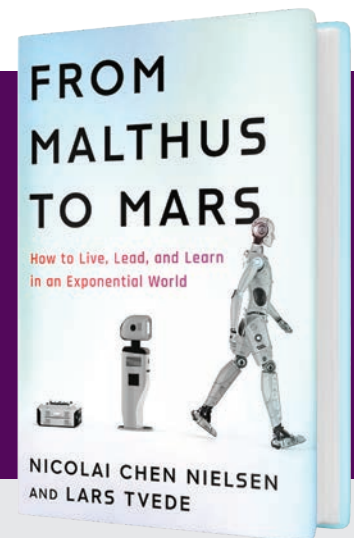


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From Malthus to Mars

How to Live, Lead, and Learn in an Exponential World

A book excerpt from Mobius Friend Nicolai Chen Nielsen and Lars Tvede



These bestselling authors bring a unique insight into the driving forces behind the world's technological development as well as a number of concrete forecasts for the world to come. With an emphasis on not only the trends, but the mindsets and key shifts organizations need to embrace, the authors offer a free future-ready assessment here: <https://www.supertrends.com/test>.

THE ROAD TOWARD ABUNDANCE

Excerpt from Chapter 6

One effect of innovation is that the world generally develops for the better, whatever society – including well-educated experts – might believe at a particular moment. Too often, we focus on momentary emergencies, not longstanding trends. Indeed, when we follow the public debate about society and politics, we cannot help but notice that a substantial part of the population seems to believe that we still live in a Malthusian world – even though we broke decisively away from it almost six centuries ago. Essentially, many people view resources as if they're in a bucket that we are gradually emptying. They think that we are "running out," largely because population numbers keep rising.

Of course, many people don't notice how many doomsday prophecies fail to come true. For instance, instead of facing the global famine that Malthus predicted in 1798 and many catastrophists predicted as late as the 1960s and '70s, our rapidly growing population has been ever-better fed and achieved ever-longer average life spans. In fact, for the first

time in 300,000 years, today there are more people on Earth who are clinically obese than clinically undernourished.

Modern catastrophists' response to such positive news is to simply postpone the predicted date of disaster, or to come up with some other, similar doomsday scenario. If we are not running out of this, then surely we're running out of that!

In our view, these new doomsday scenarios will typically (or consistently) also fail, and the reason is that since the world became truly creative, and since we broke free from the law of monotony, the hierarchy rule, and the Malthusian Trap, resources have not from any practical point of view been a finite limitation. Instead of seeing ever-growing starvation rates on the planet as Malthus predicted, we are now discussing sending people to Mars. How weird is that?

The Ultimate Resource

The deeper reason for this achievement is that – at least for the last six centuries – human ingenuity has been undergoing an exponential process. David Deutsch gave an excellent example in *The Beginning*

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of *Infinity*. He points out that at some point in the past, there must have been Stone Age people who died of exposure to cold weather while resting on dead branches. Their problem was that they had not yet invented controlled fire, which could otherwise have changed those dead branches to a warm and pleasant bonfire. We must bear in mind that if you exclude the effects of innovation, cavemen actually had far more resources per person and in total at their disposal per person than we do now. They just couldn't unlock them.

What we must understand is that "the ultimate resource," as the scientist Julian Simon also explained in his book of the same name, is human innovation.

This calls for some context. An economy can grow in two ways, which are sometimes called Smithian and Schumpeterian growth, respectively. Smithian growth is achieved by adding more people, capital, and land to the production process. Schumpeterian growth is based on innovation, which often means doing more with less capital, less people, and less land. Since around 1450, Schumpeterian growth has done most of the work. This shift toward Schumpeterian growth has had profound effect on resource availability partly because it activates potential resources, and partly because it replaces matter with mind.

THINK BIGGER

Excerpt from Chapter 17

If Dubai had been built by less-visionary leaders, it might have turned into the world's most efficient fishing village. We write this with a smile, of course, but the fact is that nothing about Dubai's rise to global prominence was inevitable, despite being a resource-rich city. In fact, similar cities in the region, such as Abu Dhabi, Manama, Kuwait City, and Doha, share similar or substantially more resource-based wealth but have struggled to replicate the same degree of growth and innovation.

Dubai's leaders thought ahead of supertrends and created a vision that leapfrogged current technologies and paradigms, rather than incrementally building on them. For example, Dubai airport has consistently expanded its capacity ahead of demand, as part

of a broader vision to grow non-oil sectors such as trade, tourism, retail, and general business activities. In 2020 oil accounted for just 1 percent of Dubai's GDP, compared to over 50 percent in the past. Dubai

has also launched a Museum of the Future, where "instead of absorbing the past, you help the future to emerge." Bold thinking indeed.

And this raises an issue: as you craft your most desired future, the unfortunate reality is that there is a high likelihood that you will undershoot and aim too low. Our brain doesn't think exponentially, yet this is exactly how the major trends are evolving.

From 10 Percent to 10X

We previously touched on the importance of an exponential mindset. Let us elaborate a bit further here. Decades of research in cognitive psychology illustrate that the human mind prefers simple, linear relationships and struggles with thinking nonlinearly. And certainly it has a difficult time considering exponential development: even as we are well aware of exponential change in the past, we struggle imagining it continuing in the future.

Another one of our many biases is a linearity bias, where we assume that a change in one quantity produces a proportionate change in another. When one of these quantities is time, we believe that past trends will continue at the same rate in the future. Okay, perhaps we make the trend grow slightly faster because we know that technology is improving, but this is often in the range of 10–20 percent increase over five to ten years, which can miss the mark drastically. Exponential changes can get to 10–100x increases or more, and as they do, they often create outcomes that are completely different from the present. For instance, a bundle of nerve cells in a worm enables it to move and react to its surroundings. But the much bigger bundle in human brains creates something materially different than just a faster worm. And whereas better battery performance for a while meant longer battery times for our phones, it eventually also meant efficient battery-driven cars, which was a whole new thing.

Let's think exponentially for a while. Imagine a

The ultimate resource is human innovation.

world where you can download almost anything in one second (e.g., the three-and-a-half-hour-long movie *The Irishman* in HD). Or where the cost of sequencing a genome is pretty much free and given away as part of a smartwatch or health care subscription. Imagine homes that are 100 percent self-sufficient with energy and where all devices such as phones, smartwatches, music speakers, and TVs can charge wirelessly. Imagine electric cars that charge while they pass magnetic fields on the road. These advances might very well happen commercially in the next decade since they work in theory or in experimental settings now. Just think about the opportunities they would bring.

So, the message is this: linear logic will reinvent the past, only slightly better. Exponential thinking will reimagine the future. When entrepreneurs such as Elon Musk enter new areas, they don't do it with preexisting views of what is possible. Musk was not a technical expert on cars, space travel, or infrastructure engineering, yet these are among the areas where his companies are breaking new ground. Tremendous new ground, in fact. He constantly pushes his colleagues to find creative ways to make things work that often involve exponential thinking.

Rational argumentation and analysis will help you break things down and understand how the world works. This is important and needed. But it will never be enough to create something fantastically different and better. For this you need a possibility-focused mindset, which is bold, aspirational, curious, and asks questions such as *How might we?* *What if?* and *Why couldn't we?* In other words, you need a growth mindset.

Thinking Backwards

Here comes a useful hack: allow yourself to dream about what the future might hold, and then work backwards from that to determine what needs to be true to make it happen. This is a diametrically opposite process than starting with what is possible today and then innovating incrementally forward.

For experts or in areas that you are familiar with, it requires a fair bit of sense un-making, where you challenge your existing beliefs and paradigms. One way to do this is to radically broaden your exposure

to different types of information, experiences, and people in search of luck. Monitor your inner voice, and shift from “I already know that” to “I want to learn more.”

When you try to think forward, you might get too close to a fixed mindset. Thinking backwards from a future fantasy promotes the growth mindset. And so does what we may call the *abundance mindset*. If you burn a barrel of oil, it's gone. But if you buy a software subscription, nothing is gone. The same can be sold again and again without end. This is one of the many reasons why the world is experiencing more wealth, or what the economist Julian Simon called abundance.

TIPS to help you think bigger and more abundantly as you craft your most desired future:

1. **Think bigger:** Challenge yourself to think radically differently about the future. Take your current aspiration and multiply it by ten, just for fun, and then analyze how you might make that future reality.
2. **Think unreasonably:** Take your long-term future vision (e.g., the one that is twenty years out), and think how you might achieve it in five years instead.
3. **Think outside the box:** Identify constraints in your life that seem like trade-offs. Crowdsource ideas on how to combine them.
4. **Be inspired:** Think about a business leader you admire such as Steve Jobs, Mary Barra, or Jack Ma, and ask yourself what they would do.
5. **Play the numbers game:** For a specific problem area or challenge, write down what you want to have happen, and if there are any constraints (e.g., financial, time limit, or other practicalities). Then set a time for fifteen minutes to come up with as many ideas as possible. Once the fifteen minutes are up, challenge yourself to double the number of ideas.

Many production processes will begin to have a cost close to 0, in the same way that drinking water feels virtually free in developed countries and data storage is rapidly getting there too. Obviously, choices and trade-offs still remain, but in this future world, there will be many more opportunities for each and every one of us. Harnessing this potential requires breaking away from a scarcity mindset and moving toward one of abundance and possibility.

In your own life, you will find more often than not that you can combine your various ambitions into a coherent whole if you dedicate the right time for reflection and visioning. The trade-offs that you believe exist can often be circumvented if you are creative. For example, today it is possible to outsource an increasing number of tasks that take up time. In developed nations, some employees even secretly outsource some of their work tasks to lower-cost labor via crowdsourcing sites so they can use their own time better.

The Formula for Creativity

Creative organizations and individuals are also some of the most structured. They combine blue sky thinking with intelligent constraints that both

narrow their thinking and ground their aspirations in a practical reality. They use many attempts to get it right, pushing themselves and their teams to come up with and evaluate tens or even hundreds of ideas in short periods of time.

You don't have to be a genius to replicate this process. You just need an understanding of exponential technologies, a growth and abundance mindset of possibility and curiosity, and then you need to come up with lots of ways this might look. In this way, you'll imagine new possibilities. This process can be used for business ideas but also for your life more broadly (e.g., family, health, wealth, and happiness). For example, have you charted different paths toward your most desired future? Force yourself to throw in a wild card option that is totally different from the rest. Then think of three more wild cards.

As you look at the emerging futures and paths, you will begin to see a strategic spectrum and a range of different futures, some that are a better fit for you than others. This is where you move from divergent to convergent thinking. Use a combination of analysis and judgment – such as the tips on page 61 – to narrow down on your most desired options. ■



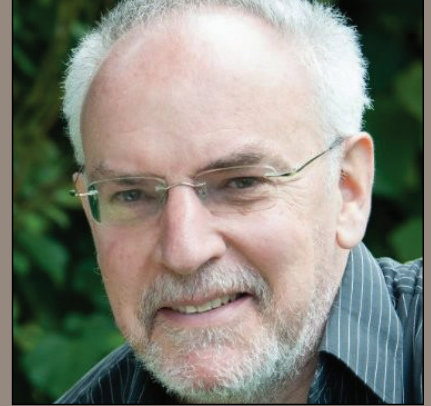
LARS TVEDE is an investor, award-winning serial entrepreneur, and futurist. He has founded/cofounded thirteen companies, including the top-performing venture fund Nordic Eye and the forecasting company Supertrends AG, which uses AI and crowdsourcing to outline and visualize innovation and supertrends. He is the winner of numerous awards, including Red Herring Global 100 Award, IMD Top Swiss Start-up Award, Bully Award, and Adam Smith Award. Lars is the author of eighteen other books, including *The Psychology of Finance*, *The Creative Society*, *Entrepreneur*, and *Supertrends*.



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The Art of Facilitating Transformational Fields

A White Paper from Mobius Transformational
Faculty member, Robin Alfred



As a facilitator, I have become increasingly interested in how to create a field, or atmosphere, in which transformation happens. I have noticed that in some groups synchronicities appear, relationships heal, insights arise, an almost magical, mystical experience unfolds, seemingly by itself. How does that happen? What is the difference between the atmosphere in that group compared with other groups where the experience is more limited and less generative? In this article I inquire into such questions and reveal some of the processes that support the creation of a highly charged, potent and magnetic field in which transformation can occur.

It is something of a cliché to say that we are in times of unprecedented change and volatility, and that we are needing to navigate ever more complexity. However, it is also true. Whether we choose to call these VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) or BANI (brittle, anxious, nonlinear and incomprehensible) times, the need for highly skilled facilitation of complex dialogues has never been greater.

WHAT IS THE FIELD?

We start our inquiry by understanding the nature of the field. It has become fashionable to look at organizations and topics through a systemic lens. That's wonderful and also limited since the system is embedded in something deeper which we call the field.

For example, there are eleven **individual** members of a football team. Together they make up a **system**

which we call a team, and that team is embedded in something deeper – the **field** of the football club – the atmosphere or culture of the club.

When we enter a cathedral, or a space that feels sacred to us, we often sense something more. That atmosphere is comprised of the energy of the prayers and the intentions brought into the space by thousands of people over hundreds of years, alongside our own intention and the energy that we bring into the space. Together these create a field effect within the cathedral.

A third example: Let's look at the word *group*. It comprises six **individual** letters. Together they make up a **system**, the word we know as *group*. That system is embedded in a piece of paper. The paper is literally the **field**: that which holds the system.

The field, then, can be tangible or intangible and has a constant impact on our experience. So, how can we create transformational fields? When we do so we invite a realm charged with magnetism, presence and coherence that allows the future to arise and, with the most generative of fields, the past to be healed and integrated.

Group Coherence

When a group is coherent, rather than a fragmented gathering of disparate parts, it “makes sense” as a meaningful whole. A coherent group comprises individuals who are imbued with a strong sense of *presence* and where each person, and the facilitator, brings a shared *intention* into the setting.

Written by the author for the Mobius Strip magazine.

Presence doesn't mean simply turning up. Fully embodied presence includes having an inner awareness of how my body feels, the feelings and emotions I have, the movements in my mind, and my connection to my creativity. We might call this four-level awareness: body, heart, mind and creativity (or spirit).

On the deepest level presence also entails sensing that what is present within me includes my ancestral lineage, layers of cultural conditioning, and even a sense of the future that is calling to me. All this can arise in true, deep presence.

Imagine a group where everyone is practicing and embodying such a presence! How charged that field will be with attentiveness, aliveness, and curiosity. What this also means is that every time we "check out" by thinking about something else, daydreaming, or picking up our phone, we diminish our own presence. This, in turn, diminishes the coherence of the group.

In addition to presence, a shared intention helps to produce group coherence. Sometimes a group convenes and it is unclear as to why its members are there. This is likely to lead to a degree of frustration and fragmentation in the field. A shared, stated intention builds coherence.

Contemporary mystic Thomas Hübl suggests we might see *intention* as being like a vertical line

on a page. Everyone who comes to the group adds their line of intention, making it more pronounced. Identical lines drawn on top of each other thicken and amplify the line of intention. And these lines start being drawn as soon as the idea of the group meeting is hatched.

For example: I have an idea to convene a group. Metaphorically, one line is drawn. I send out an invitation. Another line is drawn. Somebody reads my invitation and decides to come. Another line is drawn. They send an email saying that they are coming. Another line is drawn. And so it continues, each person adding their intentionality to the field. Groups always form well before the members arrive into the room itself or into the Zoom call. When we clarify from the outset the specifics of that intention and the purpose for which we meet, we build the group's coherence.

Intention works on many levels. For example, we may be carrying an overt intention to meet to learn more about a new IT system, but we may also be carrying other intentions, consciously or unconsciously, e.g. to raise our profile and visibility in the business, or to make new friends. There is nothing wrong with carrying multiple intentions but the clearer we are about the overarching, shared intention of the group meeting, the more coherent the field. In addition, there may be a higher intention that nobody is consciously aware of and where the question 'What is this group brought together to do?' has relevance.

Group coherence does not mean having no disagreements. Disagreements may be signposts pointing the way to important work the group needs to do. A coherent group field can hold a diversity of perspective by not polarizing and "othering" but being curious about different perspectives contained within it. Robust disagreement within a coherent field can be extremely energizing. Where disagreement polarizes, turns us away and cuts the relationship with the other person, the group will experience fragmentation and the conflict is likely to be experienced as wounding and damaging.

Symptoms of incoherence include participants speeding up; experiencing jarring feelings and emotional discomfort; checking out, boredom and

Group coherence appears with:

- ▶ Sensations of connectedness (not necessarily harmony)
- ▶ Awareness of our own and others' emotions in the group
- ▶ Awareness of where we feel numb or disassociated
- ▶ Authenticity and vulnerability in the space
- ▶ The quality of the WE field appearing
- ▶ I appear in you and you appear in me – we are one field

absencing; wanting a break; agitation or flatness where the energy is not smooth and fluid; a heavy, stuck feeling; cycling and repetitive processes.

A lack of group coherence is not a problem to be fixed but something to be noticed as a powerful indicator that something wants to be brought into awareness.

The Role of the Facilitator – Less Doing, More Being

As Bill O'Brien, former CEO of Hanover Insurance, noted: *"The success of an intervention depends on the interior condition of the intervener."* And so the question becomes: how is the facilitator *being*, rather than what is the facilitator *doing*? This is critical. We need to practice presence, entering into the nature of time, noticing triggers and staying connected to a higher source of intelligence.

1. Practicing Presence

Am I aware of what is happening within me as I facilitate? Do I have sufficient self-contact to notice the movements in my body, heart, mind? Do I feel connected to a higher source of intelligence or creativity while facilitating? How much am I trying to get the group to do something or be something or arrive at something and how much can I allow the group intelligence to emerge? Do I experience myself as part of the group? Does the group feel close or far away, warm or cool? Do I sense the group wants to be led or that the natural movement is self-organizing and evolving?

Having sufficient inner spaciousness to host these reflections as we facilitate will build the power of our interior condition and emanate a sense of safety and coherence into the group.

2. Entering into the Nature of Time

When we are in deep and radical presence, we also experience a collapsing of time. The past is not yesterday. The past is that which has not been integrated. In presence we have an opportunity to integrate and therefore heal the wounds and trauma of the past. Similarly, the future is not tomorrow. The future is that which is fresh, new, inspiring and creative. It arrives in presence. In the full *now* we experience a collapsing of linear time, the onboarding

We build group coherence by:

- ▶ Clarifying intentions
- ▶ Practicing sensing each other 'I feel you feeling me'
- ▶ Inviting people to feel into the group field – its groundedness and embodiment; emotional flavor; energy; relationality; connection to the Light and higher consciousness
- ▶ Playing 'connecting' games to open the relational space
- ▶ Pausing to check in internally: using four-state awareness of body, heart, mind, creativity
- ▶ Naming and framing what is happening
- ▶ Inviting, and modelling vulnerability
- ▶ Suspending any idea of what a group 'should be like'

and integration of the past and the capacity to receive inspiration from the future. So, when we are facilitating from a space of embodied presence and connect with a sense of less linear time, not only will we be sensitive and responsive to that which is arising in me and the group, but we are also enabling a healing field and a field that can hear and respond to the call, the whispers, of the future. We feel a sense of quiet, wise knowing and our facilitation is likely to be experienced as connected, centered, spacious and impactful.

3. Noticing Triggers

I will want to notice what triggers me in a group. Where do I become afraid? How do I work on myself in the moment where somebody irritates me in the group? When I am triggered by someone in the group, I am likely to move up into my head and tell myself all sorts of stories about the person and what is happening. In doing so I disconnect from the person and create fragmentation in the field. The opposite direction is going to be more helpful i.e. dropping down into my heart and noticing what emotions and

A lack of group coherence is not a problem to be fixed but something to be noticed as a powerful indicator that something wants to be brought into awareness.

body sensations I'm experiencing. If I can do that in the moment, while retaining connection to the person or source of irritation, insight and a new movement may arise in me. The field retains its coherence and the intelligence it carries can reveal itself to me.

4. Staying Connected to a Higher Source of Intelligence

It will also serve both me and the group to stay connected to something beyond my rational, thinking mind. If, as a facilitator, I come with a plan and some tools and intend to apply them, without resting in a higher source of intelligence that wants to feed me the inspiration and creativity that I need in the moment, my facilitation is likely to be experienced as formulaic and I am unlikely to sense what is needed, and emerging, from me and within the group.

What is my practice for staying connected to a higher source of intelligence and allowing something fresh to arising me? As Thomas Hübl, once said: *'The minute I think about what I'm going to do next, I am lost as a facilitator'* Why? Because I am no longer present. I am thinking about a strategy and am therefore disconnected from the group energy field and the source of inspiration that will put the right words on my lips and the right tools into my hands.

Trauma-Informed Facilitation

One more element to consider is the impact of trauma. Trauma can be defined as *the response within an individual or a collective when facing a situation which is utterly overwhelming.* (Pocket Project) Trauma exists on three levels.

1. Individual, such as *attachment trauma* through early childhood deficit, or *shock trauma* through biographically impactful events

2. *Ancestral trauma* passed on through epigenetic transfer so that, for example, the refugee trauma of my grandparents lives in me not just through the stories I have been told but on a cellular level
3. *Collective trauma* – the seas in which we swim including patriarchy, racism, the impact of the Covid 19 coronavirus, and many others

The interconnection of individual, ancestor and collective trauma will be present within myself and in the groups that I facilitate. We are conditioned to remain unaware of the impact these trauma fields are having on me and on the group – like the frog that hasn't noticed the temperature rising toward boiling point.

Having a trauma-informed perspective doesn't mean turning every workshop into a trauma-focused one, but it does mean understanding that there will be numb and frozen parts of myself and the group that we cannot access; that there will be dynamics that are naturally adaptive patterns and that these are behaviors that help us to navigate trauma. We are always experiencing reality through cracked lenses and not seeing things as they really are.

It is important that facilitators be trauma-informed to carry an awareness of the trauma fields within oneself and the group, and to have the capacity to lend a soft compassionate awareness when trauma symptoms manifest. A warm relational field starts to thaw frozen trauma and release the energy, insights and wisdom held within them.

One simple step we can take to remain compassionate is to look at the things we take for granted in groups or teams, the 'givens', and become curious about whether they are 'normal' (something that occurs in many of us) or 'natural' (what becomes

SUPERVISION AND INTERVISION

For even the most experienced among us, it can be complex to facilitate the coherence of a group field – intervision and supervision are two ways we support our process.

Intervision means meeting with a peer to provide a point of reflection, digestion, and integration of one's experience. Intervision can take place before, during or after a piece of work. I may contract with somebody in advance to hold an awareness that I am facilitating a group; check in with them during the process of facilitation when something arises that I would welcome some reflection on; and, for sure, I will check in with them afterwards to share my experience. This often takes the form of a shared, free, mutually supportive arrangement.

Supervision tends to be paid for and undertaken with somebody more experienced. It is an important place to gain insight into how I have experienced the facilitation I have just undertaken. As I revisit challenges I faced I not only learn from them through the dialogue with the supervisor but, because we are all part of an interconnected field, it will also have an impact on what might have remained otherwise unhealed or unintegrated for the other people involved.

possible in supportive, healthy environments). Normal behaviors include competition, a feeling of insecurity in a new group, a belief in scarcity of time or resources, experiencing cycling, disconnected and repetitive processes, but these may not be the 'natural' flow of unhindered energy and movement. Instead, they may be conditioned, trauma-informed responses and, as we become more and more aware of this, we can become softer and warmer in relation to these behaviors and thus allow new possibilities to emerge.

Facilitation as a Dialogue with the Self-Organizing Principle of the Group

When we regard facilitation not as something we do to a group, but as a dialogue we are enabling, we notice what we might call 'the self-organizing principle' of a group as it manifests.

A group comes together for a purpose. Its members have been called together for a reason. The group has a natural movement, an evolutionary impulse, that wants to happen, like the acorn that wants to grow into an oak tree. The group wants to become something. Part of the facilitator's job is to be alive

to that. What is the next movement that is arising in the group and how can I stay in contact with that and support it? It's like catching a wave when surfing. The wave is coming, and I need to join it. Similarly, the group movement is arising, and I need to meet it. Anything less will feel clunky, lead to a degree of fragmentation in the group and will not support the natural evolution of the group.

This requires a lot of letting go from the facilitator. How many times do we come with an intention to get the group to have a certain experience or to get the group to 'go somewhere' or 'be something'? As facilitators it is helpful to bring an intention but to hold it lightly as, when we meet the group and sense its energy and movement, something else might be needed.

This does not mean that we can never facilitate towards an outcome. Sometimes we are employed to, for example, support the group to make a decision by 5 pm on Friday. Our practice is to notice how I and the group respond to this. Is there a sense of expectation? Do I feel a sense of pressure as a facilitator? How do I soften and breathe into that to create a sense of spaciousness? What happens

within me if a decision is not arising by 5 pm on Friday? Do I force one onto the group anyway or do I acknowledge that the group field is not yet coherent enough for a decision to arise? Forcing may well lead to fragmentation in the group and to decisions that don't 'stick'. How wedded am I to 'getting a result'?

Conclusion

As facilitators we are often employed to support a group to accomplish something specific – a decision that needs to be made, a strategy that is waiting to be developed; a change that needs to be implemented. To do this effectively, we first need to create the right conditions, both within myself and within the group – a transformational field of group coherence.

My internal coherence means that there is congruence between my thoughts, words and actions; my body, heart and mind are synchronized

and I am engaged in an ongoing, moment-by-moment practice of presence.

The group's coherence is a product of clarity of intention and collective and individual presence. To support group coherence, we will need to stay alive to the nuanced movements within the group; the presence of fragmenting forces and those that build cohesion; the higher self-organizing principle that informs and shapes the group movement; and we will need be able to catch the wave of the naturally arising group momentum.

To do all this, while simultaneously holding an intention, lightly but clearly, to allow the purpose of the meeting to be achieved is an art, requiring simultaneous self-awareness and group-awareness, spaciousness into which insight can land, and intimacy with the higher orchestrating intelligence. It is the art of facilitating transformational fields. ■

ROBIN ALFRED worked as a trainer, educator and social work manager for 15 years in London, before moving to Scotland in 1995 where he founded the Findhorn Consultancy Service and then later, Open Circle Consulting. He has extensive experience of leading and developing groups and individuals across all sectors – corporate, public, and third sector.

For more than 25 years, Robin has facilitated groups of all sizes, from 6 – 600, in all sectors. He was a registered facilitator for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and was part of the design and facilitation team for the 2013 UN Global Compact in New York. Robin is trained in a wide variety of approaches to personal and organizational development including: Appreciative Inquiry, the Frameworks for Change Coaching Process, Process Work, Spiral Dynamics and Tools for Corporate Transformation. His facilitation work draws on these processes as well as Open Space, World Café and other innovative processes to maximize the group's collective intelligence.

Robin's clients include BP, the National Health Service, ABN-AMRO Bank, RBS, Tasweeq Qatar, BAE Systems, UN, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, CDP, Weleda and the UK Cabinet Office. Robin also spent 15 years as an Associate with Olivier Mythodrama, working with Shakespearean stories and Jungian archetypal psychology to develop high level leadership in many of the world's major corporations.

Robin is a Senior Student of contemporary mystic, Thomas Hübl. He offers coaching and trainings in Trauma-informed Leadership and the Art of Facilitating Transformational Fields. He also serves as a Mobius Transformational Faculty Member and joined us in October 2022 to guide a week-long, highly experiential track on Leading from the Future at the Annual Gathering of the Next Practice Institute.

Mobius is delighted to sponsor Robin's 3.5 day training in The Art of Facilitating Transformational Fields, in Findhorn, Scotland, September 19-22, 2023.

For more information visit: www.opencircle.live | robin.alfred@opencircle.live



The Case For Deep Inner Work

To Serve the World, We Must Start with Ourselves

By Chief Executive Officer and Co-founder of Mobius Executive Leadership,
Amy Elizabeth Fox



On October 24, 2022, Mobius Co-Founder Amy Elizabeth Fox delivered the opening keynote address of the Annual Gathering of the Next Practice Institute. During the talk, she shared the purpose and necessity of why we constitute and convene a global community of practice and why we remain so committed to hosting this week-long immersive learning experience. The following article is based on the transcript of her keynote address.

We dedicate this call to do deeper work to all coaches, facilitators, mediators, consultants, and executives who are leading change within and beyond their organizations to create a better world.

Please visit Mobius Executive Leadership's channel on YouTube to watch the video recording of this presentation.

WHO WE ARE AND WHY WE MEET

The Annual Gathering of the Next Practice Institute (NPI) brings together a global group of practitioners. It is, by design, a transformational experience that aims to foster the development of a vital community of practice. When Mobius Executive Leadership entered the field of leadership development eighteen years ago, we realized there was no graduate-level program in the various disciplines and crafts that one needs to investigate and become familiar with in order to be a refined, transformational healing agent. We realized we probably would not get people to step out of their normal lives for two years of study, but we could create a week-long learning experience practitioners might come to every

year and that this would, in turn, help define and lift the standards of practice in organizational consulting that supports individual, team and system transformation.

I am delighted that so many of you come back year after year and treat NPI as one of the sources of your refinement and development. We remain very proud of all the learning tracks that take place at NPI and the internationally renowned teachers who form our faculty – intertwining their thought leadership and their deep expertise within our field. Together, we seek to create a global community of practice devoted to the craft of transforming people into more ethical and more empowered leaders, building a more just and sustainable world, and restoring the cultural fabric of humanity.

Written by the author for the Mobius Strip magazine.

Emerging Themes in Our Work

There is a palpable and growing hunger in the world for the work that we do. Over the last eighteen years of developing leaders, we have seen the zeitgeist of the industry embrace many of the themes and ideas we have been promoting for a long time. Since the pandemic, the following themes have become ever more pronounced:

Increasingly business leaders talk about the necessity of **collaboration**, breaking down organizational silos so that people work cross-functionally and learn how to operate more effectively in matrix organizations. We would argue that you cannot have *true* collaboration without generosity and that generosity requires moving from a false emphasis on personal resilience and autonomy to surrendering to the need for interdependence and mutuality.

There has been much discussion about the need for **innovation** and **disruptive thinking**. We say you cannot innovate unless people are willing to and comfortable with making mistakes and failing in environments where it has been made safe to do so. This requires a mindset shift from a focus on certainty and expertise to lifting up experimentation and curiosity, from having crystallized opinions and being sealed off from learning to cognitive flexibility and a deep desire to expand what we know.

It is no longer uncommon to hear about the importance of **adaptive leadership** or **change agility**, as people learn to deal with an increasingly changing context. Mobius Senior Expert Zander Grashow's work on Adaptive Leadership is part of the core curriculum here at NPI and for our executive development programs. We know from experience that real adaptation requires a tolerance of uncertainty or what Zander calls productive disequilibrium. But to really tolerate being on the edge of the unknown, you must cultivate inner stillness, centeredness, and groundedness. Practices that accomplish this – for example, meditation, contemplation, chanting,

movement, art, music – are fundamental prerequisites to large-scale change; they are not merely private habits for individual benefit.

There is also an enormous movement in the industry to address the need for greater **diversity and inclusion**. Many of the programs that try to address this need do so in a tactical or technical way. We would argue that to have real diversity and real inclusion, you must possess a potent interest in other people's experience, and how it differs from your own. Further, you must possess a receptivity – a cultivated, committed, steady receptivity to hearing the pain of what it means to be marginalized or belong to an oppressed group.

Finally, you cannot have **psychological safety** and **mental health** in an organization or **emotional wellbeing** without being sensitive to and proactively addressing the trauma that we know all people carry – without committing to look at the dimensions of collective trauma under the surface of your own organizational history and the geographies in which you serve.

These quests that we are on as organizations, as leaders, and as a society, call for deep inner work if we have any hope of achieving the amount of collaboration, innovation, change agility, diversity and inclusion, mental health, emotional well-being, and trauma-sensitivity that we so urgently need. The learning tracks at NPI do, of course, offer tools and techniques, but they do not focus on those. Rather these learning experiences demand the inner exploration of your heart and your soul and seek to enable you to bring the best light that you are, into the work.

Another way to say this is that everything that is happening in our industry reflects a universal movement, slowly and steadily, from a society formed by fear to a society emboldened by love. There are two big secrets in corporate life. The first is the extremity and level of personal and collective trauma everyone walks with. There is a level of regression that we see

Everything that's happening in our industry reflects a universal movement, slowly and steadily, from a society that's formed by fear to a society that's emboldened by love.

IMAGE 1 MAP OF THE TERRITORY



in organizations that drives many of the pain points – this regression stems from trauma. It puts a ceiling on the creativity and quality of connection that we see in many teams. Secondly, purpose, inspiration, the deep eternal flame inside each of us, whatever word you use to describe spirituality, *this* is the goldmine under the conference table. Our Annual Gathering is about helping people to heal and restore whatever personal and collective trauma you carry and igniting that flame of inspiration in each of us.

Intellectual Tributaries that Underpin NPI

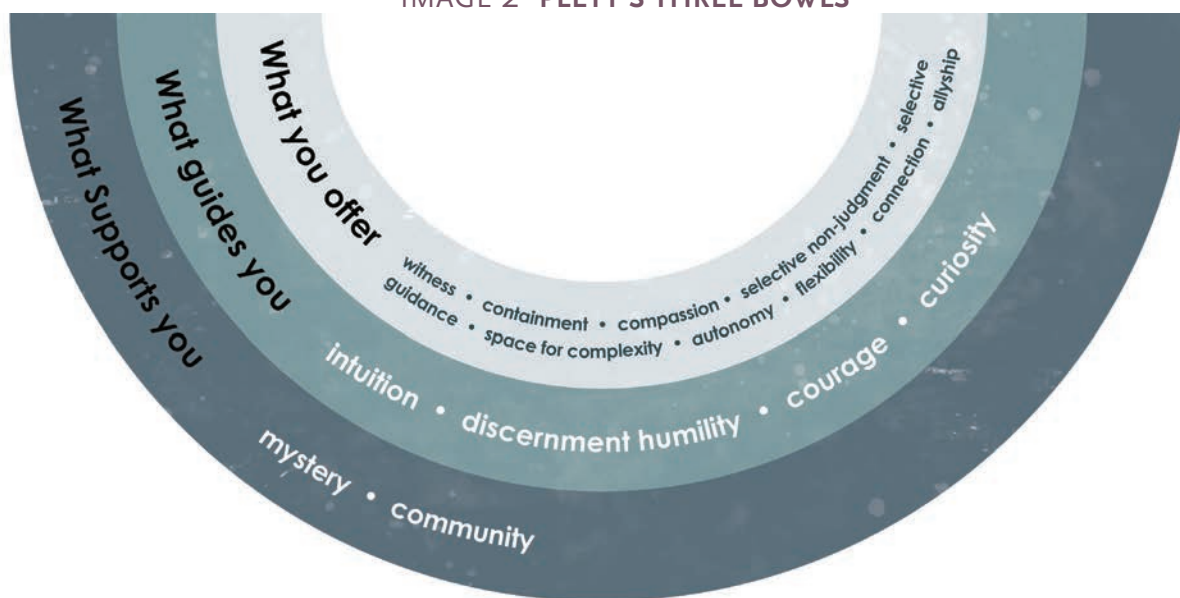
The map of the territory illustrated above I present every year to nod to the fact that our craft – coaching and counseling on teamwork, leadership, and organizational change, is not a single tributary of study. It is interwoven and interdisciplinary. And it requires at least a little familiarity with all these methodologies. If that prospect feels daunting to you, let me reassure

you. We are walking together forever. This is an eternal process of learning and refining and exploration and elevation... wherever you are on the mountain as you arrive with us this week, it is good enough. And when you leave on Friday, it will be better.

I wanted to share this morning the work of a wonderful, transformational practitioner named Heather Plett whom I had the pleasure to meet recently. Heather wrote a book called *The Art of Holding Space* (excerpted in this edition) where she sets out a model that mirrors much of the work everyone in this room is doing. She talks about three bowls that sit one within the others:

- The first inner bowl is what we *offer to others*.
- The second bowl is what we must *cultivate in ourselves* as practitioners.
- The third bowl is *the force that holds us* as we are holding people.

IMAGE 2 PLETT'S THREE BOWLS



Together these three bowls form a container for alchemical transformation. I want to take some time now to show how Heather's model so beautifully mirrors our pedagogy.

Serving other People

Heather says when you hold space for someone, you are offering to be the bowl, to create a safe container where they can feel emotions, wrestle with decisions, and navigate transitions. I thought that was a lovely way to describe our work. Heather includes in the inner bowl the gifts of witness, containment, compassion, selective non-judgment and guidance, space for complexity, autonomy, flexibility, connection and allyship.

The following list is how I frame what we are doing as practitioners when we are immersed in the work of serving other people.

- When I speak of **attuned emotional reflection**, what we are refining this week is our ability to observe and feel and absorb another's inner experience and to mirror that back without the contamination or overlay of our own emotions. To be a clear mirror, you must polish the interior of your heart so that you receive others without losing their signal through the noise of your own needs, hurts, fears, and experiences.
- **Grounded energy** refers to the way we must ground ourselves before we can become the container for others to process and integrate whatever is arising for them. When we invite people to look into the rooms of their house that are dark and shadowy and they get agitated or moved by that emotionally, our role must be to provide a safe space.
- **Unconditional love** sounds super soft, but is actually incredibly hard to offer beyond those we hold dearest in our lives. Unconditional love means first of all, that I am sourcing my Love from higher realms and not just my own heart. None of us are so evolved that we can produce unconditional love alone. You must be willing to let your heart be moved by Divine Love or love that is boundless. When you are loving from that place, it is irresistible, pure and trustworthy. Secondly we need to learn to set aside our instinct to judge. Instead we need to understand that anything that shows up in the other person as a contraction, or dysfunction, or something that bothers you, is an early childhood survival strategy that they deeply needed once in their life even though this behavior has now become antiquated. Your presence could be that moment when they

AMY'S EXPANSION OF THE ART OF HOLDING MODEL



WHAT WE OFFER: TRANSFORMATIONAL CONTAINER (OR THE "FIRST BOWL")

Attuned emotional reflection
 Grounded energy
 Unconditional love
 Generosity of spirit
 Courage to encounter pain and trauma
 Deep respect and honor to earlier safety strategies
 Discerning confrontation to blind spots and themes of their life story
 Intimate reception of their Being (speak to the light of their potential, be an ally of their highest possibility, beckon their future)
 Sense of community of belonging



SELF AS INSTRUMENT – HORIZONTAL (OR THE "SECOND BOWL," WHAT WE CULTIVATE IN OURSELVES)

Emotional self contact and transparent and vulnerable self-expression
 Non-Judgmental Receptivity
 Precision
 Candor
 Ferocity
 Curiosity
 Humility
 Stillness
 Spaciousness
 Awe and Wonder
 Devotion



CREATING A RESTORATIVE FIELD BUILDING A SACRED SPACE – VERTICAL (OR THE "THIRD BOWL" - THAT WHICH HOLDS US)

Inducting a blessing field
 Welcoming all of life's myriad expressions
 Healing personal and collective trauma
 Sending the blessing backwards to the Ancestors
 Liberating the next generations
 Communing with Nature and Beauty
 Invoking Grace
 Walking in spiritual fellowship and embracing interdependence

"I used to think the top environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse, and climate change. I thought that thirty years of good science could address these problems.

I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed, and apathy... and to deal with those we need a cultural and spiritual transformation.

We scientists don't know how to do that."

GUS SPETH

realize they do not need it anymore. You are only going to be that invitation, however, if you are not in opposition to or in reaction against their survival strategy, but if you bless and honor it. My sister Erica Ariel Fox is a genius at this. She bows to their protector dimension. That bow is what makes you a safe place for them to drop their armor. That bow is what makes one a safe place

- **Generosity of spirit**, I think, is self-evident – this means being the largest version of ourselves when we receive others.
- **Courage to encounter pain and trauma.** We will not accompany any client anywhere that we have not already gone in ourselves. This is a guiding principle when we train practitioners – you must attend to your pain because the more you do your own work, the more you can be utterly safe and open-handed when somebody brings you their pain and their trauma. We aspire to be a true invitation – that if you have lived something, then I can receive and witness it.
- **Discerning confrontation to blind spots and themes in their story.** Unconditional love could sound like *I'm a wide soft pillow*. That is good, but it is not good enough. It is equally important that we be the safe person that will help somebody to see what they do not see and the ways that they get in their own way. We have to be able to call to their attention the patterns in their life that are deeply woven into their subconscious and that create their suffering. The discernment to see the pattern in somebody's life or an organization's history, or society's shadows – this is part of what

we are cultivating as the observer. We need to become the person who offers discernment and true seeing.

- **Intimate reception of their Being.** Partly this means having a conversation with the highest part of the other person, not with their personality, not with who they are today, but with the potential of who they could unfold themselves to be. When you do that, you beckon to that part to come into form. It's a very sacred thing to be the future-whisperer of someone's soul.
- **Sense of community and belonging.** This aspect rests so deeply at the heart of how we work at Mobius. For many, many years, healing was privatized, an outsourced event where an individual went to a therapist. There are many therapists in this room and I gratefully acknowledge the sacredness of this work. But I know from my own experience, it is now time to get therapeutic healing work out of the closet. Healing must be done in public. It must be done in large groups. It must be done without shyness – but rather, done radically in community. Part of the reason why we come together as practitioners and share the deep interiority of our lives is that the friendships that get woven between us become a forcefield of Light in the world. Then when people come into our community and they can taste that quality of connection... of intimacy... of real safety and embrace, they melt into their own inner work and into their own hearts. As renowned trauma expert and mystical teacher Thomas Hübl, Master Transformational Faculty member for Mobius says, "While trauma occurs

in separation, healing happens in relation.”

Ultimately, being an interwoven, interdependent, daily community of love with each other is the secret technique that we carry. So, if you are new to NPI, my deep encouragement to just surrender to the process and let us get to know you. Let us love you. Be here with a full heart open and I promise you it will be a jewel of a week.

Self as an Instrument

Heather’s second circle which she calls what guides you, I might reference or describe as becoming an instrument of repair. This practice includes intuition, discernment, humility, courage, and curiosity. This level refines the horizontal nature of our work. Interpersonal, intimate, authentic connections are the horizontal dimension. Whereas to support vertical consciousness development, one must cultivate self-transforming capacities, what my sister Erica calls the inner Voyager. In the latter journey, one learns to learn, learns to change and grow, learns to read the daily events in the Book of Life as opportunities to heal.

In addition to the qualities Heather emphasizes in the domain of the second bowl, I would underscore a quality of awe and wonder at life. This is such an important capacity if you invite people to bring you their burdens. If a field of burden meets another field of burden in you, there is very little possibility for a shift. But if a field of burden meets a field of inspiration – where there is a disproportionate attending to beauty and the miraculous, with one who tends toward grace, *then* there is possibility for change. Cultivating an inner quality of awe and wonder, is perhaps one of the most important things we can do as practitioners. You could substitute this notion with intuition, with imagination, with devotion – those would all be pointing at the same alchemy.

Creating a Restorative Field

I love that Heather did not end it here but included the third bowl that holds the other two – what holds us as practitioners. *We too are held*. Heather highlights Mystery and Community and what I would call relational and mystical healing or the creation of sacred space. This is the essence of what I referred to

LINKING LOVE AND JUSTICE – THE EXAMPLE OF THE PROPHETS

“We think prophets make predictions about the future. In fact, prophets say exactly the opposite! They insist the future is highly contingent on the now. They always announce that we as Humanity have to make a decision now. You can go this way and the outcome of events will undo you or you can return to God, to love, and to the covenant. That’s not predicting the future as much as it’s naming the now, the way reality works. The prophet opens up human freedom by daring to tell the people that they can change history by changing themselves. That is extraordinary, and it is just as true for us today.

The prophets ultimately reveal a God who is “the God of the Sufferers” in the words of Jewish philosopher Martin Buber. Richard Rohr, Christian mystic put it this way: it is not that we go out preaching hard and difficult messages, and then people mistreat and marginalize us for being such prophets. Rather, when we go to the stories of the prophets we discover the biblical pattern is just the opposite! When we find ourselves wounded and marginalized, and we allow that suffering to teach us, and thus we can become prophets. When we repeatedly experience the faithfulness, the mercy, and the forgiveness of God, then our prophetic voice emerges. That is the training school. That is where we learn how to speak the Truth.

The prophets were always the people who went to wounded places. They went to where the suffering was, to the people who were excluded from the system. They saw through the idolatries at the center of the system because those who are excluded from the system always reveal the operating beliefs of that system. Speaking the truth for the sake of healing and wholeness is then prophetic because the “powers that be” that benefit from the system cannot tolerate certain revelations. They cannot tolerate the truths that the marginalized – the broken, the wounded, and the homeless – always reveal.

Are we willing to take the risk and become prophets ourselves? It is not that we get to preach or speak hard words and then feel justified and righteous when we are excluded. It is that we experience some level of exclusion or heartbreak, and then we have the inner authority to preach what may sound like hard words. Sadly, they will sound like very harsh and even unfair words to people who have never been on the edge, or the bottom, or who have never suffered. The prophets always bring the sufferers to the Center.”

From Martin Buber, *The Prophetic Faith*, trans. Carlyle Witton-Davies (New York: Macmillan, 1949), chapter 8. Adapted from Joan Chittister and Richard Rohr, *Prophets Then, Prophets Now* (Albuquerque, NM: Center for Action and Contemplation, 2006).

earlier as the vertical dimension of our work. This is the goldmine under the conference table. This is the dimension that is most distinctive about the level of work all of us in this room bring to the world. Creating a truly restorative space means that what happens in our presence is not being done by us. I will say this again, because it is so important: what happens in our presence, when we do this work, is not done by us. It is done through prayer, through blessing, through devotion, through intention, through ritual. It is why music, dance, visualization, meditation, natural beauty and other practices play such a vital role in our work – all of these contemplative and devotional and expressive arts create a mystical field of repair that works faster and is not bound by the limits of time and space.

When you work at this level you even send signals of light back into the Ancestry because this healing is not limited by death and life. This kind of mystical healing also sends a blessing forward to the next generations because its purpose is to repair life. Think about how profound that is. You cross the threshold of time and space. Learning how to invoke higher realms to accompany you in your work is perhaps the most holy thing that you could study as a practitioner.

Types of Time

Thomas Hübl, who joins us as core faculty each year at NPI, recently made a distinction between three kinds of time, which I thought was just a gorgeous articulation of the nature of what we are all up to in this work. He first talks about attending to **ancient time**. We enter this time when we look at our ancestry and our lineage. When we look at the scars in the fabric of humanity that he calls collective trauma, when we study antiquity and what there is to be learned from the long line of life, we do this to attempt to heal and find peace.

In **present time**, we look around the world to see where we can serve. We build community. We create intimacy and foster belonging. We serve life wherever we can. At this moment, and I suspect every moment of the rest of our lives, this work is going to become more and more urgent for all of us. It will not be okay anymore to be self-oriented in the world. I think it is fair to say the world today is burning and drowning. So, may each of us to devote ourselves fully to this work of the present time.

Finally, the only way we will be resourced enough to address everything that's coming in present time, is if we learn to nurture ourselves in **eternal time**. That means cultivating practices that help you fill with light, asking for blessing, receiving and metabolizing blessing, letting

ETERNAL TIME

(Light, Blessing, Spirit, Perennial Wisdom)

PRESENT TIME

(Intimacy, Attunement, Belonging,
Community, Service, Repair)

ANCIENT TIME

(Ancestors, Collective Trauma, Antiquity)



Spirit fill you. Sourcing from different ancient practices leads to eternal time. This is life's way of nourishing you as it asks you to give your life to serve. Some of you will have heard me quote this because it remains a stunning moment in my life. The first night that I met my teacher Thomas Hübl he uttered a sentence that made me know I would never leave him, never stop being his student. He said "Not until you are at perfect peace with your past, can you virgin birth the part of the future you came to gift to life."

Last week I had the privilege of being with another one of my teachers, Patrick Connor and it occurred to me at an even deeper, different level what this means – that you have to do so much inner work that the karmic footprint and subconscious scripts of your life go to rest. In that moment I realized what is meant by perfect peace: there is only God, there is only light. Finally, you are present.

When that happens, **then that light can go out into the world, through you.** However much light you bring to the world – that is your great contribution. This is not a vague promise. This is the inevitable byproduct of devoting yourself to inner work.

As we start this week of study and practice and engage in this material, I am reminded of what Thomas says – that we find ourselves at a profound moment in history, standing together at an inscrutable edge, and "whether that edge is the brink of destruction, or the cusp of unprecedented sacred change and repair – that is up to us."

There is No Good versus Bad – Only Cries for Healing

I had the great privilege of going with my friend Marty Boroson a few weeks ago to see Aaron Sorkin's translation of *To Kill a Mockingbird* in London, which is about the civil rights struggle in the United States. Three moments in that performance moved me that I want to share. There is a moment when the civil rights lawyer who is this very just man, is asked by his daughter why some of the men in the community are in the Ku Klux Klan. He says something that rippled through me like a lighting bolt – he replies that when they lost the Civil War, they lost their dignity and

they are trying to get it back (which is, by the way, the same thing they say about the Germans before World War Two). The daughter says, "But Daddy, that was seventy years ago." And he replies, "That was yesterday. It will always be yesterday." That is what collective trauma is: a permanent mark in the fabric of society that continues to operate and repeats itself, until it gets repaired.

The second moment is towards the end of the second act where the African American housekeeper and the civil rights lawyer stand on the porch. There has just been a tragic killing of a man who was an African

American sentenced to death for a crime he did not commit. The lawyer looks at the housekeeper in her despondency and despair and he says, in the hopes of consoling her, "It can seem very dark at night, but there is always joy in the morning." And she says, "The morning is taking a very long time

to get here." Just feel the truth of that. And the many, many lives touched by that truth today.

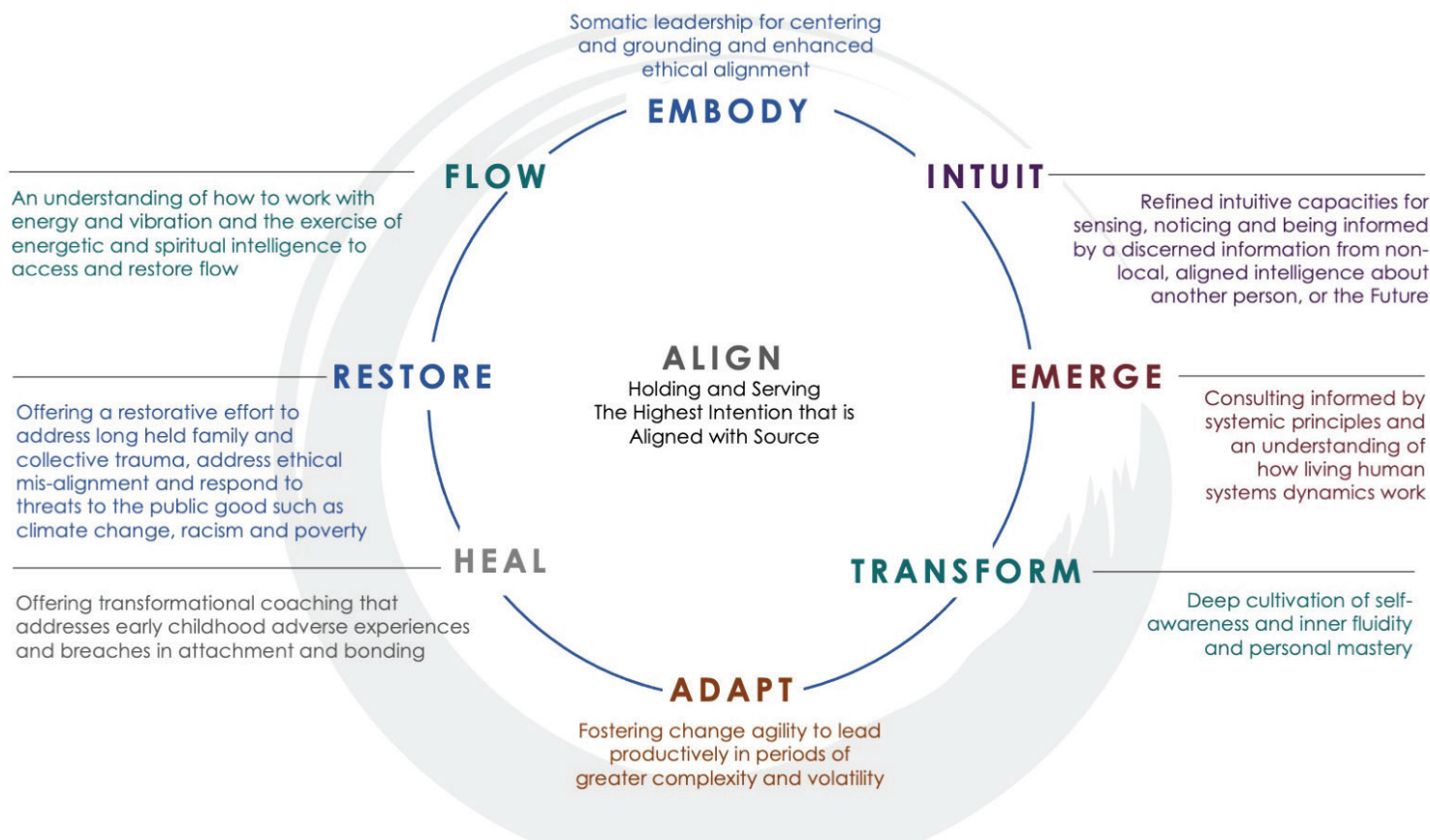
The last moment I share with you is that they end the play singing a hymn. Initially only the good guys in the play are singing the hymn. Then they drop the curtain, and when they pick it back up again, everyone is singing the hymn. And I thought, that is what happens when we die. When the curtain lifts, when the veil lifts, we can *finally* see the goodness in everyone. So, let us be that person *now*. Let's end the split, the polarity of the good and the bad, and let us be that healing remedy, now.

Invoking Miracles

I will end this presentation with a model I have been developing (Image Three). It came to me in a flash, when I was teaching a program. I had the honor of being part of the faculty alongside Patrick Connor and Lena Triantogiannis – who leads our strategic alliance with Egon Zehnder. Lena had just been sharing David Snowden's Cynefin model with the participants (which she does so beautifully.) That model maps out the predictable and unpredictable, showing how we are increasingly encountering not just complicated problems, but complex ones. The model helps executives understand how to discern between the two. Afterward Patrick leaned over to me and whispered,

Cultivating an inner quality of awe and wonder, is perhaps one of the most important things we can do as practitioners.

IMAGE 3 ORGANIZATIONAL ALCHEMY MODEL



“But where is the miracle field?” His insightful critique prompted me to grab a napkin and out came this model. Image 3 is my take on “Cynefin with Miracles.” These, to me, are the principles of a whole and holy systemic change process.

These principles for transformational and systemic change include embodiment and somatic intelligence, the cultivation of intuition and the ability to see the future, the ability to work with and operate from emergence so that we are not stuck in a crystallized life, but are present enough to let life continue to unfold itself. Also, the key skill for transformation and change: the ability to adapt and heal ourselves personally and in our families, our communities and in the world at large. The restoration of collective trauma and the repair of ancient wounds. The sophistication of energy medicine and being able to perceive things beyond the material plane, to reach them at the level of where the healing really happens (at the level of miracles).

Another way to think about what we are doing this week comes from a wonderful quote by Howard Zinn: “If we do act, in however small a way, we do not have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now, as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory.” I remain grateful to everybody in this room who has been championing this possibility for a very long time now. I hope this week is another diamond in the garland that we build together, moment to moment. This is how victory of goodness comes. I close with this quote from my beautiful sister, Erica Ariel Fox:

The unvarnished truth of transformative change can be horrific and beautiful at the same time. It requires expanding your capacity to tolerate what you can't know and welcoming the unknown. Our times beseech us, friends, to step into the chasm of uncertainty and become the agents of transformation our future needs.

Our Week Together

Friends, enjoy the week ahead. May it be one of discovery and love. For everyone who cannot be with us this year or who is curious about joining our community, we hope we will see you, when we reconvene again from October 15, 2023 for the week. The Next Practice Institute speaks to the pillars of our organization's purpose: to create a global community of practitioners dedicated to the field of transformational leadership; to support executives who lead major organizations in the public and private sectors; and to contribute to the building of a more sustainable and peaceful planet through the practices of consciousness development – made all the more urgent given the current zeitgeist and the ever increased threats from economic disparity, wars, and climate change.

During the week, we honor and learn from the pioneering voices and contributions that are foundational to our field of practice; study with senior-most experts in important disciplines of transformational practice; and explore the visionary voices of those who are actively innovating the future of transformational consulting and the emerging theories of organizational flourishing.

We invite you to bring your expertise, wisdom and most tender aspirations into these sessions to enrich our collective. We hold NPI as a rare chance to learn from one another in a unique, global, peer learning environment. Together we are proud to continue to spearhead the field

that weaves together Best Practice and Next Practice; to push the envelope to integrate “right brain” adult learning and healing methodologies into organizational development work; to be the platform for our proprietary development methodology of Winning from Within®, and to be a pioneer in the development of trauma-informed organizational culture.

This week is a joyful chance to deepen existing friendships, widen your professional network, gain exposure to thought leaders in our field, and to rededicate yourself to your personal path of inner exploration. ■

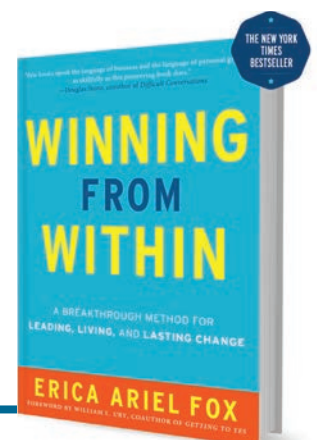
AMY ELIZABETH FOX is a senior leadership strategist with two decades of experience consulting to Fortune 500 companies on issues of human capital, organizational health and leadership development. She is the Chief Executive Officer of Mobius Executive Leadership, a premier leadership development firm. Since 2005, Ms. Fox has served as one of the lead designers and lead faculty members in Mobius transformational leadership programs offered globally. She is also the founder of the Next Practice Institute, a professional development arm for coaches and facilitators and has helped build a global firm with over 200 practitioners, a privileged partnership with Egon Zehnder, and long-standing relationships with some of the world's most innovative companies. In 2023 Amy had the privilege of serving as guest faculty in the African Leadership Institute's program for its Desmond Tutu Fellows program at the Said Business School of the University of Oxford.

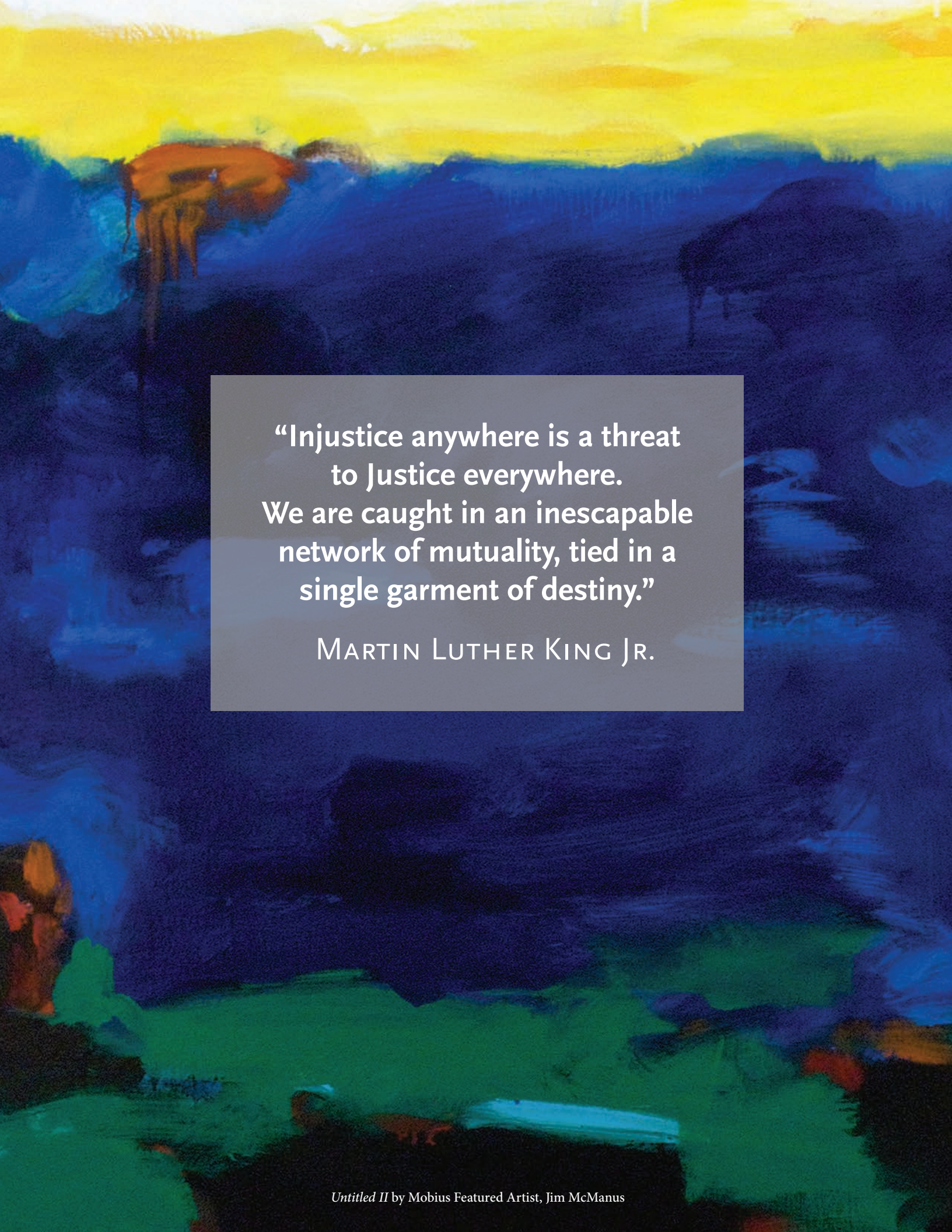


Mobius Chief Thought Leader Erica Ariel Fox offers her wisdom, insight and commentary on modern leadership challenges and the most important public issues of our time. She is recognized as a unique voice of her generation, serving as a regular contributor/columnist in *Forbes* and also having been recently selected as **LinkedIn Top Voice**.

You can follow her on:
www.forbes.com/sites/ericaarielfox
www.linkedin.com/in/ericaarielfox
www.ericaarielfox.com

We are proud to offer curriculum based on her *New York Times* bestselling book *Winning from Within: A Breakthrough Method for Leading, Living and Lasting Change* in our two day Winning from Within® skills development program and in the Voyager program, our landmark vertical development offering for senior executives. www.mobiusleadership.com



An abstract painting featuring a vibrant yellow and orange sky at the top, transitioning into deep blue and purple hues. The lower portion of the painting is dominated by dark, swirling green and blue tones, with some lighter, textured areas. The overall composition is dynamic and expressive, with visible brushstrokes and a rich color palette.

**“Injustice anywhere is a threat
to Justice everywhere.
We are caught in an inescapable
network of mutuality, tied in a
single garment of destiny.”**

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

The background is a solid dark blue. It features several concentric circles in a lighter blue shade. A thick, light blue brushstroke-like shape enters from the bottom right, sweeping upwards and to the left, partially overlapping the circles.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



OCTOBER 2023 ANNUAL GATHERING GUESTS

We are deeply honored to welcome these important keynote speakers. If you are unable to attend this year's week-long program, we welcome you to watch the livestream of these presentations.

To watch, visit [Mobius Executive Leadership Facebook Page](#)



MONDAY AFTERNOON
OCTOBER 16 | 5:00PM EST

Richard Strozzi-Heckler
Embodied Leadership



MONDAY EVENING
OCTOBER 16 | 8:00PM EST

Brian Swimme
The Third Story of the Universe



TUESDAY MORNING
OCTOBER 17 | 8:30AM EST

Frederic Laloux
Reclaiming Integrity & Aliveness



TUESDAY AFTERNOON
OCTOBER 17 | 5:00PM EST

Dr. Angela Jackson
Building a Future that
Works for Everyone



WEDNESDAY MORNING
OCTOBER 18 | 8:30AM EST

Dr. Karl Sheibe
Sometimes Life is Sweet:
Vicissitudes of Human Mood



WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON
OCTOBER 18 | 5:00PM EST

Dr. Gisela Wendling
Liminality, Ritual, and
the Sacred in Leadership



THURSDAY MORNING
OCTOBER 19 | 8:30AM EST

Dr. Ashish Nanda
The Essence of
Professionalism



THURSDAY AFTERNOON
OCTOBER 19 | 5:00PM EST

Peter Koenig
Pioneering the Viability of Love As
the New Bottom Line of Business



FRIDAY MORNING
OCTOBER 20 | 8:30AM EST

Rasmus Hougaard & Jacqueline Carter
Compassionate Leadership: How to
Do Hard Things in a Human Way



THE
NEXT PRACTICE
INSTITUTE

2024 ANNUAL GATHERING NOVEMBER 10-15, 2024 | BOSTON, MA

We are once again privileged to be joined by a world-class group of presenters, faculty and guides for an intellectually rich, emotionally stirring and artistically inspirational week-long program.

**FULL BROCHURE AND REGISTRATION
LATER THIS YEAR:**

www.mobiusleadership.com/npi

Announcing our new

LEADERSHIP PORTAL

CURATED RESOURCES FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

An exciting curated collection of Mobius' extensive trove of thought leadership by Mobius Senior Experts and close colleagues, including: the world's seminal thinkers from Harvard University; cutting-edge practitioners in personal and adult development; and business thought leaders from premier professional services firms working in leadership advisory.

Upon completion of the post-program embedding curriculum, Voyager Program Alumni receive a subscription to the Leadership Portal for one year.

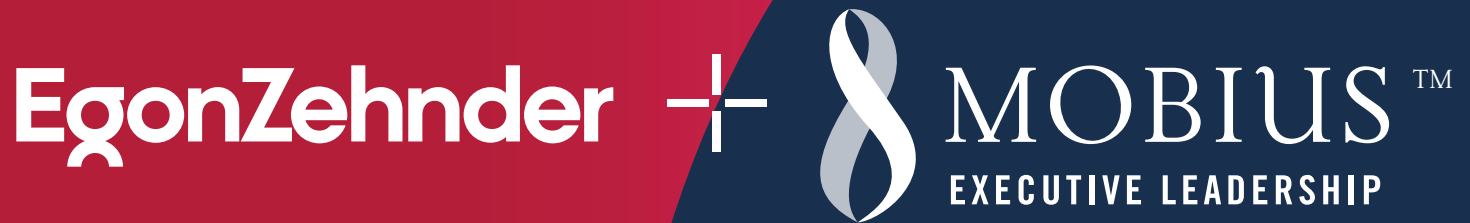
The Leadership Portal also offers a 12-lesson continued curriculum to guide alumni small groups that wish to continue their learning journey as peer coaching circles. Each lesson includes new transformational leadership content, practical behavioral assignments and a guide for small group activity related to the theme of the month.

The Leadership Portal is an invaluable resource available to all participants in Mobius transformational learning journeys.



THE MOBIUS EVERGREEN LIBRARY TOPICS

PERSONAL MASTERY & SELF-LEADERSHIP	INTERPERSONAL SKILLS & RELATIONAL SKILLS	TEAM EFFECTIVENESS, LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE	SOCIETAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Winning from Within ▶ Mindfulness ▶ Embodied Leadership ▶ Emotional Intelligence ▶ Healing & Self-Compassion ▶ Adult Development and Maturity ▶ Other Personal Mastery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Intimacy & Family ▶ Empathy & Compassion ▶ Authenticity & Vulnerability ▶ Feedback & Masterful Conversations ▶ Gathering People, Facilitation, Creating Community & Networks ▶ Other Interpersonal & Relational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Team Dynamics ▶ Psychological Safety & Learning Organizations ▶ Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion ▶ Innovation & Creativity ▶ Evolving Organizational Forms & The Future of Work ▶ Adaptive Leadership ▶ Mastering Complexity ▶ Systemic Change ▶ Other Leadership & Organizational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Purpose & Meaning ▶ Conscious Capitalism & Sustainability ▶ Societal Change ▶ Expressive Arts ▶ Collective Trauma & Healing



Egon Zehnder, the world's foremost leadership advisory firm and Mobius Executive Leadership, a pre-eminent leadership development firm are proud of the global business partnership launched in the Fall of 2018.

The historic partnership combines both firms' proprietary methods for accelerating the personal and professional development of senior executives and for stimulating an organization's ability to transform.

The partnership focuses on three capstone executive development programs: the Executive Breakthrough Program, the Executive Discovery Program and the Voyager Leadership Development Program.



www.egonzehnder-mobius.com

NOW ACCEPTING PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

**The Academy of Inner Science &
Mobius Executive Leadership present**

Trauma-Informed Consulting & Coaching Certificate Program



A one-year professional certificate program for consultants, coaches, group facilitators, & HR professionals to learn to facilitate deep client transformation through trauma-informed practices and processes

with Thomas Hübl, Amy Elizabeth Fox, and Special Guest Faculty –

including Dr. Stephen Porges, Dr. Dan Siegal, Dr. Dick Schwartz, Lisa Lahey Ed.D., Jennifer N. Wynn, Jennifer Cohen & Gina LaRoche, Zander Grashow, Dr. Michelle Brody and Bob Anderson.

Overview of the program:

- An inaugural 5-day In-Person Retreat – East Coast, USA, March 3-8, 2024
- Three 4-day Online Retreats, commencing in June, with Special Guest Faculty in the fields of Trauma, Organizational Development, and Collective Healing
- Access to a curated library with extensive resources by thought leaders in the fields of self-development, emotional intelligence, team dynamics, and organizational change
- Small-Group Supervision Sessions with experienced mentors
- Access to all videos, audios, and transcripts
- Certificate of Completion

*If you missed the free, introductory session this summer,
you can watch the recording on the web page noted below.*

APPLY NOW:

www.traumainformedcertificateprogram.com



In times of polarization and unrest, what do you need to be able to sustain the tumultuous call to equity and beyond?

At Seven Stones Leadership, our road map to travel from this place of scarcity to our new future is called **Sustainable Abundance**. *Sustainable*: ethical, reciprocal, just. *Abundance*: grateful, radiant and present to the bounty everywhere.

If you have an appetite to create something great, **we offer the following programs:**

Equity, Power & Belonging (EPB)

Our EPB partnership with Mobius™ supports sustained and courageous change through two pathways:

1. Our Signature Learning Journey: Heal Collective Trauma & Embody Anti-Racism (2024 dates TBC)
2. Executive development engagements for leaders, teams and organizations, customized to the client context.

Somatic Training Intensive for Coaches

Spring 2024–Spring 2025, Hybrid: In-person and Virtual, Year-Long Journey

This intensive for coaches dives into cutting-edge thinking from Neuroscience, Somatics and Mindfulness to deepen your skills in emotional intelligence and body attunement.

Sustainable Abundance and The 7 Laws of Enough

Winter 2024, In-Person, 3-Day Journey

This course will debunk society's scarcity myths around the lack of time, resources and attention. You will develop new habits and embrace the belief that who you are and what you have are simply enough.

Money & Wealth: A Reckoning

Spring 2024–Spring 2025; Virtual, Year-Long Journey

During this year-long course, you will unpack your personal and collective money stories, speak the truth about the relationship you have with money now and envision a new future.



The Seven Stones Online Community

Gathering together matters. Join our global online community for bold conversations, innovative practices and life-changing experiments. Free and open to all the change makers who are committed to creating a future where everyone matters, and no one is left out.

CULTIVATING

*If we want to grow our capacity
for sense-making, let's
learn how to dance at our edge.*

Growth Edge Coaching is for those interested in leading transformational change: coaches, leaders, people and culture experts, and organisational change agents are some of the folk that learn with us in our programs and workshops.

Based on adult development theory (or vertical development), Growth Edge Coaching enables us to coach developmentally, which stretches our way of meaning making and grows our capacity for perspective and complexity.

We invite you to explore this with us in a series of workshops that will enable you to confidently coach developmentally, as well as become accredited as a Growth Edge Coach, if you complete all three foundation workshops.



Come learn with us!
Visit our website by
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WHY IS CHANGE SO DIFFICULT?

The **Immunity to Change™ (ITC)** approach, based on over 20+ years of research at Harvard University, says that our minds, just like our bodies, have immune systems of their own. These are wonderfully innovative, adaptable processes designed to keep us safe. If our attempts to make change involve any element of psychological risk, our Immune Systems automatically activate to protect us. We resist changing, while often remaining completely unaware of how or why we resist.

The ITC approach allows us to identify these Immune Systems, to examine and ultimately overturn any self-limiting mindsets that activate our Immune Systems inappropriately or unnecessarily. We make significant and lasting improvements in our mindset and performance.

Immunity to Change™ offers an actionable model for transforming our lives and organizations.



2024 SAVE THE DATES

ENERGY MASTERY PROGRAMS WITH LYNDA CAESARA

Foundational 10-Day Programs:

March 15-24, 2024

Warren Conference Center,
Ashland, MA USA

Registration to come

April 19-28, 2024

Chateauform Rothenbuch,
Rothenbuch, Germany

Registration to come

Advanced Energy Programs:

May 20-23, 2024

Problem-Solving

*Prerequisite: Foundational 10-Day Program,
Light Sides of the Patterns*

Lodge at Marconi,
Marshall, CA USA

Registration to come

November 18-22, 2024

Light Sides of the Patterns

Prerequisite: Foundational 10-Day Program

Warren Conference Center,
Ashland, MA USA

Registration to come

For further details, please contact: npi@mobiusteam.com

To learn more about Lynda's work, visit the Coaches Rising website to listen to her podcast – Episode 183



OTHER NPI PROGRAMS IN 2024

In addition to the Annual Gathering and the Energy Masterclasses advertised in this section, other NPI Hosted programs in 2024 include:

THE HEALING POWER OF FAMILY/SYSTEMIC CONSTELLATIONS WITH APPLIED MYSTICAL PRINCIPLES

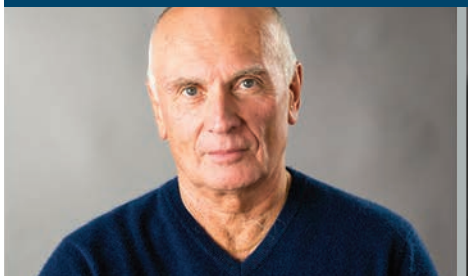


Please join us for an exceptional experiential workshop with **ESTER MARTINEZ**, Mobius Master Transformational Faculty Member

May 6 – 10, 2024

Warren Conference Center, Ashland, MA

THE MATURING MASCULINE



A special, men-only 4-day retreat where we will discover and invigorate our integrity, authenticity, curiosity, courage, and compassion with **PAUL DUNION**, Mobius Senior Expert, **PAUL ZONNEVELD** Mobius Transformational Faculty Member, & **THOMAS HALBEISEN**, Mobius Transformational Faculty Member

April 8 – 12, 2024

Location: Details to come

Registration available soon

Any questions please email: npi@mobiusleadership.com

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Love, Light and Inspiration: Upcoming Retreats with Patrick Connor

In these poignant times of worldwide chaos, confusion and crisis, there has never been more need, or a louder call from the earth, for the grace of real stewardship. Enlightened leadership is not the domain of politics, but rather of self mastery. True leadership is not, first and foremost, the ability to direct the lives of others, but most of all to gain sovereignty over the forces of illusion, darkness and fear in our own lives.

Self-mastery, in turn, is not the province of a philosophically sophisticated mind, but rather of a wise and inspired heart, soaked in a lived experience of the intrinsic Unity of Life. And vision, to be worthy of the term, is not the realm of ideas, rather a refined receptivity to the heartbeat of the Eternal and the Timeless.

Retreats with Patrick Connor offer a meticulous and guided process of alchemical intervention, healing and initiation, combined with a container of great potency and true safety, in which it is possible to transmute what has held us back – joyfully, efficiently, gently and inspirationally - and in an atmosphere of Grace, Beauty and unconditional Love. And finally, as so many of you have remarked, it is impossible to overstate the lasting value, delight and fellowship of sharing a field of mature intention with other similarly inspired souls.

The intentions of these retreats are very simple: The focus here is on releasing, with precision and depth, all the obstacles to Joy and to living fearlessly, unapologetically and exuberantly as the unique being of light that you have come here to be. On this path of Illumination, your capacity to inspire others, and your ability to live in real love, freedom and abundance, are one. They are a single path.



Patrick Connor Brief Bio

Educated at Eton, Durham and Cambridge University, Patrick's early journey included traveling widely, living in other countries, and becoming an entrepreneur. Yet powerful questions continued to arise for him: "What does success really mean? And "What is the ultimate possibility of a human lifetime?" So, he left his business career behind to pursue these questions fully.

His life and teaching has become a bridge between the mystical and the human, between the wisdom of eternity, and the ability to become truly inspired in the domain of the most practical and pressing questions of human material relational life. Today he is a spiritual teacher, philanthropist, mystic, healer, yogi, visionary, educator, and guide to leaders and groups. His particular gift has been to help high capacity human beings to live beyond their wildest dreams, and to manifest beyond their boldest aspirations.

His life is dedicated to the liberation of the human spirit, to the enlightened leadership of global society, and to the wise stewardship of the Earth.



Upcoming Retreats

12th to 17th November,, 2023 - Malaga, Spain

15th to 23rd January, 2024 - Tiruvannamalai, South India

Spring Retreat 2024 - Dates to be announced

To know more, please go to patrickconnor.org

DAVID WHYTE

POET • PHILOSOPHER • SPEAKER

Möbius Associate Fellow

David's life as a poet has created a readership and listenership in three normally mutually exclusive areas: the literate world of readings that most poets inhabit, the psychological and theological worlds of philosophical enquiry and the world of vocation, work and organizational leadership.

POETRY:
Language against
which we have no
defenses.

-DAVID WHYTE

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David's walking tours combine his poetry and philosophy with breathtaking walks, superb meals and an opportunity to meet extraordinary people deeply committed to their place in the world. No matter the location, you are invited into a circle of friendship that takes you deep into the local culture.

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A virtual mini-series offered every other month. With his unique blend of poetry, storytelling and philosophy, David explores a new theme in each three-part series.

DAVIDWHYTE.COM

NEXT PRACTICE MEETS BEST PRACTICE:

The intellectual tributaries under Mobius Executive Leadership's Next Practice Institute



To receive our monthly newsletter email

info@mobiusleadership.com

Connect and contribute to the dialogue by following

Erica Ariel Fox and Mobius Executive Leadership





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For more about the offerings of Mobius Executive Leadership please go to www.mobiusleadership.com.

To discuss bringing Mobius leadership programs, trainings or executive coaching to your organization please write John.Abbuzzese@mobiusleadership.com

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