



## This book is for you if

This book is for anyone who is interested in going on a journey of self-discovery. For those people who have a real desire to live effortlessly in line with their values and who want to bring about real change in their lives. This book will help you to unlock your true purpose and manifest your true destiny in the world, inspiring other people to be with you or be led by you. It will show you how to define who you are and find congruence, balance, wellbeing and integration between your work and your life. It will give you a new aspirational model to live and work by; the Authenticity POWER Model, which provides clarity on all the elements necessary to resolve the authenticity dilemma. This book will add value to your life as you start the journey of understanding your inner self and you battle the beast of the inner ego. It will give you the courage to be yourself. To make no excuses for that self and release the true inner beauty that is so uniquely you.

## This book will help you if...

- you have a strong desire to get more out of your life.
- you are a professional who feels confined by life within an organisational culture.

and/or you want:

- to achieve better congruence, balance and integration between work and life, especially in the age of technology where we are 'always switched on'.
- to feel you are making a difference, while being less mentally exhausted.
- to have more confidence and understand when people are winding you up or pushing your buttons.
- **seamless flow** between all elements of your life.
- to use the strengths within your team to achieve great things.
- to be yourself more often, being who you truly are in all your interactions with other people.
- to be who you are in all aspects of your life.
- to be all of you, living your authentic power.



## About Talita Ferreira

Talita Ferreira is a thought leader and change maker, who is passionate about living in true authenticity, purpose-driven collaboration and harnessing diversity of thought. As a young child she experienced two traumatic events, which influenced her life, when her father and brother died in unrelated incidences. These events triggered Talita's personal journey of discovery, firstly to understand what motivated her as an individual and later in corporate life, as an inspirational leader, where she found it extremely important to stay true to her inner authentic self.

She has written this book to share her experiences of working with thousands of leaders and teams in multiple industries during her business life and to provide her insights and learning from these encounters. Talita's passion is in understanding motivation and self-development to bring out each individual's best qualities. She has invested her life in seeking out the deeper meaning of true happiness - by discovering and unlocking her passion and purpose - and this book will help you to do the same.

Talita is an entrepreneur, business owner and experienced executive who has chosen to step out of her more than 22 years in corporate business, to resolve the authenticity dilemma and start an authenticity revolution. She values ethics and socially-responsible business and believes in:

- creating supportive organisational cultures;
- respecting difference;
- focussing on authenticity as an enabler for true diversity of thought and inclusion; and
- fostering higher levels of acceptance for diversity and difference, for the benefit of all.

Working within globally established brands including KPMG, Investec and BMW, in England, Germany and South Africa, Talita developed her authentic, inspirational leadership approach. She also developed a unique ability to nurture people, across cultural boundaries and within highly complex matrix organisations.

As a qualified Chartered Accountant and consultant with KPMG, Talita's corporate experience began in the South African banking sector before she pursued a career in the automotive and financial services industry with BMW. In 2013, she became a Chartered Director. She has an excellent track record for delivering inspirational leadership to drive business through the human capital and back office of an organisation, for introducing strategic change, developing talent and organisational values and establishing proper risk management and compliance structures. She has a Bachelor Degree in Commerce Law (Cum Laude) and became a Fellow of the Institute of Directors in 2015. She was nominated for the Business Leader of the Year 2016 awards, for the South African Chamber of Commerce in the UK.

Talita is an experienced public speaker and has addressed the Accenture International Women's Day, HR Grapevine, CFO Rising, Inclusive Leadership Network, Institute of Directors Chartered Director Day, An Inspirational Journey and The Pipeline. She is a positive activist for transformational change and believes in helping individuals to grow and develop beyond their own expectations, while creating a business environment, which allows managers to be authentic, inspirational leaders. She invites you to read her book and be inspired to join the revolution of authentic change, which the world needs right now!



## Dedication

### For Marcus and Isabella

Marcus, my wonderful supportive husband, without you  
this book would not have been possible.

Isabella, your patience gave me the space to write during times we  
should have been enjoying together. You inspired me to make a  
difference for your generation.

### For my father

I forgive you. Please forgive my intolerance as a child.

### For my mother

Thank you for teaching me to be strong and independent and  
never to compromise on my ideas or my authentic self.

**Unleashing your passion and purpose  
to live more authentically**

# **The Authenticity Dilemma Resolved**

**Where consciousness and  
connectedness collide**

**by Talita Ferreira**

**Introducing the Authenticity POWER Model**



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# Foreword

## Jean Gomes

We are in clear need of leaders worth believing in. As businesses go exponential, creating a new realm of possibility, with equal measures of anxiety and optimism, geopolitics collides with inter-faith conflict and the competition for scarce resources. The world is changing at an extraordinary rate, with rising volatility and unpredictable events. We live in an exciting, bewildering or terrifying environment depending on your circumstances and perspective.

The role of Twitter in the dissemination of free speech, is just one example of the astonishing power even youthful organisations now wield and the global responsibility their leaders must bear. Such power cannot be transacted through a narrow set of commercial values or a self-serving perspective without dire consequences for us all. Leaders must think and act on a grander scale.

To create a bigger and more fruitful world, leaders must complement their incessant search for new capabilities, with a corresponding growth of their inner world. To see longer, wider and deeper in the pursuit of value, they need a richly developed interior, grounded in profoundly explored values, self-knowledge and continual self-awareness. As the decisions they make become ever more paradoxical, their ability to hold opposites will mark the limits of their vision and **decision making**.

We need more leaders like Talita committed to the pursuit of authenticity. We crave leaders who are knowable and whose values ensure they are predictable in the toughest calls. We crave leaders who create safety around themselves in the face of ambiguity and paradox. The questions that living an authentic life provoke, are challenging but ultimately lead to a life worth living.

Jean Gomes

Chairman

The Energy Project

## Hanno Burmester

Every day, millions of people put on their professional masks before entering their offices. They do not like it. It makes them feel alienated. It takes away the feeling of being themselves. But they believe this is what it takes to be a successful professional.

Separating professional identity from our true self makes workplaces feel hollow. By detaching parts of ourselves from what we do at work, we take the soul out of professional interactions and our relationships. That has its cost: professionals especially in big organizational structures burn out quickly because bridging the gap between professional identity and the private self takes too much energy from us.

The price we pay for wearing masks at work is much higher than the individual cost. As an organizational developer, I see and feel the price people pay for wearing this mask in almost every organization I work with. The detachment of what we do at work and what we stand for as individuals creates a delta, which leaves space for meaninglessness and, in the worst case, destruction.

Consider the financial crisis of 2008, or how companies such as Enron and Volkswagen deceived and lied. I am convinced these examples of collective irresponsibility would not have happened if the people involved had been fully present at their workplaces, being their authentic selves. If they had connected their fears, their hopes and their values with what they did at work, it is far more likely more of them would have said, "No." Instead of continuing to harm their individual integrity, their organizations and most importantly, society.

These may be extreme examples. At the same time, each of us know how frequently we accept work tasks even though we think they are meaningless or wrong. We agree to act and say things we never would as private, authentic beings. This takes the life out of professional interaction and allows meaninglessness to take control of every day processes and thus our lives.

In my work as a systemic consultant, I believe the impact I create comes from encouraging people to allow their inner self to be visible to themselves and to other people: their values, experiences and emotions. This is where our gravitational centre and our power can be found. Our authentic self is the source for all meaningful interaction and action. Meaningful change,

meaningful exchange and meaningful **every day** action will happen only when we discover and cultivate it, bravely.

The key for me, was to discover that I can only move people to start cultivating this approach to their lives, when I radically open up myself. When I am present in my true self and when I face people as the vulnerable me, they start to trust me. My authenticity is the spark for every change I initiate.

In her book, Talita describes authenticity as our most important resource for the transformations to come. She makes authenticity speakable as a topic in professional contexts by fleshing out how we must face our inner self to create the meaningful change we, as societies, organizations and individuals need. She highlights how opening up for true encounters and co-creation with other people is the prerequisite for unfolding the potential of our true authentic selves.

Talita's voice is highly important as part of the global discourse on conscious business and meaningful co-creation. She spent years, where many change agents – including me – refuse to spend their working life, in big corporate structures, dominated by profit interest and deeply rooted in unsustainable business models. This makes her the perfect spokesperson to reach the corporate leaders we need to engage with in the coming years. Talita's life story shows how it is possible to act as an authentic leader, while initiating meaningful change for individuals, organizational systems and society at the same time.

Frédéric Laloux **in his**, "*Re-Inventing Organizations*" writes about Wholeness as one of the three pillars of Teal Organizations. Talita, with her first book about authenticity, adds useful models and more importantly, stories to that discourse. Her meaningful voice will enrich our debates and experiments regarding the transformation of the ways we work, helping us to bring our true selves to the workplace.

Hanno Burmester  
Organizational Developer, das Resultat  
[www.dasresultat.de](http://www.dasresultat.de)



# Introduction

This book is about defining who we are in a different way. Although people think they are authentic, the rapid changes in the world require a new perspective. The sweet spot is to be found where consciousness and connectedness collide and everything we do is more purpose-driven and intuition-based. It is about spending more time on developing a deeper understanding of ourselves and other people and spending less time on competing with our innate egocentricity. We can connect to all of ourselves by integrating this deeper understanding and inner focus in all aspects of our lives and bringing our whole self to everything we do. When we start creating relationships based on true authenticity, they become more meaningful and we find the missing part and integration in our lives. At the heart of it all is simply being real.

This book will:

- create a desire to understand yourself better, to understand what drives and motivates you and to unlock your purpose or guiding light on this planet;
- inspire you as an individual to bring more of yourself to all relationships and all the people you encounter;
- encourage leaders and players in corporate life to bring their whole self to work;
- give ego leaders an opportunity to realise there are alternatives and they can be more and have more from life;
- show you how to improve wellbeing; emotionally and spiritually;
- create a realisation in corporate clones, chameleons and pretenders, giving them the ultimate choice of how they want to be; and
- suggest a different way to be that provides more meaning and connection in your life.





# 1

## **The Future is Different, Robots and Millennials Define Business**

Leading us through a new decade of  
humanity and people



*It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change.*

Charles Darwin



# 1

## **Is something missing in your life?**

Have you ever felt there is something missing or misaligned in your life? Despite all your perfect efforts to have a meaningful job and meaningful relationships with work colleagues, your children, your partner or spouse, there is still an empty space. Something out of your reach that is a bit off course and not quite right. Despite all our good intentions to have good relationships and interact in a certain way, it does not feel right. This feeling is born from within us and the solution is also to be found inside ourselves.

Much of our lives we are caught in certain states: the ego state; the fear state; the limiting self-belief state; the control state; and the competitive state.

Depending on how self-aware and conscious we are, these states are more or less relevant to us. Due to the pace of change coming from the Information Age and the dynamic world around us, these states can compound this feeling of emptiness, unless we find a solution immediately.

When we feel like this, we are not fully integrated and aligned. We compartmentalise our lives into work, home, friends, acquaintances and we might even change the version of ourselves we show at each of these interactions. We do not equally use all the powerful parts that make up the

whole: the mind; the body; the heart; and the soul or spirit. We are mainly focussed on the mind and the body. Perhaps we occasionally interact with the heart when we are overwhelmed or sad. However, we seldom connect to the heart fully and do not recognise it as an organ; as powerful as the brain itself. And then there is also the spirit or soul, which for many people is so complicated and unknown that it is easier for us to simply shy away from it completely.

### Unprecedented change requires a new focus on skills

The world is changing faster than we ever imagined. The World Economic Forum is predicting a Fourth Industrial Revolution, a revolution more comprehensive and encompassing than ever seen before. Robots and the Fourth Industrial Revolution will change the face of how we work forever. In the future, highly-valued, traditional jobs will be performed by robots. It is predicted that driverless cars, advanced robotics and artificial intelligence will be part of normal life by 2020. Robots able to learn and adapt will work with us. Therefore, to survive in this more automated world of the near future, human beings will need to understand who we really are. We will need to be more introspective and find out what is at the heart of us; to be more selfless and discover what we can contribute to the world. Robots might be able to create faster progress in the future, however they are not yet as creative as human beings. It is predicted that the skills required to survive and to lead in life and business will change. Humans have emotional intelligence, creativity and empathy, which will set us apart from robots. Emotional intelligence will migrate into the top ten core skills\* required to thrive in this new revolution and will be required from all people.

Another interesting piece of research regarding skills is contained in a book called *The Athena Doctrine*. Sixty four thousand participants and respondents were asked to categorise leadership traits as feminine, masculine or neutral. They were also asked to categorise the traits that strongly related to leadership, morality and happiness. The results demonstrated that the traits traditionally seen as more feminine were the ones more strongly relating to happiness, morality and leadership. In this new technologically challenged world, the traditionally feminine qualities, such as intuitive, passionate, expressive, patience and flexibility will be the skills we require to be happy. The traditional masculine paradigms of dominance, hierarchy and aggression are being

challenged with the more collaborative, transparent, quietly confident and strong feminine perspective, to create a better world.

We are moving into a new decade of people and humanity. What does this mean? The next decade will be defined by who we are as a human race; by what value we have to add, beyond what robotics can achieve. By how we interact, how we collaborate and how we use each other's strengths to attain greatness and co-create.

The Technology Age has given us information at our fingertips beyond our wildest dreams. For example, the contents of the entire 29 volumes of the Encyclopaedia Britannica can be downloaded in less than a second via a single **hairthin** optical fibre. The world has become significantly smaller and significantly more interconnected. For example, one billion people can turn on their television to watch the same sporting event around the globe. The qualities of collaboration, working together to achieve, asking for help when needed and gaining a deeper understanding of ourselves and co-creating, are more needed now than ever before, to ensure we remain one step ahead, to create the new sharing economy of the future, together.

To achieve this result, human beings will need to be more introspective and analyse who we are as individuals. We will need to conquer the ego and fear states and battle these inner beasts. Only then, **can** we truly collaborate with other people and form partnerships without the traditional competitiveness and drive to be the only one at the top, or to be the first one there. In this new **technologically driven** age, we will have to learn to accept ourselves, rise above our limiting self-beliefs and respect differences to avoid extinction (the same as the dinosaurs) and prepare ourselves for artificial intelligence. In the future, it will no longer be necessary to have all the answers yourself, to go it alone all the time; purpose-driven collaboration will be the key to our future as humanity. However, a deeper connection with other people and purpose-driven collaboration will only be possible when we start with a deeper understanding of ourselves first.

## The next generations

Another challenge will be the new generation emerging; sometimes they are referred to as the Millennials\* (born between 1982 and 2000), or the Generation

Y or Generation Z (after 2000). I was born in 1971 and am therefore classified as a Gen X. The Millennials live very differently to my generation. They appear to live very authentically and openly on social media; they do not see differences in race, gender and sexuality in the same way as my generation. Within their network, they share and collaborate. They use each other's strengths to achieve and they celebrate failure. I say this very provocatively, because this is not how my generation are accustomed to behaving.

For example, when a Millennial bakes a cake, the recipe is found online after a Google search. If the cake flops, a photograph is taken and shared among the network of friends. The reason for the flop is also found online, using either a Google search or from the experience of another person in the group. Also, the solution is shared with the other friends in the network. The failure of one now becomes the achievement of the others. They will all avoid repeating the mistake and they have learnt through the process of sharing. This generation expects to add value, be heard and continually develop. They are highly ambitious and how they live privately will spill into their expectations of working life. They are also very loyal, but they do not expect to spend 20 years working for one organisation at the outset. These professionals tend to stay with employers for a shorter period, learn as much as they can and move on. This generation is not only focussed on money and status; they are focussed on sharing and an economy that can support this. There are futurologists who are predicting that the traditional paradigm of one employer will change. It will be the norm to be working for multiple organisations, at the same time including charitable endeavours. Again, this situation will require new skills and demand more adaptiveness and flexibility from all generations alike, to create a greater respect for difference.

This new generation will soon be the leaders and entrepreneurs in our world. It is estimated by the *Deloitte Millennial Study*\* that by 2025, 75% of the global workforce will be Millennials\*. Our traditional paradigms will be challenged when big business and social good collide. We will see the emergence of partnerships, businesses, products and customer relationships that we have never seen before. This situation will be driven by the Information Age and how the Millennials respond as future customers and leaders in the world of business. Companies who want to survive will have to adapt their strategies and adapt how they interact with their employees, their customers, social aspects and the economy.

Who knows what the following generation will be expecting of their future employers and the world. For example, my young daughter **Isabella, who is** growing up with an iPod, iPad, Google and the power of social media. She never has to watch anything live on television if she so chooses; everything can be recorded on our Sky Plus package. When she is a teenager, artificial intelligence will be everywhere and the Internet of Things\* will have changed our lives forever. This connectivity of objects in our lives will place new demands on us as humans. It will challenge our integration or disintegration between the different aspects of our lives, both professional and personal.

We will want to ensure we can still connect with this new generation and there is not a gaping chasm forming between the older leaders and the new leaders, in general life and in business. A redefined authenticity and greater respect for difference is at the heart of this connection and acceptance of each other.

## A taste of the future

The following will be working norms in the future.

- Artificial intelligence as part of boardroom decisions.
- Greater age differential between members of boards, as the younger generation resonates more with new customer demands and with customers.
- Medical body scans readily assessable, giving a prognosis on **life threatening** disease instantaneously.
- Driverless cars enabling a host of new '**in car** activities', including, work, pleasure and health assessment.
- Working for three organisations and two charitable causes at the same time.
- Collaborating and meeting in virtual reality.
- Wider generational differences in organisations from people working later in life.
- Co-working in offices where multiple companies are housed and people are grouped based on our core skills and training.

## The People Decade

The People Decade is about individuals making a difference every day. A difference in society, the companies we work for, or as entrepreneurs running

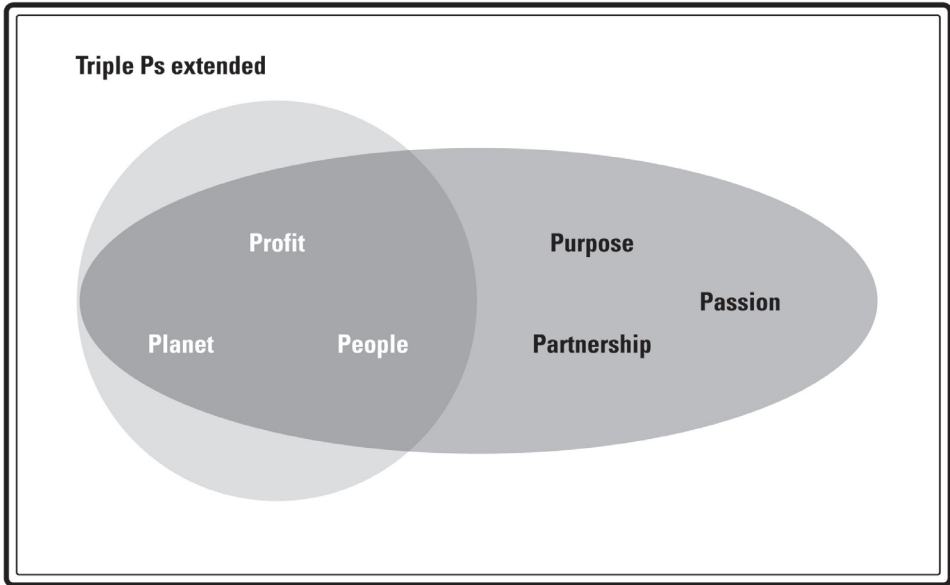
our own businesses. It will no longer be about which age, race or gender you belong to. It will be about our passion, following our purpose and creating relationships and partnerships that drive this purpose forward - not just for ourselves - but for generations to come.

The opportunities of the Information Age are with us now. It is already changing how we work and what we can achieve tremendously. Businesses can be launched after completing a wealth of research from anywhere in the world because the information needed is available on Google, Twitter and social media platforms. We can observe what customers think by following blogs and conducting research via search engines that sit atop the social media platforms. Gone are the days of needing to go to the library for information. Of spending months sifting through page after page and reference book after book, to find what you are looking for! Now, it is all there instantaneously. It awaits our analysis rather than the laborious search. Although robots will also be able to analyse, our unique human creativity will be needed to shape the future.

This decade of people centricity will be defined by collaborating to solve problems; by relying more on each other's natural strengths; and by forming alliances or partnerships to conduct business in ways never comprehended before. We will form partnerships based on our natural skill sets complementing each other, instead of conforming to what other people believe we should do and experience.

Instead of trying to be all and everything ourselves, we will need to have more balance and to be more integrated; more connected to the planet and to each other. Only then will we survive the perils of being 'always switched on' and living within the electronic interconnectivity, from the Internet of Things. In this situation, we will give true meaning to the Triple P of Planet, People and ultimately more responsible Profit generation. We will enter a new decade defined by socially and morally good business, conscious business, aligned to our true purpose and passion. The new Ps of Partnership, Passion and Purpose will emerge to further enhance the Triple P. This will provide true meaning and expression to be ourselves as human beings and to our lives on this planet.

## TRIPLE P'S EXTENDED



## Living authentically and being real

At the heart of conducting business and living in this different way is being truly authentic; authentic in all the facets explained in this book. True authenticity will lead to the cultivation of true diversity of thought. This will eliminate cultures with a high propensity for 'group think'. We will use authenticity to bring fresh ideas; ideas crossing gender, culture, international, religious and generational boundaries. This will propel businesses forward and lead to true innovation. Creativity will be a benefit at the heart of the changes coming from the Fourth Industrial Revolution; once we embrace it. It is this creativity that will distinguish us from the growing intelligence of robotics.

From a company perspective, honouring authenticity will lead to higher organisational efficiency. People will work aligned to their true purpose, adding more value, feeling more engaged, empowered and aligned to the strategies of their companies. People will want to work in an environment where authenticity is allowed, differences are respected and individual contribution is valued. Within these premises, a higher level of mutual trust will emerge from higher collaboration and working together in genuine teams, to create

value and drive business performance. In the future, the way of working will be more effortless as we no longer need to be right or always in control. This change of 'working culture' will increase company profits because employees and customers will be more engaged. In an evolutionary way, it will naturally lead to higher diversity of thought and inclusion, because we will at last accept people for who they are and for their individual contribution.

From an individual perspective, the future is not about the battle to compete with each other, but the battle with the inner self and the ego. It is about understanding our true self in a way that unlocks our purpose and allows us to truly connect to and collaborate with other people. It is about leaving the state of doing that drives us today and entering the future state of being. This allows us to live in a way that is aligned with our values and our core beliefs. It will resonate deeply with who we are and how we can fulfil our destiny on this planet. We will relate to other human beings in a way that brings about more creativity and more collaboration. It will ensure that humans live their purpose and complement artificial intelligence.

## REFLECTIONS AND INSIGHTS

- The emptiness or misalignment we feel comes from within ourselves.
- The changing world will exacerbate the emptiness.
- Artificial intelligence will change the face of work, as we know it.
- As humans we add creativity, emotional intelligence and empathy.
- Millennials are the future leaders and customers and we need to engage them effectively.
- We need to cultivate a deeper respect for difference to ensure greater inclusion when people work later in life and collaborate with younger generations.
- We need to collaborate and partner in different ways to create the future and the new face of business and the world.
- The current Triple P of Planet, People and Profit is extended to include, Partnership, Purpose and Passion.
- We need to have a deeper understanding of who we are and how we relate to each other as human beings to collaborate more successfully in our fast changing world.
- Authenticity is the key to making each of us better people and the world a better place to live for all.





# 2

## **My Journey to Authenticity**

The battle of the sexes replaced by the  
battle of the inner beast



*The key to success is to focus our conscious mind on things we desire, not things we fear*

**Brian Tracy**



# 2

I will start by explaining how I came to be on my journey of self-discovery. My life has been a sequence of events that has led me to a certain point in time and a revelation. This revelation and my personal awakening was pushed along by the changes in the world taking place externally around me. This collision of external and internal worlds has led me to believe that authenticity is now more relevant than ever before and a redefinition of authenticity is vital for our future state as people and humanity.

## **An entrepreneurial childhood**

When I was relatively young, I accompanied my mother to her beauty salon every day. This was where I grew up. She taught me how to knit and crochet. I had a doll called 'First Love' that I absolutely loved and I knitted and crocheted clothes for her. I visited a **toyshop** regularly that had all the latest frills for this doll. The ladies running the shop loved the clothes I made and they asked me to make clothes to sell in the shop. At seven years of age, an entrepreneur was born. However, as an adult I have spent more than 22 years in corporate life and my biggest desire now, is to be my own boss. The real question is what distracted me from following through on this entrepreneurial path when I was younger?

Did I follow the path that everyone expected of me? Or was it the fear that grew inside me as my parents' businesses did not work out? Or was it that my mother ended up with nothing but her personal possessions when the businesses failed? Or was it something entirely different?

When I was **thirteen**, my brother died unexpectedly in a car accident. I refer to this as my first trigger event. My father decided he did not want to live after this. He basically withdrew from life following my brother's death. He finally died of a heart attack two years later. I never truly understood the impact of this on my life. It was a decade later that I discovered I was pushing myself beyond all boundaries. I had been in corporate life for five years and I was climbing the corporate ladder. I impressed everyone around me; really proving myself, but not spending much of my attention on the relationships around me. I was on this underlying emotional roller coaster that followed me every time someone pushed my 'not good enough button'. I went to see a therapist because I was at the cliff's edge of exhaustion and not making sense of my life.

I was driving myself to excel at the cost of my relationships and losing my identity at the same time. This is where my journey became clearer and it is only after years of self-discovery that I can label this button and clearly see when someone is pushing it.

### **My corporate adult life**

I have spent most of my adult life in a corporate environment working for different companies. Sixteen years ago, I landed a great job with an international brand that set my Curriculum Vitae up for the rest of my career. My last corporate role was Chief Financial Officer, where I also managed and led the competencies of Human Resources, Strategy, Employee Engagement and Change. Despite my great job, I sometimes felt exhausted; every day trying to be what I thought everyone else expected of me.

- The great leader at the office.
- The perfect mother and wife at home.
- The perfect daughter to my mother.
- The perfect listener, helping and supporting friends with their challenges.

These expectations slowly made me feel I was not living a 'real life'. I was living as a clone in a world I did not always understand. I had to fit in every day and sometimes wear a mask at work and sometimes wear a mask at home because my daughter was affected by my emotional state. I had to network in exactly the right way, to make sure I had the right connections for my future. I had to say things the right way, to ensure I did not offend the higher ranks. I needed to be conscious that what I said and did, would impact my performance appraisal. I was successful in this world and adapted to it. But I began to realise that I wanted more; I wanted more **real life** interactions and to be the same person in all facets of my life without wearing any masks.

During the last ten years of my corporate life, I had transitioned from being a manager to a leader. I really enjoyed leading in a more inspirational way. However, I also benefitted tremendously from working with two life coaches at different stages in my career and they helped me to understand what motivates and drives me. Over time, I became tired of interactions around superficial friends or colleagues and tried to avoid these. I grew tired of relationships that were not meaningful and I tried to connect at a deeper level with my team members. I supported them with their growth and shared more of myself with them because I believed this would lead to a higher connectedness. I found it difficult to invest in all relationships equally because I did not have the time to invest in them all. We sometimes forge relationships with a greater intention, for example, career connections or introductions. These relationships are sometimes superficial and they lack meaning, but because I did not want to offend anyone, I did not say what I was really thinking. I did not want to invest the time to point things out and then work on saving the relationship afterwards. This could also be true for you in some of your relationships; those at work or with friends and acquaintances. You might also, have some of these expectations placed on you; making your parents proud; or not disappointing a manager who has been good to you. These relationships, combined with unrealistic expectations, are what lead to inauthenticity; this feeling of 'not being real' and not following our true purpose and passion.

## Unlocking my true purpose

About two years ago, I unlocked my true purpose and realised I had constantly been pursuing something that would not make me happy. I loved developing my team members, even beyond what they thought they could achieve. I

loved driving cultural change and seeing how an organisation can change incorporating the creation, acceptance and living of new company values. I realised that I wanted to be an entrepreneur, to make a real difference and drive more change. I wanted to develop people and have an impact on the inauthenticity that I saw in business. I wanted people to be themselves in all the interactions they have. I wanted people to truly connect with other people; even if that makes them feel vulnerable. I wanted people to be allowed to bring all of themselves to work and to lose the feeling of emptiness; of a continual desire for something they just cannot attain. I wanted to help create a place where we live authentically and savour every moment.

For example, my worst experience in corporate life was when I worked to deliver a big project on top of my day job as Chief Financial Officer. The project related to relocating three companies to a new **campus style** location and changing the underlying individual company cultures to create a more integrative culture. The project was not the problem because it perfectly suited my change, making a difference and people development agenda. However, there were tight deadlines for relocating the three companies and I had to tell people what to do, far more often than I could live with. I went from being an empowering leader to being a command and control leader, to reach deadlines and avoid financial penalties and costs. I rationalised that this is what was needed in the moment to be successful. It was during this period that I realised I would always face uncontrollable challenges in corporate life; having to do what must be done, but then being totally misaligned to my values and my preferred leadership style. During this period, I felt really exhausted every day when I arrived home. I had no real balance in my life and I was constantly feeling I was not living in my body. I felt detached from what made me happy and from being fulfilled.

I felt as if I was a different person at work to the person I was at home. I found it increasingly difficult to move effortlessly between my home and work life. My relationships with my daughter and husband were starting to suffer. I was less integrated and my intuition was not working at home. I felt far more fearful at home; all my limiting self-beliefs started to rise to the surface and occupy my thoughts more and more frequently. I realised that something needed to change. At work, we had recently launched a new set of company values. Authenticity was one of the values. I wanted to have a deeper understanding of authenticity and started in-depth research to help with the roll out. What

followed was a passion for the topic that really surprised me. I started spending my private time reading articles and papers on authenticity until I created the model you will discover later in this book.

I now realise that many relationships have been lost on my way. I am not sure whether it was always simply a question of time. I think that feeling of having something missing in our lives and feeling not quite right, not centred or grounded can also account for some of this. Sometimes, I think we also grow apart naturally, but we are either not aware or we decide to invest just enough in the relationship for it not to matter.

My personal awakening occurred as a result of the focus on gender diversity. In the space of six months, I attended various women's events on diversity and the gender gap in business and in the world. I saw so many presentations on progress already made on gender balance, but I also learnt that it had not actually moved the needle materially. I realised the focus on one element of diversity would exclude others. This would mean that real change has not been effected at all levels. I realised we need a broader focus on diversity.

I have never felt disadvantaged because I am a woman. I have always put my head down and worked hard to prove myself. Sometimes, I did feel that I worked harder than those around me. Those around me were of the male variety because I chose to work in a male dominated industry for a substantial part of my career. However, I decided early on in my career that I did not want to measure and compare myself against other people. I defined myself by what I wanted to achieve. I looked around me for the qualities and traits in other people that I admired and I learnt from the successful leaders that I encountered. I will explain later in this chapter why I believe the narrow focus on gender diversity is actually the wrong debate, which will lead us down a path where we will not gain the best out of everyone. I believe I was never promoted only because I am a woman and I would have hated to be promoted to Executive Board level simply to be occupying a seat. I would rather have a strong voice that is valued for its contribution and experience.

## Generational differences

Millennials view diversity and inclusion very differently to my generation. For Gen X inclusion is about representation, while diversity is about gender,

religion, ethnicity and sexual orientation. A recent study\* completed by Deloitte University mentioned in Chapter 1, partnering with the Billy Jean King Institute, unlocked the differences between the generations. Millennials view diversity as cognitive diversity or diversity of thought; recognising their individual contribution and the value they bring to a team. For Millennials inclusion means collaborating and working as a team, with these individual thoughts being recognised and understood as helping to add value to drive business success. We need to be aware of this different view to ensure we understand the emerging generation as leaders and customers, as I have already mentioned in Chapter 1. We need to understand what motivates and drives them to form powerful joint partnerships.

Reading the Deloitte University report and attending numerous diversity panels as a speaker, I have come to the conclusion that there is something more. I want to do more and effect more change; faster. A wider definition of diversity is necessary to be truly inclusive and allow us to be – simply real. This wider definition is about authenticity and allowing people to be and bring all of themselves to all facets of their lives. True inclusion, respecting difference and acceptance of everyone will stem from this deeper redefinition of authenticity. The current focus on certain elements of diversity because it is easiest to recognise, does not feel like the change we actually need. It is not good enough because we will exclude sexual orientation, the invisible minority within. There are FTSE 100 companies\* that are actively promoting the recruitment of Lesbian, Gay, Transgender and Bisexual candidates to C-suite\* positions.

### **My vision**

I feel strongly about authenticity because I believe it is the only way to include everyone, value their individual contributions and promote development of talent overall. It is also the only way we will truly respect individuality and difference and ensure true inclusion.

As authentic individuals, bringing our whole self to work; we need authentic environments to thrive and be our best. As companies and businesses, we also need to resonate with authentic customers of the future. These customers will simply be – who they are. Who better to resonate with them in organisations than individuals who are respected for the value they add and the contribution they make irrespective of gender, ethnicity and social orientation.

I also realised that authenticity is what we actually need in the world to make a difference as human beings and as people. We need to eradicate the meaningless in our lives. We need to focus on what we truly are without conditioning or expectation management. We need to rise above the competitive conditioning we have created in the world; where we live to be right and win all the time, without truly understanding the costs to ourselves, or where we compete on the basis of our gender. We need to replace the sense of emptiness with a sense of purpose and partnership and be able to live every day in a happier state.

I believe it is time to bury the battle between the sexes and the focus on gender and diversity in the narrow sense. We need advocates who support diversity in their home lives to bring these parts of themselves into the working environment. It is time for men and women to embrace and respect difference; to be powerful advocates for change, emotional intelligence, empathy, collaboration and the sharing economy. It is time to give new meaning to powerful, purpose-driven partnerships and unlocking our passions. I truly believe authenticity is the differentiator to unlock this.

## REFLECTIONS AND INSIGHTS

- Authenticity is about understanding the journey that shaped who you are; a journey into your past to discover what defines you.
- Doing what is expected of you will not unlock your passion and purpose.
- We need to replace gender diversity with diversity in the widest sense; including authenticity and allowing people to be the best they can be.
- Diversity of thought is required for our future challenges both from a customer and employee perspective.
- Greater diversity of thought is generated by allowing people to be the individuals they are and bringing all of themselves to every interaction.
- To replace the emptiness, we need to focus on who we are at a deeper internal level.
- We need to lose years of conditioning and honestly discover ourselves.
- The battle of the sexes is past and we need to move on.
- We need advocates, who bring their support for diversity in their private lives into the business environment.
- The world needs powerful advocates for diversity of thought, collaboration, emotional intelligence and purpose-driven partnerships.
- Authenticity is the new differentiator.







# 3

## **The State of Doing, Inauthenticity Revealed**

Battling the beasts; fear and ego



*Leave your pride, ego, and narcissism somewhere else. Reactions from those parts of you will reinforce your children's most primitive fears.*

**Henry Cloud**



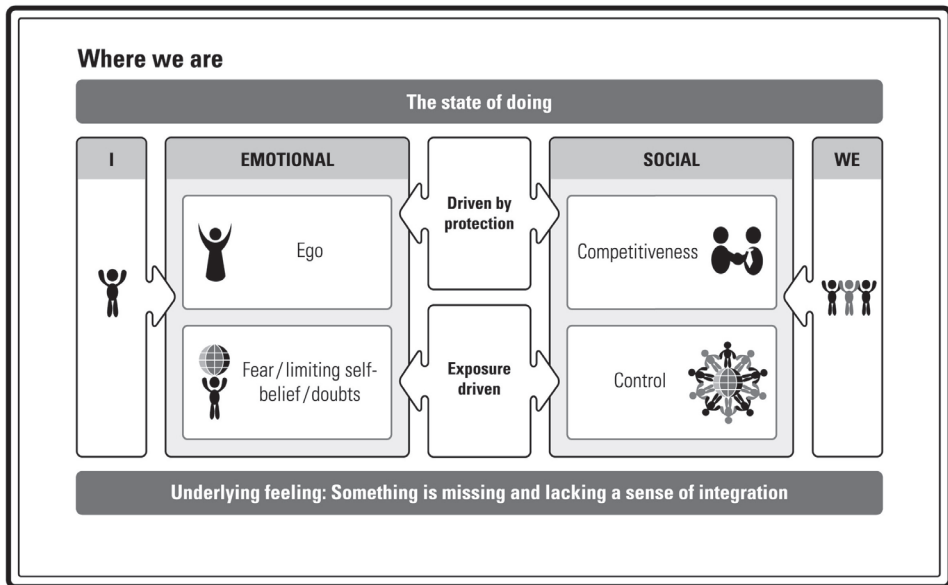
# 3

## iving in the state of doing

**L**In today's **fast paced** world, driven by technology and the need to be 'always switched on' and in contact with everyone, it is very easy to live in a continuous state of doing, as shown in the model on the following page. Our busy lives perpetuate this state characterised by:

- ego;
- fear;
- strong desires to compete;
- limiting self-beliefs we have cultivated over time;
- self-doubts we allow to reign in our minds;
- overall pride and control; and
- the drive to protect ourselves and to reduce our exposure.

## THE STATE OF DOING MODEL



Living permanently in this state of doing, holds us back from true happiness and from working together to solve world issues, business challenges and relationship problems in our lives. There is not enough quiet, within all the movement, between various places and the mind activity that has been created as a result of this continuous state.

We are driven by strong desires to compete with each other and protect our vulnerabilities from surfacing to ensure we are not exposed. This can be holding us back from a true connection with other people and from sharing who we really are.

For example, how many times have you walked away from an argument feeling it had escalated out of control? When you think 'If only I had not said that'. You cannot take back what was said in the heat of the moment. Being honest with yourself, you know there is no turning back and you went too far. What was said was driven by an overwhelming need to be right, because it gives us validation and we need to prove it continually throughout the conversation. Sometimes we are the greater person and we return later to apologise, other times we remain in the state of unfulfilled doing. We refuse to concede that we are wrong, we refuse to give in and a relationship is ruined forever. We

will continue to be defined by this state of doing; unless we become more self-aware and analyse our own behaviours to avoid self-destructive patterns, repeating in the future. The state of doing has a huge cost to our health and to our relationships and holds us back from reaching our true potential. It stands in the way of people working together authentically and achieving success. Luckily this state is a choice and we can make a conscious choice to change.

Sometimes, we are too afraid to openly admit when we have been hurt by another person and too afraid to share our feelings or vulnerabilities. But because of this, we are unable to truly connect with other people at a deeper level or to truly co-create to solve problems. There is always something standing in the way of our success. I believe this is driven by inauthenticity and the fact that we have not invested enough time in understanding ourselves. We are unconsciously being driven through our lives; doing; doing; and doing the next thing to be done.

## Ego

In psychological terms, Sigmund Freud defined the ego, the superego and id as the three constructs of the mental psyche. The id is uncoordinated and instinctual. The superego is more the moral and critical component and the ego mediates between the desires of the other parts.

The ego is the desire to always be in control and always have all the answers. It is never to show or share any vulnerabilities and it is typified by the desire to be right and prove that you are right at every opportunity. It creates a separation from other people that will not serve us in this new paradigm, where people want to consult, partner, share openly and connect with each other, to solve problems and find the answers to unlock a better future for everyone.

The ego is like a Teflon coating. It creates a hard impenetrable shell around us. It is a protection mechanism we use. You decide which comments you allow in for further assessment, or which you shake off 🙅 to ensure that the comments do not touch your core and attack the human being inside.

This ego holds us back from a deeper understanding of ourselves, as well as from a true connectedness with other people. These others can be our spouse, partner, family, children, friends and our colleagues. It is 'the thing'

that comes between us and limits us individually. It will be better for all of us when we become the watcher of our personal behaviours and habits and understand what drives and motivates us.

## Fear

Sometimes, the inauthenticity is revealed through deep fear; a fear of being caught out; or not being good enough; a fear of never getting to that position or place you aspire to reach. The fear drives us to hide who we really are, to avoid any exposure. Due to an overwhelming fear of failure we might decide never to try something new. Rather than try and fail, we succumb to the paralysis of doing nothing.

There are a number of questions that spring to mind when mentioning being truly authentic; these are similarly driven by an underlying fear and desire to hide your true self. I am convinced some of the following questions will already be in your thoughts.

- Will people find out that I am a fraud, if I am my true myself?
- Will people see that I am not nearly as in control or as good as I pretend to be?
- Will I be found out for not being clever enough, nor having all the answers?
- Will I fail if I do not play the game?
- Will I fail if I am authentically me?
- How will I be able to inspire other people, if they have a different set of values to me and it is all comes out in the open?
- How will I deal with that person I absolutely cannot stand and have no connection with?
- Will I be liked and accepted if I am myself?
- How can I truly be myself in the office?
- How can I do my job without being ridiculed or feeling that I do not really belong?
- How can I be authentic at work if nobody else is?

These are especially important and valid questions and can be exacerbated by a traditional corporate environment or certain cultural dimensions; where you need to be or to act a certain way to survive, thrive and climb the corporate ladder.

Through a deeper understanding of true authenticity, in all its elements, an individual can achieve POWER - an acronym for authenticity, including:

**P**resence;  
**O**vercoming fear;  
**W**hole integrated being;  
**E**ffortless flow; and  
**R**esonance.

When this happens, all these questions will become far less important. Undoubtedly, new questions will arise about how to continue the journey of self-discovery and how long it will take. Authenticity is a lifelong journey. As many people have said before me, if we are not learning or developing, we might as well be dead or stop breathing.

For those of us who are driven by fear or the ego, the thought of being authentic could trigger a response such as, "I will be exposed, people will know I am not that good, people will think I am a fraud." Once you have mastered turning off this fear, which comes from a deep set of behaviours cultivated through childhood and young adulthood, you will be free to see and be the true you.



*Ultimately we know deeply that the other side of every fear is freedom*

**Marilyn Ferguson**

I believe it is fear that holds us back. Some people believe that behind the greatest fear is the key to unlock your greatest potential. The fear is normally fed by our negative drivers or limiting self-beliefs. Examples of fears that I have regularly encountered, are the fear of being caught out and the imposter syndrome\* when you start a new job or get a promotion and you fear people will find out you cannot do it, you are not good enough. I have observed these common fears in people that have worked with me or friends I have met.

I have a great life coach, Gosia Gorna who has helped me to recognise that my greatest fears can unlock my greatest potential. By being playful with this fear and juxtaposing it with its polar opposite, I can unlock my true potential and start to create more congruence in my life. Exaggerating the fear makes it sound so laughable that it is absolutely impossible to feel it with the same intensity that I did before. My coach calls this the Expansion Game.

An example best describes the fear releasing process. When I was writing this book, I told my coach I was afraid I would not come up with anything original and therefore, I had an aversion to even try to write the book. We played the Expansion Game and it sounded as follows.

*"I allow myself to muck about, never get going, keep all my wisdom to myself, never write it down or in fact write it so badly that no one will be interested in ever reading it, and **I am really looking forward to it.**"*

*Take a deep breath.*

*I allow myself to be used as a channel for divine writing. I am inspired to write and the words flow through me onto paper without any holding back. I create something magical and am able to change and inspire many people with my writing, and **I am really looking forward to it.**"*

Using the phrase **I am really looking forward to it** helps to amplify the worst and the best of the fear, helps the energy flow and somehow makes it fun.

The process is repeated multiple times from the worst to the best, to minimise the fear you are feeling, unlock your potential and remove any resistance.

This process really worked for me, especially because I am not the type of person who can do nothing or mess around without achieving anything. It inspired me to try and embrace this wonderful thing behind my fear – to inspire other people with the concept of authenticity – in all its glorious elements. Better to have tried and inspired a few, than not to have tried at all.



*You can conquer almost any fear if you will only make up your mind to do so. For remember, fear doesn't exist anywhere except in the mind.*

Dale Carnegie

## Competitiveness

I am certain you have written an email to defend your position and to prove you are right. Or witnessed an argument where it appears like a tennis match. Each party has to prove a point, prove a counterpoint, prove another point and ensure that he or she wins or has the last say. All this competing activity or doing compounds to create a persona that is very far from the real you and your deepest inner calling. It compounds inauthenticity.

It is the desire to be right and continually prove it. From a very early age we are taught to be competitive. We are also taught that we should be good and not do what is naughty. I see it in my young daughter. When I try to explain a principle to her after something has gone wrong, she immediately assumes I am blaming her and tells me she did not do anything. I think this is one of those behaviours that we unconsciously transfer to our children, especially if they are in classes where they tell tales about each other when they do things wrong. A desire is bred to be right and not to be told off by anyone. In contrast, I try very hard to teach my daughter that it is about enjoying the process and not about winning. There are so many individuals who always want to have the last word to feel that they have been heard. They always have to show that they know more or have more experience.

I believe life will be much better if we all worked for the greater good. For example, in a company context: to win the business they seek; to deliver outstanding customer service; to have high employee engagement; to return extraordinary profits; and to make people happy while they are in the office.

What if we truly worked as a collective to solve issues and create returns for everyone; customers, shareholders and employees alike? Where the value we generated was measured by the value we achieve for customers, our fellow employees and the overall added value to the success of the company.

In contrast in reality, it is the opposite, a place where managers compete with each other, where they have team events to outshine each other and where being the most in control and right the most times, might make you feel the strongest and most worthy. At the very least, competing outside our own teams would be a great start to change.

There is nothing wrong with healthy competition, if competition is the purpose, for example, sport. It is only when it holds us back from our true potential that it becomes an unnecessary evil.

### **Limiting self-beliefs**

When I attended an international women's day event, one of the speakers mentioned she had been lucky to reach the position she held in the organisation. If you consider yourself merely lucky, you have not fully acknowledged that you deserve what you have achieved. You have achieved because you have the necessary skill and have worked hard to achieve it. Somehow, saying that you are merely lucky diminishes the impact of your self-worth and leads to the conclusion that you are filled with limiting self-beliefs and self-doubts.

I already mentioned my negative driver: "I am not good enough". This makes it relatively easy to make me feel undervalued by saying things that will press this reaction button. Having a high level of self-awareness has helped me to recognise when this button is being pushed. It brings the emotions I am feeling into my consciousness, which means I can better deal with it and recognise it for what it is; simply a button being pushed and not reality. It is my pseudo-reality built on years of 'head stuff' and dialogue within my own mind.

I know that many people might feel true authenticity will mean their vulnerabilities are exposed and they will be found out. Being your true self can lead people to believe that you have no confidence or you do not know what direction to take or which decision to make as a leader. However, it is much better to share some of these fears with your team or your loved ones, albeit

in a confident manner. This might be exactly what is needed for a working basis or relationship to be set in deeper trust. For example, sometimes in my corporate role, I did not know exactly the answer when the question was asked. I brainstormed the problem with my team or thought aloud and explained what I was doing and by doing this, we came to the correct decision together.

Inauthenticity and living in the state of doing, leads to a feeling of something constantly being missing. Do you sometimes feel that you do not fit in? Whether it is in the office or with a group of friends. You have everything going for you, a great job, a lovely supporting family and if you are really honest with yourself, you have most of what you could ask for, apart from the really extravagant things. Yet why do you still seem to be unsatisfied with your life? Why does it feel as if there is something missing from your life? There is always this feeling of wanting something else; the next holiday, the next material gift, the better position, something always out of reach, making you continuously strive for what it is that you cannot attain; the unattainable. And even if you miraculously reached it, it will still not be good enough.

I have a very good friend who is exactly in this situation. He has a wonderful family and a good position with a great company. However, he never seems to be satisfied. He loves to learn and continually challenges himself within his career, further developing his competencies and skills. Unfortunately, he has not found his purpose, neither has he found true inner peace or happiness. When we speak about what he wants to do next in his career, I have this distinct impression that he can take many different roles, but nothing really matters. He has defined himself by the next hierarchical level that he wants to reach in the organisation. My theory is there is no meaning in this for his true self and hence he is not really committed to do it or be it. His heart does not sing when he speaks about any of it and it seems that his passion has faded. He is always really excited before he has booked to go away on holiday. He dreams about it for weeks and enjoys it when he is there. But when he returns, he has nothing to look forward to and it seems as if a deep unhappiness settles back over him. We have discussed it together and agreed there is a certain meaning lacking in his life. He has agreed to explore this further on his own journey of growth and development.

Being more authentic, having a higher self-awareness and understanding what drives and motivates us, will certainly help with this deep feeling of

either emptiness, sadness or loneliness that we sometimes feel. Sometimes this feeling is only there when things go wrong, when someone pushes our buttons beyond the boundaries we have set. We are mostly not even aware of these buttons or our standard reactions.

### **Control**

We generally understand control as being to give direction, command or dominate someone or a situation. Some people do not like the feeling of being out of control or the feeling they are not able to direct or influence a specific situation. Control and the ego are very closely linked together. Control is prevalent in business and corporate life where leaders can feel they have lost control when they are not able to predict, pre-empt and manage situations effectively; especially when structures are hierarchical. This constant state of controlling means we cannot effectively collaborate with other people. We might be so busy controlling a situation we lose sight of the higher purpose of the interaction, the greater good that needs to be created for the benefit of the individuals and the organisation. While we are controlling situations within our responsibility of work or relationships without thought for the higher purpose we might make decisions that are good for us but don't support the greater need of the organisation. Leaders can make short-term decisions for their own areas, which impact the greater whole, for example short-term profit decisions. In relationships we might want to directly control the outcome of a conversation; how an action is taken and this can impact the long-term success of the relationship overall. When we are consistently ensuring every situation is controlled, we might be unconsciously dominant and commanding.

This holds us back from true collaboration and connecting with other people in a deeper and more meaningful way. In Chapter 7, you can read about letting go of the need to control, to enable a higher level of connectedness to other people.

It is these interactions and inauthentic relationships built on ego, control, fear, competitiveness and limiting self-beliefs that are holding us back from true happiness; holding us back from being our true selves and living in congruence with our true purpose and passion. We need to move to the state of being if we really want to bring about change in our lives. The cornerstone of the state of being is authenticity, in all its elements and dimensions.

## REFLECTIONS AND INSIGHTS

- We live in a state of doing.
- The state is characterised by the ego, fear, competitiveness, limiting self-belief, control and exposure.
- The Authenticity POWER model can help us to move to a new state; being.
- The ego is about being in control and it protects us.
- Immediate fears and immediate questions relating to authenticity are normal.
- Behind our biggest fear lies our greatest potential.
- The Expansion Game created by Gosia Gorna can release our fears.
- We learn to compete from an early age.
- Healthy competition channelled for good is fine.
- Limiting self-beliefs are a product of our mind.
- There is something missing in our lives; something always out of our reach.
- We can move towards eliminating the missing void by gaining a deeper understanding of ourselves and our connections with other people.
- Authenticity is the cornerstone of the state of being.





# 4

## **The Authenticity POWER Model**

The origins and model revealed



*Authenticity is a collection of choices we have to make every day. It's about the choice to show up and be real. The choice to be honest. The choice to let our true selves be seen.*

**Brené Brown**



# 4

**A**uthenticity has been around for a long time. When I mention the word to some people, I sometimes receive the response that it is a well-used word especially by corporate people. I believe authenticity is what every person needs more of to be truly happy. The word needs a rebirth to do it justice, give it full impact and meaning and to ensure we live authentically as we are destined to.

## **From where did authenticity emerge?**

Authenticity can be traced back to ancient Greek philosophy. It focuses on the development of the core or cardinal virtues. These virtues are as follows.

- Prudence: fair-mindedness, wisdom, seeing all possible courses of action.
- Temperance: being emotionally balanced and in control.
- Justice: being fair in dealings with other people.
- Fortitude: courage to do the right thing.

Online research defines authentic leadership through four elements.

- Self-awareness: the leader continually reflects and evaluates their strength, weaknesses, and values.

- Relational Transparency: the leader openly shares thoughts and beliefs, while balancing inappropriate or unnecessary emotions.
- Balanced Processing: the leader draws out opposing views from other people and considers all aspects in a balanced way.
- Internalised Moral Perspective: the leader exhibits a positive ethical foundation in all relationships and decisions and is resistant to outside influences or pressure.

When I talk about authenticity, people have a slightly different understanding or definition of the word and mostly they only scratch the surface of what authenticity truly is and what it is not. They normally refer only to self-awareness and the ethics, values and purpose-driven leadership. Two very key aspects are normally missing. These are the relationships with other people and the balanced way in which we should make decisions. Better purpose-driven collaboration and the creation of more truly effective partnerships is often left out.

Bill George, the former Medtronic\* Chief Executive Officer and Harvard Professor, pioneered the concept of Authenticity and Authentic Leadership as a tool to find your purpose. His two books, *Your True North* and *Authentic Leadership*, were a guiding light for many people. He created the Institute of Authenticity in the 1990s, in America, where he provides training on leadership, purpose and helping teams and individuals to relate to this. His books and the Institute were a reaction to the unethical behaviour of business at that time.

### **Authenticity for all; everyone, everywhere**

I do not want to focus on authenticity as a leadership model because I believe many people feel excluded if I use the term leader. However, I believe every person is a leader in elements of his or her life. If we really think about it, we are either leaders or followers in everything we do. Unless you are living totally on your own and never connecting with another human being, you are either supporting a concept as a follower during your interactions, or being a leader. And when we are doing either, we can be authentic within that process. Either it is telling someone else exactly what we think when they are trying to persuade us to buy into something and we do not agree or do not understand. Or when we are trying to take people along with us or convince them of something we believe in, it is being totally truthful in what we are saying. This goes for

all our interactions and relationships with partners, spouses, work colleagues, children, friends and family.

You do not need to be in a leadership position to be drawn to the principles of authenticity and authentic leadership. I have been drawn to it during various interactions at engagements and events, where I have found myself sucked into inauthentic conversations and I have not wanted to engage for fear of directly saying that I have a different opinion and ruining relationships that are important for some greater future need.

Being authentic means being yourself in all facets of life. I know you might ask who am I and what do I really stand for? What defines me? Normally, we are defined by the following.

- Values
- Morals
- Set of ethics, especially when dealing with other people
- Behaviours
- Positive and negative drivers
- Experiences

## What authenticity is not

- The ingrained judgements we have of other people; this is learnt behaviour.
- Unconscious biases built up over time.
- An excuse to be rude or offensive.
- Our limiting self-beliefs or self-doubts.
- The reality of the negative thoughts created by and in our minds.

With authenticity comes a higher level of self-awareness and a search to continually develop and understand ourselves even better. This means that it is not an excuse to say, "This is who I am" or "Accept me as I am. It is my way and no compromise". It means that we can use our developed self-awareness to understand the unconscious biases we have or the conditioning we have chosen from our history. I use the word chosen in this context quite lightly to honour our non-awareness. It is only when you continually strive for more understanding of yourself that you really get to the heart of this conditioning and see it for what it is.

## Authenticity and culture

Depending on the culture of where you live, authenticity can also be more or less lived. For example, in some cultures people are very polite and do not want to offend. When this is the case, it is quite hard to read the underlying messages. Without direct, open communication, inauthenticity can be prevalent through the eyes of the beholder. There are some situational cultures that even thrive on duplicity, for example, politics. Therefore, it is also important to view authenticity within a situational context. I have noticed in my interactions from living in South Africa, Germany and the UK, that some cultures are perceived as too direct and others as too duplicitous. It always depends on perspective and a multitude of facets, for example, upbringing, intercultural awareness and adaptability. Luckily, being more authentic means a higher level of awareness, of yourself and others. Therefore, attaining this more conscious state will help you to recognise these underlying 'situations' in different cultures more easily.

## Authenticity at work

It is not the mask I used to wear when I went to work in my corporate role or the mask I wear for the interactions that I dread; when I pretend to be something I am not, for other people to feel more confident about me or comfortable with me. It is not what I am able to deliver, my thoughts or my patterns of learned behaviour from my past. It is not the impacts from my childhood or other interactions where my ego has won the battle and can claim that it is right and in control of the situation.

Being authentic within a corporate environment will always pose a harder question. When signing up to a company culture, the questions are, "Am I defining myself by this culture? Can I be myself within this culture?"

For example, my friend Penny joined a company on a scholarship programme and spent almost two decades in the same organisation. Unfortunately, the gender balance in this organisation was stacked against her and its limitations only became apparent much later. She took on the persona of the ideal leader; an ego-based, corporate climber who needed to be severely polished; as shiny as the product. It is no surprise when starting to lead a team, empathy for her team was one of her crucial learnings and her supportive leadership skills

started to shine through. This situation confused her immensely, because the ego became threatened by the supportive, empathetic side of her character.

Another crucial learning for her, was not to judge other people for their shortcomings or for not attaining her excruciating high standards. When another more senior manager turned up late, without prior notice for meetings she had organised, it locked her in a grudge for days to come. He did not share her commitment, her values and her dedication, but he was more senior in the organisational hierarchy. How can this be? There are several learnings in this example. Do not measure yourself by the standards of other people and simply, do not judge because it causes negativity. The more you hold on to negativity, the more negativity you attract. It has taken Penny a long time to realise the underlying power of being herself and ignoring the advice of how she was supposed to be, to fit in.

You might be asking: "What if I want to keep my work persona hidden or safe from who I am privately, being inauthentic every day, to get by and fit in". The energy required for this continual pretence will leave you exhausted and is probably why we have increased underlying stress, mental illness and wellbeing issues today. When you work incongruently and in misalignment with who you are, it causes issues. It pushes you close to the edge where you cannot achieve your highest potential and you become exhausted and unhappy. Close to the edge means when we are tired or feel trapped in an environment. Times when we are not sure how to motivate ourselves to go to work or get ourselves out of the situation. When everything feels stacked against us. When we feel we cannot get it right and everyone or everything turns out to be negative or things do not go our way. I was close to this edge when I delivered the project mentioned in Chapter 2. I will expand on this example later in the book because it truly unlocked several new self-realizations.

## Rebirth and redefinition

The importance and real need for authenticity has developed more rapidly during the last two decades. I have already mentioned the following changes that will require a new way of thinking.

- The power of social media and the interconnectedness of the world.
- The way the new generation naturally connects with each other and lives more openly.

- The abilities defining human beings above robots.
- Feminine traits required for happiness and leadership in the future.
- A new sharing economy, where partnerships drive a deeper purpose; not only profit.

These changes are driving a higher need for authenticity and true meaning in our lives. Authenticity is now more relevant than ever before. The key to authenticity **it** is not only in our awareness of ourselves but also in the awareness of other people. Although the focus used to be on purpose, passion and values at the core of authenticity, other elements are now emerging to the forefront and becoming more relevant.

We should focus not only on ourselves but also on other people and our connections with them to unlock true authenticity. It is time to acknowledge a more conscious approach of ourselves and with other people. We need to understand our interactions and effects on other people as we connect with them; learning to accept difference more readily and suspend old judgements.

The need for more meaningful connections with other people and our purpose is becoming an imperative. We need to be more emotionally intelligent to keep pace and start acknowledging that social intelligence is just as important. We must cultivate our intuition and find our common purpose to give new meaning to how we connect and relate with each other.

The model I have developed will show you where consciousness and connectedness collide; where intuition and purpose are at the heart of everything we are and do.

Authenticity redefined by this rebirth is about the following aspects.

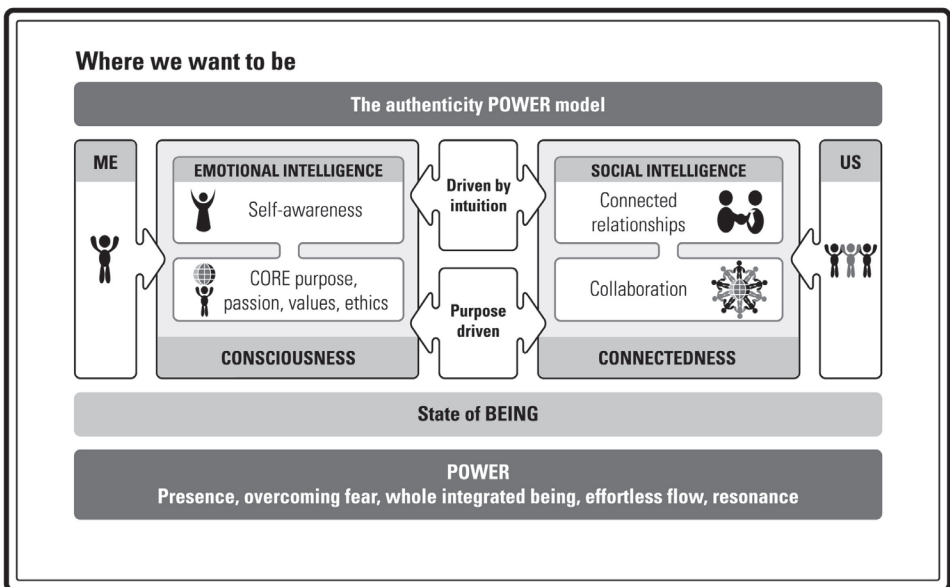
- The Me and Us **d**imensions.
- In the Me **d**imension, we focus on the elements of self-awareness and what is at our core – purpose, passion, value and ethics. In this dimension, we have higher emotional intelligence and are more conscious.
- In the Us **d**imension, we focus on the elements of connected relationships and collaboration. In this dimension, we have higher

social intelligence and a more meaningful connection with other people.

- By engaging with all the elements and dimensions, we enter a state of being.
- The state of being provides us with POWER; an acronym for authenticity as redefined.

One element without the other three will mean missing a part of the whole. I explain the elements as I have encountered them and I feel they can be adapted to the new world we live in.

## THE AUTHENTICITY POWER MODEL



## Being more self-aware

This is the journey to discovering who you truly are, what drives you, what motivates you and what helps you to inspire other people in your **day to day** interactions. It is also about becoming aware of your unconscious biases and core behaviours and staring them in the face, to recognise them for what they are – sometimes decades or centuries (if passed on from your forefathers) of conditioning. This is about learning to let go of your ego and connecting to the inner self.

## **The core of you and your true purpose**

This is finding the heart of you as a human being; finding your true purpose and unlocking it through assessing your values, beliefs, ethics and your passion. Finding the elements that make you feel alive and resonate in alignment with your core. Some people refer to it as finding what makes your heart sing. It is embracing and moving towards the fear that holds us back, to unlock our true potential.

## **Being you, true to yourself and truly connecting with people around you**

This is sharing who you are with those people you lead and encounter in business and in organisations or in your day-to-day interactions. It is not conforming but being able to keep yourself as a separate self and adopting a stance to survive in environments in discord to the self. It is deciding to actually leave these environments because they require too much energy and effort. It is being brave; having the courage of your convictions; sharing who you are openly with those people around you, even when you are a leader. It is bringing your whole self to work and to all your interactions; especially the dealings with other people. It is creating a connectedness to other human beings without being competitive or being driven by underlying fears or limiting self-beliefs. It is being comfortable to share and show your vulnerabilities without the fear of being exposed.

## **Purposeful collaboration**

This is the ability to evaluate in a balanced manner and go beyond your own thinking and conditioning. It is about purpose-driven collaboration; to honour different perspectives and take them into account when making decisions. It is about diversity of thought; to ensure you have reached the best result, to use all possible skills or information to your advantage. To suspend judgement, respect differences and accept others for what they are. As the leader of your own life, you will always make the final decision, sometimes fast, sometimes with time to consult, sometimes using your gut feeling or intuition. In these cases, it is about being honest with yourself and those people around you.

Even if the truth is hard, or contains an unpleasant message, it is important to explain it to other people. It provides them with the ability to understand our perspective.

Authenticity is the road to the true self and true happiness. It will unlock doing everything more effortlessly and create a new level of balance and integration in your life. It is a journey of self-discovery and not an instantaneous fix. It will raise your level of awareness. You will gradually start to gain a deeper understanding of your true self and develop further over time. This journey needs to be assessed constantly with continued questioning: to understand the being within, master the power over the ego and battle the inner beast.



*The best way to change it is to do it. Right? And then after a while you become it, and it's easy.*

Ursula Burns

## Alignment and congruence

When we behave and lead in true authenticity and in congruence with our core, we can enjoy life and our jobs without the fatigue of the daily slog or rut, without the need to conform totally to what other people want or need from us.

We should demand to work in environments where we can be ourselves, this will bring out the best in us and allow us to be truly creative. Once we are more attuned to ourselves, it will become a right to be able to be that person; everywhere in every interaction to increase our wellbeing and our mental health.

Due to the changing demands from an ever faster changing world and the interconnectedness of work and life, we will no longer strive for simply balance. We can instead strive for a seamless integration of worlds; where

there is no necessity to switch a persona or to put on a new mask. This will be a space where you can seamlessly shift and integrate the two worlds (work and life) to one harmonious level of positive energy; a place where you can truly be yourself.

By demanding more consciousness from ourselves, we will also demand it from business around us. No business can be authentic if it does not also consider the world around it – planet, profit and people. More conscious business does not mean business will forsake its profit objective. However, it will consider doing business in a more sustainable way for the world and our collective future. Business will be more connected to its purpose, stakeholders, people and the world around it. Being able to adapt faster to change to deliver what its customers or clients of the future need.

Combining the two sides of the model means we are both conscious and connected and can move into the state of being, where:

- we love life to the fullest and can be truly happy and fulfilled;
- we do not dread interactions most of the time or feel tired and without purpose or direction; and
- we do not compromise who we are just to fit in, get a job done or please other people.

This state of being leads to our authentic POWER, which you will read about in Chapter 9. This POWER will give you confidence and help you to be more truly yourself. You will be able to bring your whole self to work and to all the interactions and relationships you have. When you find that you do not fit the values of the organisation, you will have every reason to leave or disengage and pursue what makes you feel whole or better about yourself. If the people you are interacting with are grating against your core, you will find more meaningful relationships that sustain your energy and bring your passions to life.

## REFLECTIONS AND INSIGHTS

- Authenticity is for everyone living and leading within individual lives.
- Authenticity plays a role everywhere in life, not just at work, or as a leader.
- Authenticity needs a rebirth to have more meaning in challenging times.
- The Authenticity POWER Model provides clarity on all the elements necessary for the rebirth of authenticity.
- There are four key elements to focus on, not only purpose, values and passion.
- We need to demand more authenticity from ourselves and from those around us to be happy and to have more fulfilling relationships.
- The two sides of the model at interplay are consciousness and connectedness.
- Business also needs to be more connected and conscious.
- The authenticity rebirth is key to shifting into the state of being.
- The state of being, leads to POWER and a more successful you.





# 5

## The **ME** Dimension: Self-awareness

An attitude to life-long learning



*To improve is to change. To be perfect is to change often.*

**Winston Churchill**



# 5

**T**he element most crucial to authenticity, without which we cannot start the journey to a more meaningful life, is a deep understanding of self-awareness. Without self-awareness there is no foundation for the other elements of the model to follow. Self-awareness is the key to a higher level of emotional intelligence and the dimension of consciousness referred to as the Me **d**imension. Achieving a higher degree of self-awareness will unlock all the other parts of the model and is integral to the journey into the state of being.

## What is self-awareness?

The common perception today is that self-awareness is the capacity to look inside ourselves and to realise we are separate individual entities from those people around us and from the environment we live in. It is the skill of being able to cultivate a deeper understanding of ourselves; an understanding of what drives and motivates us and on the flip side, what can put us into a negative state. It is to know and acknowledge our behaviours, recognise patterns and to be able to 'jump over our own shadow'.

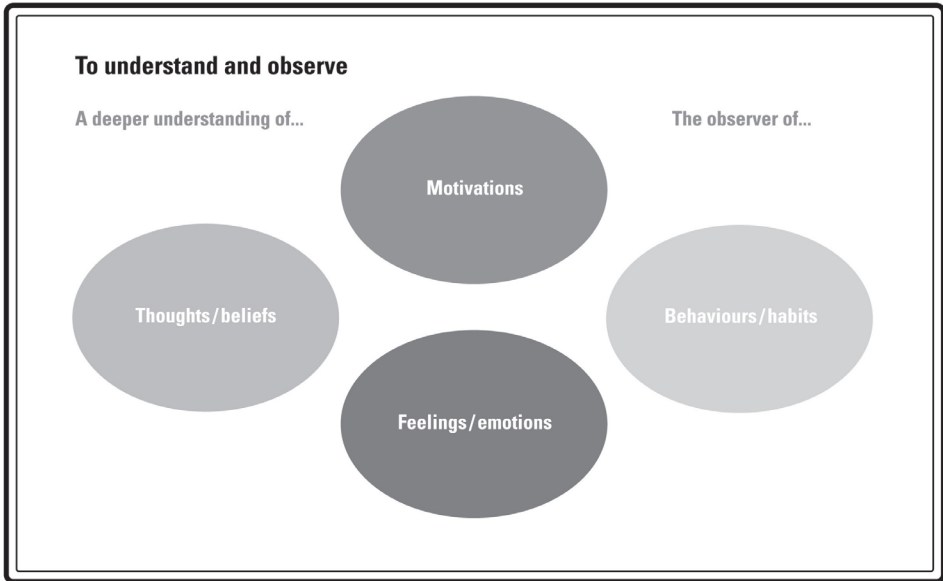
I have observed senior leaders who are not able to live with a certain measure of uncertainty. In leadership and business **w**e refer to the 80/20 principle. The more senior you become, the more willing you need to be to go with an

overarching positive gut feeling. If I am 80% sure of the content and accuracy, I need to be comfortable with the other 20% being less certain. I have observed many senior managers who really struggle with this concept. For example, I might know I always need to check everything four or five times, which borders on the obsessive side. But the skill in managing this effectively is to acknowledge I have this pattern of behaviour, actively identify it when it happens and then ultimately to be able to reduce the behavioural impact it has on me. This means that in the future I will only have to check once or twice and be able to accept the discomfort that follows and become more comfortable with it over time. It means jumping over my shadow and learning to live with the 20% uncertainty.

Another example is when I have a conversation with a colleague that goes horribly wrong and I feel the need to repeat elements of the conversation to four or five friends or colleagues, analysing the situation beyond reason. Firstly, I need to recognise this as a constant need to repeat the same thing and that the repeats impact my mood. It does not help me to resolve anything and it actively increases the judgement I feel towards the other person. This is especially relevant when other people add their own negative experiences and interactions into the conversations. It is also important for me to realise the behavioural pattern that is going on and to keep any conversations that follow really short. In this way, I minimise the negative feelings and judgements from consuming me. I have realised it is far better for me to have one or two shorter conversations because they can provide me with distance and perspective. Secondly, I need to move on and close the issue by using a daily journaling technique.

In essence, achieving self-awareness is a process, which can help us to develop ourselves beyond our own learned behaviours, patterns and mind activity. The following diagram shows we can increase our self-awareness by observing ourselves and by gaining a deeper understanding of patterns that emerge. When we observe our behaviours and habits, our thoughts and beliefs, we gain a deeper understanding of what drives and motivates us, or which feelings and emotions are triggered by certain events.

## TO UNDERSTAND AND OBSERVE



## Understand self-awareness

Achieving self-awareness is becoming the observer or watcher of our behaviour, thoughts and triggers and gaining a deeper understanding of ourselves. When we are able to notice the same repeated patterns of our behaviour, these move into our consciousness and we become more aware of them. When this awareness sinks in, we are able to have less unconsciously driven behaviour with our loved ones, friends and colleagues.

When we observe the behaviours, we need not judge them, we can silently recognise them, saying to ourselves: "Oh, there is that same pattern again".

This helps us to move through life towards the state of being. We will consciously start acknowledging behaviours and drivers and this helps us to choose how we want to react in a certain way. It sometimes helps to ask: "Why did I do that?" or "Did I really want to do that?" or "Did I really intend the consequences of what I said and did?" Being the observer leads to a deeper understanding of our motivations, thoughts, beliefs, behaviours, habits, feelings and emotions, to attain a greater understanding of why we do things the way we do. Being

the observer helps to unlock old patterns of behaviour and consciously provides a different choice. Do we want to continue on a certain path or do we want to change?

### Analysis of emotion and motivation

It is meaningful and increases our self-awareness when we analyse our emotions or feelings and understand what our motivations are behind engaging or not engaging in different situations.

For example, society can dictate our conditioning around certain behaviours and emotions such as crying. In corporate life we know that we are not allowed to cry because it is seen as a sign of losing control or weakness. Boys who cry show weakness while little girls are allowed to cry. I teach my daughter it is fine to cry. I also ask her why she is upset and help her understand what has made her sad. I want her to understand the connection between the tears, the emotions she is feeling and what caused them.

My emotions normally come at me in waves. I need to pay attention when I feel tears welling up because my body wants me to recognise something. You can read more about the tsunami of tears that occur when I continuously ignore my emotions in Chapter 7.

Achieving self-awareness is attaining a greater understanding and how we can better regulate or change our behaviour. It is to better understand how we behave in certain scenarios, how we make decisions, how we lead other people, what motivates and de-motivates us and how we can inspire other people through our interactions with them. It is noticing and understanding these repeated patterns of behaviour or arguments for what they truly are – repeat conditioning.

For example, I compare these behaviours to when I drive a car. I sometimes reach my destination without being aware of the exact actions and encounters on the way there. I went through the motions of driving without being truly conscious or aware of every moment, turn or the other cars around me.



*Any fool can know. The point is to understand.*

Albert Einstein

## The essence of self-awareness

Achieving self-awareness is a journey into a greater understanding of ourselves and our limiting self-beliefs, our positive and negative drivers and how other people see us. It is a constant battle to recognise the inner beasts, the ego and fear. We embark on this journey to personally develop ourselves and achieve a higher level of consciousness. For example, with a higher level of self-awareness I recognise I am not the voice in my head and I gain a deeper understanding and awareness of other people, which enables me to create more meaningful connections as I recognise my own patterns of behaviour more clearly. In time, I also start to recognise patterns of behaviour in others.

## The journey of development and greater understanding

Achieving self-awareness is a journey into individual experiences, including life's traumas and how they have shaped and moulded each one of us.

Attaining this level of self-awareness is a lifetime journey. It is definitely not achievable in a moment or a single fix or even as a list with attached boxes to tick. At the centre of attaining self-awareness is regular self-reflection to conquer the underlying fear, which you read about in Chapter 3.

The most positive change we need to adopt is to recognise the fear or ego behaviour when it arises and to understand why we feel fearful or the need to control or win. We need to understand that the ego state is normal and recognition holds the key to our higher self-awareness.

For example, my husband washed one of my shirts and it came out of the wash with two bleach blotches on the back. When he showed me the shirt,

we argued for about two minutes about who had got the bleach on the shirt. At first my ego wanted to be right and defend my position. 'I did not do it' and I wanted to blame him. Luckily alarm bells of recognition went off in my head and I recognised my own behavioural pattern and that it actually was not important. The shirt was not worth having an argument about and was easily replaceable. There was no point in trying to determine who was at fault in this situation and there was no gain in blaming anyone for it.

Have you ever told your spouse about something, to be told a few days later: "But you never told me that." In this situation there is actually no party who will ever win. It is better to acknowledge something went wrong and try harder next time to fix the problem using better planning. For example, when I will be later home in the evening, I now write a note and put it on the fridge. It is a bit more effort, but no one can argue afterwards that I did not tell them.

The journey to reach self-awareness goes deeper and becomes more meaningful over time. It is as though a bit more of the puzzle is revealed every time we make a new discovery. Every time we notice the behaviour again, it is as if something new is revealed, a small detail showing us there is more to discover and understand about ourselves. For example, I recognise the limiting behaviour in myself first and in turn can see it in other people. By being revealed in small incremental segments, these underlying traits and beliefs, over time, allow a greater understanding of the whole. This greater understanding of ourselves gives us the ability to help other people. We can help them see for themselves and develop, while being there for them and supporting them on their own journey of discovery.

However, we are each of us responsible to develop ourselves. No one else can do this for us or create the desire to understand ourselves better. Some people spend a lifetime of bliss, through ignorance and this is what makes them happy. They are not to be judged by us if we want more from life, are more self-aware or want to deeply understand the true self and the triggers driving us each and every day.



*Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.*

**Mahatma Gandhi**

## The voice in our head

Many people have a constant monologue in their head; an inner voice, which assesses their actions and rates it as good enough or not good enough or ignites their limiting self-beliefs. Although, I have confidence in my abilities and what I can achieve, I notice this voice often. I have also started to link the voice to an underlying feeling or emotion. The types of emotions I recognise are linked to my negative thoughts, including sadness and fear.

For example, I reached out to a contact I had met at a conference, via a LinkedIn message. I had resigned my position as Chief Financial Officer and was working my notice period. I wanted to make her aware of my future plans and explore whether there was an opportunity for commonality or working together, although I had no idea what working together looked like. I had headed the message: 'Exciting news, authenticity redefined'. She responded with a very short email saying she would like to meet but she wanted to make sure she brought the right counterparts to the meeting. I focussed on the negative aspects of her short email and for two days I was uncertain how to answer her. I was afraid she did not really want to meet me and I failed to focus on the fact that she was fine to meet and simply wanted to clarify the content. Of course, I was letting my limiting self-beliefs reign free.

Finally, I decided to reveal all and tell her I had resigned from my corporate role and I was writing a book about authenticity and wanted to meet her as a fellow female entrepreneur to share our experiences. She came back instantly saying how courageous I was and her email was warm and friendly.

The importance of this story is that I chose to listen to my limiting self-beliefs and I allowed the fear to rise. This was actually unnecessary and my negative

emotions were unfounded. This was a lesson for me on my journey, to observe my behaviour next time and refer back to the positive conclusion and choose a different state of being and way forward.

Watch out for this voice and the limiting effects it can have on us. It can limit our achievements and impact on the results we are able to deliver. Noticing and recognising it is the first step to overpowering it and becoming a more conscious and self-aware individual. Recognise the voice and tell it there is no place or use for it within your world. This is the second step to freeing ourselves from its power and providing us with different choices.

### **Awareness of other people**

As I mentioned, understanding ourselves better will gradually lead to a greater awareness of other people. We can more easily recognise patterns in other people and in particular those with similar afflictions to our own. For example, despite my negative driver, I have a lot of confidence. However, many individuals with a lack of self-confidence suffer from one or more limiting self-beliefs. Many books have been written about the psychology behind negative drivers or limiting self-belief, which is also known as an assessment of your state of mind.

I have led many managers with limiting self-beliefs. I have also met managers with the same 'not good enough' trigger as me at the heart of their limiting self-belief. I coach a leader with this exact trigger. I help her to recognise when something goes wrong, she always reverts to her limiting self-belief; that she is not good enough or has done something wrong. She asked me to help her with a situation where she had discussed a presentation for a committee with her boss. He had raised no concerns and they pre-agreed a recommendation before he attended the meeting. However, in the meeting he changed his mind and decided to raise an objection that he had not discussed with her. Instead of analysing his behaviour, she immediately thought of what she must have done wrong and how other people would perceive her. Her thoughts went along the following lines: other people would think she had not discussed the options with him properly; or she had not done her job properly; or they would have expected her to warn them that he might raise an objection. However, because I know my behaviour and negative drivers well and can recognise these in her behaviour, I was able to offer her a different perspective. Her boss always

changes his mind, he always raises topics that he has not discussed with her in meetings, even if she has prepared him and he has not raised concerns. After pointing this out, she recognised her own behaviour and saw new solutions in dealing with him. She simply needed to make her counterparts aware that she aligns topics with him; that he sometimes changes his mind; and they need to be prepared for this behaviour following a committee meeting. After our discussion she felt better about herself and more prepared for future interactions with her boss and her colleagues.

Another example is a friend of mine who never asks for help. Her father died when she and her sister were young adults. Her mother was so overcome with dealing with her own grief that there was a period where she could not comfort or console her daughters. My friend recognised she had to be strong and be the one person they could rely on. She took responsibility for the duties in the house and started to care for her mother and sister during this period.

She never asked for help and became fiercely independent. My friend now has her own family and has faced medical challenges of her own. Through this process she has recognised her inability to ask for help and she is more actively aware of her behaviour and how it positively and negatively impacts on her and other people. I was able to help her recognise this behaviour and we sometimes make a joke of it; that I can help her when she does not ask for help. When we share our experiences and our reactions, we can move away from limiting ourselves and focus on our positive potential instead.

## Using self-reflective questions to unlock and develop self-awareness

When you think about self-awareness, there are several significant questions to consider which have amazing strength.

*Who am I today and what has shaped me to be this person?*

*What shaped me at a deeper level?*

*What are my negative drivers/triggers? What are my positive drivers?*

*What are my limiting self-beliefs? Which repeat patterns of behaviour do I display?*

*Which unconscious biases do I possibly have?*

Think about the following questions and ask yourself how they apply to you and your life and highlight your qualities, feelings and emotions that are unlocked by asking these questions. I have answered the questions using examples.

### ***Who am I today and what has shaped me to be this person?***

In this question, focus on who you are today and where you came from. Think about the different roles you play in your life, as a child, sibling, partner, parent. In your working life, what role do you fulfil and does this link to your aspirations? How do you perceive yourself and your unique qualities?

*For example*

*I have a colleague who is a wonderful mother and wife. She is also a daughter. Her relationship with her mother has defined many aspects of her life. Some of her limiting self-beliefs have been defined by this relationship, especially the feeling that she is sometimes not good enough. Her own relationship with her daughter is totally different, loving and supportive. She made a huge effort to define her relationship with her daughter in a different way.*

### ***What shaped me at a deeper level?***

When you answer this question, it is important to go to a deeper level and ask what has shaped and defined you. Think about the most significant events in your life and times you felt strong emotions; have these created limiting self-beliefs or behaviours that you can recognise in yourself. These can be positive or negative events that have influenced who you are today.

*For example*

*I have a friend whose father died at an early age, when she was still at school. She became a survivor. She always felt she didn't fit in after this event. She felt more mature than the other girls. She also felt lonely because of the event; it differentiated her from her friends. What seemed so important to them, felt insignificant to her.*

### ***What are my negative drivers/triggers? What are my positive drivers?***

Attaining self-awareness is about understanding the influences and experiences that can drive us positively, can make us happy and can cause us negativity and desperation - if we allow them free reign for too long. Understanding this fully is the core to understanding our positive and negative drivers. Identify what your core negative and drivers are.

An example of a negative driver: 'I am not good enough.'

An example of a positive driver: 'I can do anything I set my mind to.'

*For example*

The negative driver 'I am not good enough' fostered itself somewhere in my childhood. After my brother died in a car accident, my father basically gave up on life. It was a long and arduous process as he became ill over time. This was a very difficult time and gave rise to the negative driver. At a very subconscious level I felt I was not important enough for him to stay and take care of my mother and me. Hence we were not good enough and more specifically I could not make him stay; therefore not good enough. This negative driver will cause negativity and despair if triggered in situations unless I recognise it for what it is – a limiting self-belief. It is crucial to recognise the power it has over my emotions and my state of mind. In the first instance it is not to conquer but rather to gain a very deep understanding that helps me to be aware of patterns of thinking and feeling and then to change them over time. Psychologists would consider this going from unconscious incompetence to conscious competence because of the deeper understanding it unlocks. The pattern of behaviour is now in my conscious mind. I am more aware. I am able to recognise the behaviour or pattern of behaviours more clearly.

It took me a long time to recognise the 'I am not good enough' button. Once I recognised it and unpacked the origin or trigger, it became easier and easier for me to recognise in my behaviour and in the underlying emotions I feel. I always tend to feel similarly miserable when this button is pushed and therefore it is easier to recognise as the button, by concentrating on the emotion.

**What are my limiting self-beliefs? Which repeat patterns of behaviour do I display?**

It is important to recognise your negative drivers/triggers because they create and perpetuate your limiting self-beliefs. For example, when your negative driver is 'I am not good enough' your immediate response to a new task may be: "Will I be able to do this?"

*For example*

The following situation faced Jake at work. During an eight year period he had three new bosses, who each questioned why things were done in a certain way. Every time he had a new boss, it triggered his feelings of not being good enough;

*until he was able to recognise it. The continual questions made him wonder if he had done something wrong and the 'not good enough trigger' was activated. His behaviour that followed the trigger was always a need to discuss with other colleagues what had happened and what he should have done differently. Jake had countless conversations in the period following each new boss, obsessing about what happened, why the boss was questioning everything and how it made him feel. As it happened within a short space, three times, it was easier for him to recognise the behaviour and actively start a conscious shift within himself.*

### ***Which unconscious biases do I possibly have?***

At a deeper level, achieving self-awareness is to truly understand our own unconscious bias and the beliefs we unconsciously hold to be true. For example, our brain makes judgements and assessments within a split second of meeting new people and being in a new situation, based on our background, cultural environment and our personal experiences. We all grow up with certain stereotypes and are affected by biases. To understand the deeply ingrained judgements we have, or that have been passed onto us through generations, we need to think about raising our awareness and actively understanding what these biases are. However, our unconscious bias is hidden and needs to be exposed to be understood for what it really is – mostly learned behaviour and judgements built over time.

*For example*

*Joan met Mary, a new contact on the telephone after an introduction by a colleague. They immediately connected at a deeper level and wrote each other emails commenting on how they wanted to meet soon and discuss common topics. A few weeks later, Joan went to a conference and found out Mary would also attend. Joan asked the organisers to point her out so they could meet personally. Hanging about in the foyer, Joan waited for the introduction, she noticed the organiser approach a woman and mention her name to Mary. In this moment, one of Joan's unconscious biases emerged because she evaluated how Mary was dressed, her hairstyle and the colour of her hair. Joan's instantaneous thoughts were that Mary cannot be the same person.*

The important fact is Mary and Joan would probably never have had this exciting conversation and connection if they were standing in a room and had to choose to talk to each other based on their physical appearances. We are all driven by ingrained biases built through the decades of our lives. When we

identify these biases as conscious thoughts, we can actively rise above them. We do not want our biases to hold us back from a deeper connection with other people and an ability to learn from truly amazing people. We want to adapt and change and be able to interact with people we normally would not, to broaden our minds and have a more rich and diverse life.

It is useful to make a list of what you think your biases are and identify any during your daily interactions, especially when meeting new people.

## Self-awareness profiling test

A good way to start discovering your level of self-awareness is to take an online self-awareness profiling test. For example, the *KEIRSEY Temperament Sorter* or personality instrument, which is easy to follow.

Achieving true self-awareness is reaching a higher sensitivity to our behaviours and awareness of our inner drivers, a realisation of our thoughts and feelings and a mindfulness of ourselves and other people. Attaining self-awareness helps us to strive for the best possible self by exposing our undesirable behaviour. We gradually learn to regulate behaviours and instantaneous responses and to jump over our own shadow. This leads to greater adaptability, resilience and effortless flow between the various dimensions of our lives and a higher level of integration. This can be a magical journey, discovering who we truly are and inspiring other people.

## How do you know when you are self-aware?

You will know you have developed your self-awareness when you:

- recognise repeat behaviours, thoughts and emotions; and
- recognise which underlying fears and limiting self-beliefs these are driven by.

## REFLECTIONS AND INSIGHTS

- We achieve true self-awareness when we become the observer of our thoughts, motivations, behaviours and emotions.
- We can become more self-aware and recognise patterns of behaviour driven by fear, the ego or underlying unconscious bias.
- We can identify positive and negative triggers to increase our awareness.
- We can become more conscious and aware of ourselves and other people.
- We are not the dialogue in our mind nor the limitations it creates.
- When we achieve true self-awareness, it is a **life long** journey of learning about ourselves and is a continual process of development.
- When we ask ourselves a number of significant questions **s** it can help us to become more self-aware.
- When we achieve self-awareness, we strive to be our best possible selves, rather than a set of instantaneous or emotional reactions.

A large, dark gray number '6' is positioned in the upper right quadrant. Below it, a series of concentric, wavy lines in varying shades of gray flow from the left side towards the right, creating a sense of movement and depth.

# 6

## The **ME** Dimension: The Core of Me

My unique brand, my values, my ethical  
core, my passion and my purpose



*Choose a job you love, and you will never  
have to work a day in your life.*

Confucius



# 6

**T**he second element to 'The Me **d**imension' is to understand your real core. This is to understand what makes your heart sing; what ignites your passion and provides the purpose and meaning to your life. What you are about; your core values; and the level of ethics running through your veins. In this chapter, we go deeper into the understanding of ourselves. We can compare this to peeling away the layers of the onion to get to what is at the core.

It is also important to consider what other people say about us in the working environment, because we statistically spend **two thirds** of our life at work. What other people think and say can show us when we are not being true to ourselves in our interactions at work. Acting this way continually, can lead to a feeling of exhaustion or misalignment with our true purpose.

It is best to start with considering your values and your core, what you stand for and how other people perceive you. You can then consider your passions and purpose. With the knowledge of all these areas combined, you can move to maximise your alignment and create a true and deep understanding of yourself.

Significant questions come to mind when we explore what is at our core.

*What are my values?*

*What do I stand for?*

*What is my unique brand?*

*What do other people say about me?*

*What is my ethical core?*

*What will hit this core and what will be the consequences?*

*What are my strengths and my weaknesses, as a leader or in relationships?*

To demonstrate the impact of these questions and how our purpose and passions form an alignment to define the Me dimension, I have answered them using examples. Ask yourself these questions, as follows and see how they apply to you and your life.

### ***What are my values?***

Our values are our fundamental beliefs. They are the principles, which drive our behaviours and actions. Identifying what your values are, can help you to distinguish between what you believe is right and wrong. For example, when you meet someone for the first time, you might say you have much in common, due to your shared values. Many people describe values as a guiding light or our inner moral compass.

Characteristics of people we admire can also help us to find our values; core identifiers or our essential truths. It helps to look for the qualities that inspire us in other people and that we hope other people will associate with us.

You will find a useful list of values and qualities at the end of the chapter. Identify your own values, the ones that resonate most deeply with who you are and what is important to you. Spend a few moments to do this before you read on, to ensure you have gathered your own most important values and that you get the most out of the rest of the chapter.

*For example*

*For many people, integrity and trust are very important.*

*For other people, personal growth or family might be very important.*

Select the five values that resonate with you most and focus on these as you answer the rest of these questions.

### ***What do I stand for?***

When other people ask you what you stand for, it really matters how we respond. Most of us want to be known and valued by other people for our true traits, which are often the qualities or traits we admire in other people. What we stand for or want to be known for is normally closely aligned to our values.

*For example*

*To stand for ethical behaviour, moral values and doing the right thing are very important to some people. For other people a level of people centricity can be at the heart of what is important to them and what they want to be known for. They want to see individuals for who they truly are, how they can develop and what they can contribute at a greater level.*

When answering this question you can question whether there is a difference between what you stand for at home and in your work life. This can highlight incongruence, or the perfect alignment between the two elements.

### ***What is my unique brand?***

Your unique brand is a description of the words other people say about you when you interact with them regularly and they know you well. There can be a difference in the unique brand you want for yourself and how other people perceive you. This can mean there is work to do on the alignment of who you really are, who you present yourself as to other people and how they perceive you. This misalignment can show inauthenticity, especially in certain relationships, for example with work colleagues or in private relationships where you want to be liked and accepted.

Think about the role or position you have in your business or work life. Think about the elements you really enjoy and why you enjoy them. For example, you might enjoy developing and coaching other people even if this is not your exact role or position. Take it to a deeper level and gain insights into what motivates and drives you. It is not only about the position or role you play in the work environment but it is also the value you bring and that you want recognition for. Think about your uniqueness and how you are different to other people in the same context: What is your unique differentiator?

### ***What do other people say about me?***

It is important for you to receive feedback from other people, including family, friends and colleagues, to enable you to learn more about yourself. The feedback can also help you to identify incongruence in your behaviours with friends and in the office. Two specific questions as follows, can be impactful and are positively phrased to help you gain a deeper understanding of what other people think of you.

- What is the general perception of me as a leader/colleague/person?
- What can I do differently to have the greatest impact on my success?

You can ask a few colleagues or friends for their feedback to gain a deeper understanding of your external perception. The feedback can provide insightful information on how other people perceive you and what they believe is holding you back from your true potential. If you are uncomfortable with doing this with colleagues, trusted friends can provide insights instead.

Achieving deeper self-awareness is a journey and this feedback can be a real gift for you along your journey. Asking other people for their feedback is allowing yourself to be brave and vulnerable at the same time. You can read more about this in Chapter 7.

### ***What is my ethical core?***

Your ethical core is your deeper, most sacred values, which you hold as true for yourself. These are the values you are not willing to compromise on; your unique qualities; and fundamentally, who you are.

*For example*

*For many people at their core is trust, honesty, openness and the importance of family. For other people, being part of something greater than themselves is really important. Being able to make a bigger difference in the world can also be at your core, to ensure future sustainability for humanity and organisations.*

It is important to measure yourself against what you set out to achieve and not what other people expect of you, nor what the 'traditional path' might demand. When you follow what you want to do, as opposed to what is expected of you, this is an indicator of following your core and a route to being truly your authentic self.

***What will hit this core and what will be the consequences?***

When analysing what impacts your deeper, most sacred values, you may discover a trigger or deep-seated belief. It is important to understand the consequences of these, because they can help you to understand why certain relationships fail or why you do not trust other people.

*For example*

*People who display dishonesty or unethical behaviour will hit the core of someone whose values are based on honesty and ethics. It hits my core when an organisational department follows a rulebook approach and ignores the individuality associated with human beings.*

*Someone who pretends or changes behaviour continuously will confuse those people who are open, honest and whose values are based on trust. They will not know how to be with the other person and might avoid them. Individuals who are highly competitive can hit my core, especially when they ignore the humanity around them, or the fact that they are part of a team. For example, when they only care about winning at all cost and ignore whether it is good for the team dynamic or not.*

The consequences of hitting our core can be when our trigger buttons are pushed and limiting self-beliefs, such as 'I am not good enough' emerge. Sometimes, it is a convoluted process to find the origin and realise that the feelings and emotions lead back to a trigger. When a trigger is rooted in a deep limiting self-belief, people will feel at their most negative and disempowered. Evaluate your core in a similar way and think about trigger occurrences and the reasons for hitting your core.

***What are my strengths and my weaknesses, as a leader or in relationships?***

Leadership as a human quality has evolved into a more strengths-based approach. Leaders are encouraged to find their strengths and focus on them, instead of a constant obsession to eliminate weaknesses. It is important to understand your strengths as individuals, irrespective of whether you are leaders or not. When you understand your strengths you are more able to deeply understand yourself and analyse why you enjoy certain situations and why you hate other activities. This also helps you within your relationships, with your husband, wife and partner, as well as with your children and work colleagues, recognising why certain behaviours irritate you or lead to stress.

An excellent book on this topic is: *StrengthsFinder 2.0: A New and Upgraded Edition of the Online Test from Gallup's Now Discover Your Strengths*, by Tom Rath, published February 2007.

To demonstrate this further, below is a personal example of the benefit of understanding our core strengths and how they can impact us negatively in certain situations.

*I become frustrated with my daughter while she does her homework. She is known at school for being a hard worker and always doing her best. On weekends she is normally tired after the pressures of school and her homework is the last thing she wants to do. As parents we are sometimes not able to motivate our children in the same way as their teachers can in the classroom environment. No amount of coaxing, pleading nor positive affirmation can get Isabella to go faster than her weekend pace. I become frustrated and irritated when she takes too long or does not take it seriously enough. However, I ascribe this to the achiever in me and yet, when I actually analyse the situation, she is taking it seriously, I simply have no patience in that moment. Transposing this achiever element onto an **eight year old** is totally insane. It is good I know I have this trait and understand what drives my behaviour in these situations because it makes my interactions with my daughter easier.*



*It is impossible to be authentic and to do what other people approve **of***

Teal Scott

## Finding our purpose

Purpose is the reason why something exists. Psychologists describe finding our purpose as a pathway to greater **wellbeing**. Doctors have found people with purpose are less susceptible to illness and disease. Following our passion

and what brings us joy can bring us closer to our purpose. Unlocking our true purpose means to resonate with this purpose each day, taking actions in congruence with it and living for the higher good of this purpose. Dr Wayne Dyer\* refers to this ability as our impersonal life; who we really are in the invisible space within. It unlocks our burning desires.



*The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why*

**Mark Twain**

By analysing our leadership purpose, we can come closer to unlocking our purpose on this planet. Purpose is the difference we bring to the world each day; it is the essence of who we are.

## How I unlocked my purpose

Finding my purpose was definitely a journey and not a sprint. My first interaction with purpose was in 2013 at a leadership course. The course content was about different leadership styles and how to: communicate more effectively; have more gravitas and impact; and develop greater networks. Throughout the course, we had to develop our own leadership purpose and stand on a raised stage and communicate this with impact to all those people taking part.

### *My example*

*I defined my leadership purpose as being: "To develop individuals to reach their full potential, so the organisation can evolve to the next level; to harness individuality where it really matters. As a result of today's workshop, I will stay true to my inner sensitive authentic self."*

The first part of my leadership purpose was designed to use my unique talents and values and the second part was about the legacy I want to leave. The third part was about how I want to be, while delivering this purpose – the higher

good I mention earlier. It was fascinating for me to see how my passion for authenticity was already visible in these statements I crafted that day in 2013, before I wrote this book.

After my presentation, one of the volunteers at the event said she thought I was a change maker, which pleased me at the time. But little did I know that years later my coach was to use these exact words to describe me and the changes I want to bring to the world by writing this book and creating an Academy of Authentic Change\*.

This event was only the first step in moving towards my true passion and purpose. The second step was to learn how to bring intention to the process of finding my true purpose. Deepak Chopra\* believes if we have an intention to do something and we place our attention onto it, it will become a reality. I knew I wanted to work for myself at some stage in my life. Later in my career, I started referring to this goal as my fifties plan. When I am fifty I want to have my own business.

In 2014, I went to an evening event sponsored by Red magazine. Chrissie Rucker, the entrepreneur and founder of The White Company presented a powerful talk, entitled: *How to be your own boss*. Her key message was to look for that one thing, or one business idea that keeps you up all night. For weeks, I thought about what it could be for me and it was only after those diversity panels and conferences I mentioned in Chapter 2, that I unlocked my idea.

The core message here is that I made it my intention to find my greater purpose and idea for my business. I went to workshops, conferences and talks and made a vision board to focus my attention on my intention and to make it my reality. The more attention and energy I put into it, the more it became clearer and clearer, until eventually the ideas for this book started to flow and my thoughts started to crystallise into a real idea. If you want to find your purpose - create the intention to find it and support the intention with activities to unlock your future.

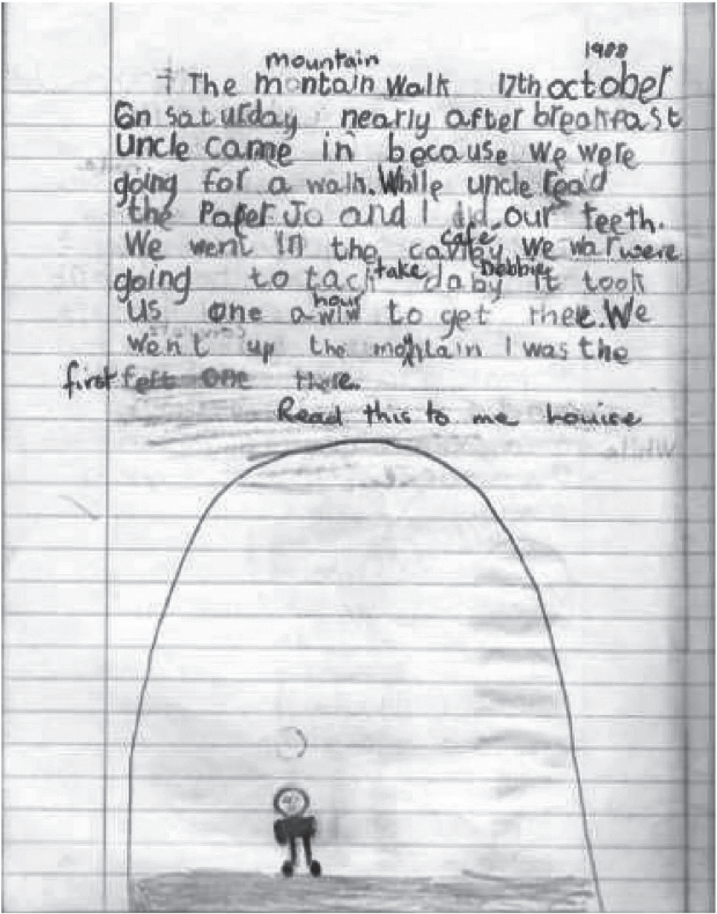
### **Our childhood can provide clues**

Another way to unlock your purpose is to look for what you loved as a child. My mother always thought I would be a teacher because I loved to 'play school'

with my dolls. I suppose bringing a message to the world through writing a book can be considered a way of teaching. To some degree, I taught and coached other people every day in my interactions with them as leaders in my corporate life. Creating the Academy of Authentic Change is close to this passion within me to develop and grow individuals.

The Academy of Authentic **change** will be a place where we can connect with like-minded individuals and organisations. My vision is to create a new platform for individuals and companies believing in authentic change. It is a platform for individuals to grow and develop and share their experiences and for organisations committed to drive change from within. One pillar of the academy **is about bringing about** social change in a way that I describe in Chapter 9.

In 2015, I listened to a talk given by Squash Falconer\*, an avid adventurer, inspirational speaker and presenter, who believes the words 'you can not' or 'you must not do that' or 'it is impossible' do not exist in her world. Her passion is to ride a motorcycle to a mountain, climb the mountain and paraglide off it. During her talk, she told the story of how her younger self glimpsed her purpose at the age of seven. She told us how she went out for a walk with her uncle and sister. They climbed a mountain; actually it was Thorpe Cloud in Derbyshire. It was a small hill, but it seemed like a mountain to a **seven year old**. Squash told us she still remembers the elation she felt when she reached the top of the mountain first. On the Monday back at school, Squash wrote the little piece below about her weekend. Years later **S**quash found this piece of her writing and connected the dots. She had loved climbing mountains since a very early age. If only she had known this was part of her greater purpose as an adult.



Squash Falconer writing about 'The Mountain Walk'  
aged seven.

## When we are not 'on purpose'

Negative feelings or emotions, or feelings of discomfort, physical exhaustion or **repeated wellness issues** can also be an indication of when we are misaligned to our core purpose. In Chapter 2, I mentioned the exhaustion I felt when I delivered the major culture change project, which was not in congruence with my core values. Let me reveal the truth of it now, because I call it my 'turning point'.

At the time, I felt trapped before I realised I could make a difference within an organisation and live my values of being a change maker within it. I remember a heated conversation with my husband when I told him that I could not continue with corporate life. I wanted to leave because I had enough of the ego-based discussions, of pandering to everyone else's expectations and not being true to myself. When I told him, he reminded me of how good the company had been to me, although from my perspective it was only blood, sweat and tears and the super performance I had always given. I told him I wanted to start my own business and he reminded me of the income I needed to generate and how I could not leave a well-paying corporate role on a whim. Of course, he was right, but I remember saying: "I am trapped in a corner, with my back against the wall and there is no other way out." In this instant, I truly felt like a trapped animal.

I remember going upstairs and sitting on the toilet (with the lid closed, of course!). This was the only place where I was alone, with time for myself and could sob my heart out. I contemplated killing myself and seriously thought about how I would do it; luckily my analytical mind kicked in and I realised it was a very poor plan. My life insurance probably would not pay out and my deep rooted set of ethics and humour brought me back to reality. The ridiculous solution I came up with was not fair to my loved ones and I had to find another way out. I was not very tempered, rational or emotionally balanced in that moment on the toilet lid. However, the control returned. I had to find a solution to my situation. Even though it had not been revealed yet, the solution was to come to me the next day. I had the courage to continue another day in the hope it would be better. Sometimes, hope is the only thing keeping us going; a deep belief that tomorrow must be a better day.

The lesson of this story is that in the darkest moments of our lives, the light is not far away, we are simply not able to see the future at that moment. There had to be this dark despair for me to realise I had to change my life and embrace the turning point. I never wanted to go back to that place of total despair again. Now, I watch for signs of incongruence more attentively to ensure I catch myself before I spiral too far into that dark place again. It was not corporate life that drove me to this darkest place. It was so many different facets all building up to this one moment; stringent deadlines, misalignment to my purpose, not enough time for relaxation and this powerful feeling of being trapped. Although I thought about killing myself that day, I have never been suicidal and have never thought about following through on the thoughts. From speaking to other people, there are so many who have had similar thoughts and are not suicidal.

The next step that helped me unlock my true purpose was attending a course run by Gosia Gorna: *How to have the best year ever 2015*. I made a vision board\* the weekend before with a friend and took it with me and I focused on the elements of manifesting my true destiny. A vision board is a collection of pictures and phrases you cut out and paste on a board, as a visual reminder of what you want to achieve. This is made after you have achieved clarity of your values, your core and your purpose. I was introduced to the concept at one of the Aspire\* workshops presented by Dr Sam Collins.

In my case, the elements contained on my vision board are:

- extreme transformation of myself;
- health and balance not burnout;
- enjoying the best of life every day - my husband and daughter;
- being my own boss;
- investing in a social business and being a social entrepreneur; and
- writing books to help drive change for other people.



My Vision Board, January 2016

Gosia Gorna became my coach four weeks later. She has had the most healing and profound impact on my life. She helped me to heal the past, let go of my negative drivers and to unlock my true purpose of being a change maker in the world. Working with her, I started a journey of clarity about how I can move forward. She helped me to realise I can be a change maker or intrapreneur within an organisation and drive my core purpose within it. I simply need to be more aware and ensure I am aligned to my purpose. I stayed in corporate life making a greater difference for almost two years after that terrible day and my turning point. Having the right attitude and glimpsing the vision of what we can achieve becomes clearer when we start to focus on purpose and we take action towards our dreams, even when it seems truly impossible.

### **Purpose can make a difference to something you hate**

I used to hate presenting in public. My heart would pound as if it would leave my body at any minute. In my corporate life, I had to meditate and slow my breathing down before any financial presentation to large groups. I was terrified someone would ask me a question I could not answer and I was uncertain whether I was able to 'wing it' in the moment. This completely changed when I started presenting publicly about content aligned to my purpose. When I was presenting on cultural change, or the new values we launched in the company or changing leadership behaviours or strategic direction of the organisation - it was very different. Today, I am still nervous, but it is a positive energy, which fuels me to excel and impart knowledge to other people. I am not afraid of questions anymore and now I feel I fit in my skin in those moments.

I presented at a Human Resources and Talent management event in 2016. I was intentionally provocative about culture and change. The questions I was asked were very challenging, but I felt comfortable because I was sharing knowledge to develop and drive change in leadership and organisations.

Understanding my purpose changed the underlying fear I used to have about presenting to big audiences. In future, I will present about authenticity and the impact it can have in our lives. This will make my heart sing, because I understand I will be helping and developing other people through this process. Behind the fear of presenting, I found the greatest opportunity, which was presenting about culture and change to drive the development of individuals.

## Why I am on this planet and what makes my heart sing

When trying to find our purpose, we are looking for those activities we really enjoy and are really passionate about. We are trying to find the things that will make us happy and provide meaning to our lives. When we are fulfilled and live in a congruent and aligned way, causing our hearts to sing. I worked in finance for more than 22 years and realised through this journey, how much I really enjoy developing individuals. I loved working on the human resources and strategy topics that were part of my wider role. When I realised where my true joy came from, it was easier to accept that my passion would be in this area.

Sometimes it is easier to find your purpose when you work in an organisation, which delivers social good, for example, a charity whose goal is aligned with your purpose.

Unlocking your real purpose and finding the resonance with your core will not be an easy task. Focus on the intention to find your purpose and follow with supportive activities like reading and attending conferences or courses to focus your attention on unlocking it.



*Most of us go to our graves with our music  
still inside us, unplayed*

**Oliver Wendell Holmes**

## REFLECTIONS AND INSIGHTS

- Values are your guiding light or inner moral compass.
- Analysis of the core is about values, your ethical core, what you stand for, your unique brand and your strengths and weaknesses.
- A number of questions can help to unlock our core.
- Purpose is a pathway to greater wellbeing.
- Finding your purpose is a journey.
- You can unlock your purpose by setting an intention and focusing your activities on that intention.
- Childhood passions can provide guidance on your purpose.
- Clues flow from not being on purpose.
- A vision board can help connect you to your purpose.
- Purpose can make a difference to something you fear or hate.
- With greater intention and attention you can manifest your purpose to reality.

## List of values and qualities

|              |               |                 |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Abundance    | Ethical       | Loyalty         |
| Achievement  | Fairness      | Motivated       |
| Adaptability | Faith         | Nurturing       |
| Adventurous  | Family        | Open-minded     |
| Altruism     | Flexibility   | Openness        |
| Appreciation | Fun loving    | Optimistic      |
| Authenticity | Generosity    | Passionate      |
| Autonomy     | Harmony       | Patience        |
| Balance      | Healing       | Peace           |
| Beauty       | Health        | Personal growth |
| Challenger   | Honesty       | Pioneer         |
| Committed    | Honour        | Pleasure        |
| Community    | Humility      | Positivity      |
| Compassion   | Humorous      | Recognition     |
| Competence   | Independence  | Relationships   |
| Connection   | Influence     | Reliable        |
| Consistent   | Innocent      | Religious       |
| Courageous   | Innovative    | Respectful      |
| Creativity   | Inspirational | Responsibility  |
| Dependable   | Integrity     | Spiritual       |
| Dignity      | Joy           | Spontaneous     |
| Educated     | Justice       | Tenacity        |
| Efficient    | Kindness      | Trust           |
| Enthusiastic | Knowledge     | Wealth          |
| Equality     | Love          | Wellbeing       |





# 7

## The **US** Dimension: Connected Relationships

Let go of the need to control; unlock your heart while being brave and vulnerable



*What we are all striving for is authenticity a  
spirit to **spirit** connection **on***

Oprah Winfrey



# 7

**T**he Us dimension was only briefly touched on in previous works on authenticity. The focus was on transparency in relationships and making decisions in a balanced way. The dimension of connectedness has been missing and yet it is the key to unlocking our true authenticity; creating the social intelligence we need to be in our true POWER and live in a state of being. This is the social side of the model, where we bring the emotional intelligence we have gained into our interactions with other people. Our togetherness as humanity and people unfolds in this dimension and we see interactions as an opportunity to create miracles. We are connected to our own being, connected to other people and connected to our purpose.

I assume in this dimension we have a greater awareness of other people through the awareness of ourselves and the higher emotional intelligence, from the Me Dimension. We are already the watchers of our behaviours and emotions and are therefore able to recognise behaviours and emotions in other people. We are more aware when we want to compete, when the ego surfaces and when we are judging other people. Once we have this deeper understanding of ourselves through self-awareness and the ability to tap into our passion and purpose; the connectedness to other people will start to flow more freely and we can start our journey to co-creating together and collaborating meaningfully through everyday life.

These are the elements we can master in this dimension to give us this deeper connection with other people:

- acknowledge the interconnectedness of all beings;
- acknowledge and let go of the need to control;
- unlock our heart; and
- be brave.

Once we have mastered these elements, the ultimate test at the heart of connectedness, is to show vulnerability.

### The interconnectedness of all beings

We can create more real human interaction and a connectedness with other people when we move from the state of doing to the state of being. We will understand that the interactions we have with other people can create a ripple effect in the universe.

We know that objects are made up of molecules and molecules are made up of atoms. The atoms are made up of subatomic particles. These particles have no solidity at all. Due to the vibration of these elements at the speed of light, we are not able to visibly see them with our human eyes. It is a bit like a movie where all the different frames are strung together to provide the picture. If we could see at the speed of light, we would see the vibration of the universe and the interconnectivity of all things. Deepak Chopra describes this well in his book, *Synchro Destiny*, an absolute must read if you want to live and notice coincidences and interconnectivity in your daily life.



*Each one of us and all the objects in the physical domain is just a cluster of energy floating in this energy soup*

Deepak Chopra

What he is describing is the ethereal version where every being and living thing is connected at a deeper level. For people who are more analytical or rationally minded, it can be explained as the connection to people through the interactions and relationships we have every day. We connect with a person, they connect with another person and carry a bit of our interaction with them and so forth and in an indirect way, we have touched those touched by the other person. We should not be afraid to embrace the science, even if we cannot understand it and the possibilities make us fearful. A ripple effect is created in the universe, where one interaction leads to another.

I believe it is through this connection that we are able to manifest either positivity or negativity. I am convinced that when I have judgements against another person and I am unable to free myself from it, I keep perpetuating it through negative words and actions. If I say negative things based on my self-belief system, "I can't do it, it is impossible", in time it will become impossible. This negativity is passed onto and into the universe. I fear if we continue this negative cycle of mind and word activity, it comes back to us through the universe.

Dr Wayne Dyer refers to this **inter-connectedness** in his book, *Manifest your destiny - The nine spiritual principles for getting everything you want*. In the third spiritual principle the book refers to people being environ-organisms and not organisms in an environment. Dr Dyer writes that when we perceive ourselves in the hologram of humanity, we connect on an energy level to everyone else in the environment. He writes about being gentle, loving and kind to other people and how significant this can be for us and the other person. The energy of love is sent out into the universe and connects with the same loving essence in all things.

One of these connected moments was when I first met Gosia Gorna. She presented at a course and demonstrated her fear releasing Expansion Game with one of my colleagues. After she completed her session, I introduced myself to her and said, "You will have a profound impact on my life". We had never met and I had no idea why I said this and why I would introduce myself in this way. Gosia gave me this strange look, pondered my statement for a moment, tilted her head ever so slightly and said, "You are right". What a strange experience for a rationally minded Chief Financial Officer at the time. Nine months later, she became my coach and she has had the most profound impact on my life. I call it truly transformational.



*A human being is part of a whole, called by us the 'Universe', a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest - a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.*

**Albert Einstein**

There are many different ways to create positive energy and motivation in our daily lives; for some people it is contained in daily visualisation techniques. I find inspiration and motivation from a daily email subscription called a TUT\* from the universe. These are notes that inspire me and guide me to reach my goals. Mike Dooley is the creator and author of the notes. Originally, I provided a secret profile containing my goals, establishing the Academy of Authentic Change being my number one goal and I provided little other information.

However, there are days when I receive a message that is uncanny in its relation to my thoughts on the day and it reaffirms my belief in the connectedness of all beings and all things that exist. For example, I recall one morning having a thought about resigning from my corporate position, but that I should also see a head-hunter first and prepare my Curriculum Vitae for a full time Executive Director position; just in case things did not work out as I had planned. This was my TUT for that day:



*Talita, it does little good to say you want something and then "just in case" prepare to do without*

Mike Dooley

## Acknowledge and let go of the need to control

Many people really enjoy control. I think part of my love for working in a German company was the level of control, rules and framework it provided. I knew exactly what the rules were, how to flex them, what to do and what not to do. Two examples illustrate my absolute fear or my paralysis of losing control.

The first was a speed boat experience at the Knysna Heads in the Western Cape Province, South Africa. For anyone who has ever been there, it is one of the most beautiful places in the world. You exit the bay into the wide-open sea through the Knysna Heads. It is absolutely breathtakingly beautiful. When my husband wanted to go on a speed boat ride on the open sea I thought, "What can go wrong with a lively speed boat ride?" The answer came just as we sped through the heads - absolutely everything! My husband absolutely loved every moment of the thrill, speed and excitement. He is an avid motorcyclist, he used to sky dive, abseil and bungee jump for fun. I think the picture is clear; he enjoys speed and thrills. I had done some abseiling and tree top adventures at the Tsitsikamma Canopy tours and river gorging in my younger days, but nothing prepared me for this activity.

I had a reaction close to a panic attack when the driver of the boat opened the throttle and bounced across the waves. This constant bouncing made me think the boat would go off like a rocket and overturn at any moment. Watching a speed boat chase in a Bond film has never been the same again. In that moment, I lived through the fear and actual feeling of paralysis and vowed I would never repeat the experience. I have subsequently been on a speed boat, but always with my husband, who I trust implicitly. I am a bit of a nag because I constantly tell him to slow down. None of the other adventurous

activities ever scared me as much, not even the tree top canopy adventure. I believe it is because I felt in control with other activities as opposed to the speed boat where the control was not in my hands.

The second time I experienced this feeling was a few days after my daughter was born. Before her birth, my husband and I did not exactly understand why we needed health visitors to visit unexpectedly after the baby's birth. We took it quite personally and felt the visitor must want to check up on us. However, we decided to accept it and embrace the **inter-cultural** difference. I can recall that morning so vividly. I had not slept all night. Isabella breastfed with ease in the hospital and the first few hours at home and then everything changed. I could not get her to drink properly. We had been awake all night with a very unhappy and distressed baby. I was trying to make her drink. Anyone who has had a **new-born** baby, will realise there is no controlling a young baby in distress. I was crying, tears streaming down my face. Isabella was crying and I saw the absolute desperation on my husband's face because he felt helpless. The doorbell rang and the health visitors arrived. I think Marcus said something like: "Could you please go **upstairs, she** is desperate and I do not know what has happened to her?" I had lost control. This was a totally foreign experience after my well-controlled Chief Financial Officer role and knowing exactly what to do when things went wrong. It was a very humbling experience and taught me that losing control is a great tool for self-development. In the moments of discomfort in our lives, we find an inner strength, when we learn to adapt or deal with the situation.

### Unlock your heart

We do not always truly see the people around us. Some days at work feel so much like the day before we forget to interact in a meaningful way with other people. We can be so locked into our state of doing, moving from one activity to another and wrapped up in what we want to achieve. We can forget to see and greet people when we pass them in the corridor or in the **open plan** area. To unlock our hearts, we must first be aware and observe the other human being we are interacting with. Connectedness with other people is about having a deeper connection, going beyond being right and wanting to have the upper hand in arguments. It is about a deep respect of inherent difference and creating a true heart connection with other people. It is about setting aside our demands or goals for the greater good of the relationship.

We try to understand what is important for the other person, not just in the verbal communication between us, but also in the unsaid aspects flowing at a deeper level.

We start to unlock our heart by thinking about the person we are dealing with and their perspective, what they might think or feel and how they will react to what we say. All this occurs before we engage with them. We unleash our empathy and emotional intelligence, which help us to suspend judgement and to care about the other person's point of view.

To truly see the other perspective we need to heal our own triggers and regulate our emotions to be able to open our hearts. The true change for me came when I started to notice my heart for other people and I realised how all people are fearful and suffer from some ego form, trying to mask what is on the inside. It is often said, what is on the inside is reflected on the outside, for example, when we observe a strong reaction from a counterpart. Something has been internalised and leaks out through the behaviour. When I realised everyone just wants to be happy and do a good job, a great shift occurred in me. I realised people are struggling to cope with their own challenges, trying to fit in, finding more meaning to life and doing their best with what they have. Before I became more self-aware, when someone did something I did not like, or did not agree with, I engaged my warrior with them. To explain this in more detail, I have mentioned already the Aspire course I attended in 2013. At this course, I was identified as a warrior leader. The other types of leader profiles were collaborator, sage, sovereign and pioneer. The parts of the warrior leader that resonated with me most were:

- always challenging the status quo;
- fiercely protective of teams;
- using a lot of warrior/masculine energy;
- not shying away from conflict; and
- motivated by a personal drive and passion.

I am consciously aware of this warrior energy and how the power behind it can scare other people tremendously. I can choose to think individuals are afraid, are weak and this is their problem or I can choose to be more self-aware, more introspective and adapt my own behaviours. I realise now that I need to adapt this style to engage more out of other people and to bring out the best in

them. When I am being the warrior, sparring with other people, people are less likely to tell me the truth, to share their ideas or even acknowledge why things are going wrong. This is a huge learning for me. In relationships outside work it is very important to turn off this warrior energy and engage my true self with other people to create more meaningful and deeper relationships.

Instead of battling and using the warrior energy, I individualise the person to understand their perspective better. I relate to who they are and what they need in the moment.

When I notice I am ready to engage my ego or warrior I now ask myself the questions: "What do I value about this person? What can I learn from this moment and from this person?" These questions help me to shift the warrior energy and bring relationship skills and empathy into focus in my mind.

During one of my coaching sessions my coach asked me to consider the other person's perspective, by pretending I was being them for a moment. When I was about to resign from my position I had a telephone conversation with a Human Resources professional. It was very powerful to put myself in her position for a moment and understand what she would be feeling prior to the call. This helped me to prepare myself adequately for her questions and concerns. It is often referred to as 'walking in the other person's shoes'. From this experience I find it easier to unlock my heart because my empathy increases for the other person's situation and perspective. Coming from my heart, I see people as individuals and can understand where their ideas or pressures come from, what their deepest desires are and what drives them as individuals.



*If there is any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view and see things from that person's angle as well as from your own* 

**Henry Ford**

Unlocking our hearts is to bring more real honesty to relationships in a very loving way; with honesty that does not harm nor criticise for an ego-driven gain or competitive advantage. When we have a real interest in other people and we try to understand what drives and motivates them without any judgement or comparison.

I use a guided meditation\* every morning from the CD *'The Successful Heart: how to use your heart to realise your dreams'*. In this exercise, I focus on breathing through my heart. I can actively feel my heart and a soft glow from the organ when I focus my attention on it. This is the principle of intention and attention. I set an intention to connect with my heart and I focus my attention on it, by breathing through my heart. My coach taught me how my heart is soft, but strong and a very powerful organ to help me unleash my empathy and understanding for other people. I use meditation as a way to connect with myself, as time for me, to find moments of peace, calmness and clarity and to relax and renew.



*The less you open your heart to others, the more your heart suffers*

Deepak Chopra

## Be brave

When I left corporate life, the one comment repeated to me in almost every conversation I had, where I explained what I wanted to do in the future to follow my purpose, was how brave I was. Numerous senior executives mentioned to me they never had the courage to leave corporate life and they really respected my decision.

Being brave is also having the courage of your convictions. I am convinced about my purpose and I felt strongly about leaving corporate life. One senior

manager was not convinced. He proposed all the negative aspects that could influence my future business, including an economic crisis, companies cutting their training budgets or use of change consultancies. I totally understood his comment and his perspective, but when we worry about everything that can go wrong, we will never start our journey of purpose.

Our current state always contains safety because it is what we know. Leaving this behind can be scary and make us fearful. To move forward from the safety, we need to have a clear plan and be brave enough to follow our dreams. We take the leap into the unknown. Many people call it a leap of faith. We attract all the people we need to lead us to where we need to be; our purpose. However, we can only do this when we believe in who we are and what we want to achieve unreservedly.

On holiday in the Maldives I met a mother and her daughter. She had divorced her husband a few years ago and had been trying to launch her own business. She shared with me how she wanted to launch a clothing line and she had even been to China to find a factory to produce the line for her. Unfortunately, after numerous times of her friends telling her not to do it, she believed she could not do it and would fail. She will never know. She inspired me to be brave and start my journey, despite any negative comments from friends or colleagues.

Many of my friends believe I had the perfect job in corporate life and I should not have left it. Other people believe in my abilities and support me to follow my purpose and my dreams.



*Be bold, be brave enough to be your true self*

**Queen Latifa**

Squash Falconer, who I mentioned in Chapter 6 is brave and vulnerable. Sometimes these two traits go hand in hand. During her ElliptiGO trip she asked strangers if she could stay with them for the night; being brave and vulnerable at the same time. Squash started in Liverpool and completed a 3,074 mile journey through five European countries to establish a world record for the longest distance travelled in one journey on an elliptical bicycle. This bravery combined with her vulnerability and humility makes her a truly authentic adventurer who believes in the connectedness with other people. Squash and I connected at a deeper level from the very first time we met. I felt as though I had already known her for a few years.

## Show vulnerability

Once we have mastered the elements showing us the interconnectedness of all things, letting go of the need to control, stepping up to be brave and unlocking our heart, there is one final, ultimate test to allow a deeper connection with other people. This ultimate test is the heart of connectedness and requires us to use the combination of all these skills to show our true vulnerability, because without vulnerability there is no real connection to other people.

It is not often we trust ourselves to show what we really feel in the working environment. I have experienced real power in doing so, especially when dealing with individuals of high integrity. I am no longer afraid to tell people, especially my manager or friends, how I feel.

By allowing ourselves to show our fallibility or vulnerability we create emotional and psychological safety for other people. By sharing more of ourselves we create a deeper connection with other people. The reason we do not normally show our vulnerabilities is because we are afraid of exposure; being labelled as too soft, too weak, being a failure or not being good enough in the moment. This fear makes us scared and induces negative energy and feelings. It holds us back from a deeper connection with other people.

I have observed how people who are less confident do not contribute as much in meetings for fear of being judged. When other people create an emotional safety for them upfront it gives them more confidence and they are more likely to speak up and share their ideas. These ideas are sometimes brilliant and the team would have lost out if their words of wisdom were not shared.



*If you can push through that feeling of being scared, that feeling of taking a risk, really amazing things can happen*

**Marissa Mayer**

I am not condoning that we can all walk around at work or in business with our heart on our sleeves and expose our deepest feelings and desires to everyone at all times. However, we can show vulnerability when appropriate and use it as an innate strength of character and to demonstrate our belief in who we are. For example, vulnerability is really important in my individual interactions.

In larger groups where a degree of credibility is necessary for me to be successful and when I was doing my job as a Chief Financial Officer effectively, I was less likely to show such vulnerability. However, I was not afraid of saying that I did not know something when asked a question. I learnt early on in life how it is actually a strength to say, "I do not know, I will find out and get back to you". When I delivered a big cultural change project, impacting many people in an organisation, I first built up my credibility and then I dialled up my passion. When I have really engaged and connected with the other person, built a burning platform or reason for them to change, I bring more of myself and my ideas into play in a more forceful manner. I learnt this from Brita Fernandez Schmidt\*, the Executive Director of Women for Women International UK. Brita talks about first tuning into the same radio station or frequency of your counterpart and then turning up the volume, or dialling up your passion. In this way, it is easier to connect and form a more meaningful bond.

## **Learn to apologise**

When a situation goes wrong and you end up feeling bad about a conversation, do not be afraid to say you are sorry and to admit you were wrong. In any interaction with tensions prevalent, there is always the opportunity to do something differently. In the moment, you might react emotionally and

become frustrated, or engage your warrior or ego. This is all part of being human. To acknowledge and accept the behaviour, without judgement of the other person or yourself is crucial to your further development. We can use our higher self-awareness to become conscious about what we want to be different, about the interaction with that person, to make amends. There is no shame in apologising or saying "I should have handled this situation differently" after we have time to assess and rethink. Sometimes we avoid each other for a few days hoping the situation will go away or the other person will forget what we said or did in the moment. Following on from the connectedness in the previous section, this will only harm the relationship in the long-term.

## Ignoring my emotions – a tsunami of tears

I learnt the hard way about vulnerability. I ignored my emotions for a long time and I bottled them up. The result was an uncontrollable tsunami of tears. I had to learn to accept all of me and be more in touch with my emotional side to avoid this uncontrollable storm.

I do not cry very often. I never have and I never liked how it made me feel or look. Until I realised the power of the calm after the storm, when you have spent all the tears and you can return to a feeling of relief and peacefulness. I have a friend who always looks beautiful after crying, with her eyes still clear, whereas mine become red and puffy and everyone can see I have been crying. Sometimes I wish I was more like my friend and cry with grace. Perhaps if I engage with the emotions more often, I will be able to be more graceful in my execution.

A few years ago I had the experience that I could no longer control the flow of my tears in the office. I have already mentioned that some of us are told as children that we should not cry. I was taught it is never acceptable for a senior woman in a position of power to cry in front of her boss or other people. However, I now challenge this paradigm based on my experience of understanding the value of showing more vulnerability, which unlocked the greatest relationships for me.

When I was promoted to my second Chief Financial Officer position and had to leave the company I had worked in for eight years, I was desperately unhappy. I think the promotion paled in significance because I felt I had no control, I had

no choice and was told that I had to move. One of my most trusted mentors told me he had tested the waters and unless I wanted to ruin my career, I had to go. The reason I did not want to move was because of my perception of the culture. I had become used to the more informal culture where I was able to drive inspirational leadership. I moved to a more formal organisational environment that was more hierarchical and I perceived the office environment to be less pleasant. My journey to work would be a lot further each day and I was really worried that I would not be able to balance my work and life commitments. My daughter Isabella was only five at the time and I knew I would not see her as often in the evenings. I became really stressed about the idea of missing out on some of her most precious years. In hindsight, I know this move was a very defining point in my career and would be responsible for great personal growth. It brought me far closer to my true purpose. However, at the time it felt as if my world was imploding. For a **two week** period, if anyone looked at me in the slightest funny way I could feel my emotions welling up and the tears coming. This was an extremely difficult time for me. It was as if a tsunami was washing over me and I had absolutely no control to stop these tears. The harder I tried to bury them, the more they came to the surface.

I was very fortunate at the time to be in a coaching programme with Sara Boas\* and she helped me to understand the tears, but also gave me the ability to share my feelings openly with my team. We had planned a workshop with my team to set our 2013 objectives in a more inspirational way. This had not exactly turned out as expected because I constantly felt as if I wanted to burst into tears for no apparent reason. If I rationalise it, it must have been from **pent up** frustration and years of suppressing the tears. At breakfast, I had asked my coach what I should do if I wanted to cry because I was finding it extremely difficult to find the 'off switch'. Sara calmly responded, "Just cry". I was a bit indignant; cry in front of my team; this would show my weakness. Sara said it would show my strength. We agreed to disagree and travelled together to the office for the workshop.

The first time the tears welled up, was when my personal assistant at the time, burst into tears when asked to describe what she cared about most. We were starting with what was important from a personal perspective and then moving to the office environment and our work objectives for the year. She answered, her horse and started to cry because the horse was very ill and she had not slept well the previous night. She was also emotional because I was leaving to go to another company and we worked really well together.

As my tears welled up and started to flow, I had to explain to the team what was going on. I started to explain that although I was being promoted, I did not want to leave. Also, I did not want to experience the culture change because we had already progressed so far with inspirational leadership change in my current organisation, that I felt I would be moving backwards.

My team was perfectly balanced from a gender perspective. One female manager was actively taught by her older sister never to cry in the office because it is terrible sign of weakness. There was nothing voluntary about my tears or my vulnerability. I had suppressed it for so long that it had become an uncontrollable flood. The harder I tried to bottle the emotions the more tears flowed. I tried to go to the Ladies Room for a private cry, but knew I would be spending the day there if I stayed. I thought my absence would be disrespectful to the team and more embarrassing because they would not understand what was going on at all.

My team was supportive and Sara facilitated it beautifully. I explained how I felt and they each got a chance to comment. At first they were hesitant to share their real feelings but coached through it by Sara, the honesty grew and grew. However, they did not understand why I was feeling the way I did because all they saw, what I could not see and recognise in that moment, was I was going to a bigger position, a promotion, what was wrong with that? I became instrumental in driving cultural change at the new company and later I led a project that brought fabulous new values of Authenticity, Inspiration and Collaboration, to the organisation. My team already recognised this potential in me. Unfortunately, I took a while longer than them to realise this, due to the emotional rollercoaster I was on.

The tsunami taught me that when I try too hard to control anything in life, it becomes impossible. Going with the flow, has relaxed me more and also made it possible for me to curb any huge outbursts. When I feel I am emotional, with this welling up in my chest, I accept the emotion and go to a softer place with myself. I acknowledge the sadness and try to understand what has brought it on.

There are days when there is no rhyme or reasons, it just is and I have to accept it. I have a very strong bond with all the managers in my team that participated on that day. The whole experience gave a new meaning to our connectedness

as a team, based on a higher level of mutual respect and trust. For the last few weeks in my old position, we bonded at a very deep level and it was as if we had experienced a turning point together.

I am not saying that I now cry as often as I like, openly in the office and in public because I believe this will undermine my authority and my credibility in my role. There should always be measure and balance. The times when I did show my vulnerabilities to my team and to my manager, it made us stronger and changed the relationships to a level of trust that I did not comprehend. There have been three instances in my career when I showed my vulnerability and my tears to my team or my boss. I will explain another instance under the corporate clone and chameleon section in the next chapter.



*Vulnerability is the birthplace of connection and the path to the feeling of worthiness.  
If it doesn't feel vulnerable, the sharing is probably not constructive.*

**Brené Brown**

Each time showing more emotion strengthened the relationships beyond what I ever imagined. Writing this book, thinking about all the interactions, I have realised that sharing a piece of myself unconditionally and being truly authentic and vulnerable in the moment was the catalyst to more meaningful and deeper relationships. By trying to over-regulate my emotions, I did not afford them the respect they deserved. I believe not giving my emotions the respect meant that I could neither cope with them, nor control them. Ever since I have stopped controlling my emotions and acknowledged them at a deeper level, perversely I have found more peace and presence in the moment.

## Formality undermines vulnerability

My relationships with my team are always based on values and the level of trust is always immensely high. It is the way I prefer to lead. It has always been difficult for me to understand cultures where work relationships are extremely impersonal. For example, in Germany you are mostly addressed by your last name and not by your forename. The first time someone called me "Mrs (Frau) Ferreira" in Germany, my authentic response was "Frau Ferreira is my mother, I prefer to be called Talita."

I was immensely shocked when one of my bosses in Germany, who is long retired now, did not know the first name of an employee who had been working for him for twenty years and was about to have his leaving celebration. I am not here to judge other cultures, I can only say this was too impersonal for me and I cannot connect enough with the other person by calling them Mr or Mrs something.

To lead people effectively, I need to understand what they are about. I need to share who I am with them and mutually we come to a deeper understanding of each other. This means we do not need as many words to explain behaviours or why we do things in a certain way, because of a deeper understanding of each other.

It is also about reciprocity. When I give more of myself, people are more willing to show more of themselves. A new manager joined my team. He loved our interactions when we talked about how we could develop and be more authentic. We quickly discussed the necessary task-orientated aspects of the business and then we would focus our meetings on self-development and what he had learnt in his coaching session. He was more willing to share because I openly shared my experiences on my journey of self-development.

I have already mentioned meeting Squash Falconer when she delivered an inspirational talk at a speaker season event in our organisation. She was so authentic, so real and shared so much of her own vulnerabilities, while telling her story of riding a motorcycle from England to the foot of Mt Blanc. Squash climbed the mountain and then flew a paraglider from the summit to become the first British woman to fly from the top. Her authenticity shines through because she is so willing to share who she is, her best moments and her most vulnerable moments.

Squash also climbed Mustagata in China and was the first British woman to snowboard on the mountain. On this trip, her best friend fed her and held a flask of tea to her mouth when she could not go on. Squash talks about how she felt the energy and warmth return to her body. Squash is not afraid to be vulnerable or to ask for help. She regularly asks for what she needs, without any fear of showing her vulnerability.

The first element in the Us dimension, focuses on connected relationships and a deeper connection with other human beings. Today we already connect with other people in our day to day life. The redefinition of authenticity demands that we deepen this connection and make it more meaningful. We achieve this by learning to regulate our thoughts, connect to our hearts and have more humanity for other people. We learn to let go of the need to control and be brave all at the same time. When we add our own vulnerability into the mix, we move to the ultimate heart of connectedness with other people. We are now free and ready to move to collaborate with other people in a way that suspends our judgement, allows us to cultivate a deep respect for difference and allows our effortless flow between interactions in all aspects of our lives.

## REFLECTIONS AND INSIGHTS

- All beings are connected, we send negative or positive ripples into the universe.
- Let go of the need to control, it can set you free.
- Unlock your heart, as the key to a deeper understanding of other people and having more empathy.
- Unlock your heart by individualising the other person and their unique qualities. Spend a moment in their shoes experiencing what is important to them.
- Be bold and brave and believe in yourself and your purpose.
- Vulnerability is at the heart of connectedness, the true and final test.
- Without vulnerability there can be no real connection.
- Show vulnerability, do not be afraid to say I am sorry, I was wrong.
- Afford your emotions the respect they deserve.
- Deepen the connection to other people by regulating your thoughts, connecting to your heart and having more humanity for them.





# 8

## The **US** Dimension: Collaboration

Respect difference, suspend judgement  
and be yourself everywhere



*Our greatest strength lies in collaboration,  
not competition*

**Joseph Rain**



# 8

**C**ollaboration is based on truth, trust and connectedness. Sharing our strengths and weaknesses with other people and making ourselves fully known, to enable us to achieve the highest goals together. Once we have mastered the deeper connection with other people, we can start collaborating more effectively. An exact cut off between the connectedness and the effective collaboration elements of the model is not possible. The elements are fluid and are necessary throughout the whole dimension. In the area of collaboration, the following prerequisites add meaning to deeper connection and allow us to collaborate with a purpose greater than our individuality.

- Cultivate a deep respect for difference.
- Suspend judgement and let go of grudges.
- Being yourself, everywhere, in all interactions.



*Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success*

**Henry Ford**

This dimension focused on using our social competence to create the best possible outcome together. It defines: me; and my relationship to you; my purpose; and your purpose; and our shared purpose. It defines being part of something we have created together – who am I with you? It requires a certain level of 'absence of self'. Letting go of the needs of the self, to be right and to win. Letting go of individual gain and allowing the presence of self for mutual gain, for the greater good, or the bigger picture. In this dimension, we receive and give and allow reciprocity and receptivity. We become more humble in our enquiry and allow acts of kindness to flow. Together we leave a greater footprint in the sand of time.



*If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.*

**African proverb**

## **Cultivate a deep respect for difference**

We are born different. We are unique and develop throughout our lives in different ways. Some people make life an everlasting journey of development; other people hate self-development and the connotations attached to it. I prefer to learn about myself and my interactions and how they define me as a

person. I have a great need to understand how my experiences make me grow and develop me further. However, I realise that other people are not like me and I need to respect this.



*A great relationship is about two things, first, find out the similarities, second, respect the differences*

**Unknown**

In one of my corporate roles, I wanted to reach out and persuade my peers and my boss to be more like me. I was exhausted at not being able to convince them of what I believed to be right for the culture of the organisation. What I understood even less, was producing empirical evidence of why something needed to be a certain way, but still there was no response in the way I expected. I realised it is because of two things, fear and difference.

The new culture adopted a modern working environment where people are allowed to work flexibly from home, as opposed to being present in the office for a certain number of hours a day. Therefore, it was a shift to an output-based approach versus the ability to manage attendance. It is far easier to manage people knowing they are at a desk for a certain number of hours. It is harder for leaders when they need to define the exact output they require from individuals.

Let us start with fear. Once I realised that some managers were afraid to embrace the new way of working because they did not understand how to manage the output requirement, it became clearer. They were used to command and control, telling people what to do, being the strong leaders who always had the answer and **told** people how to be or act. Taking this control away and moving to empowering individuals in a more networked approach, where decisions are made together in a collaborative manner, meant they would not always have the answers. Partly their egos did not know how to cope with this because they could not rely on their history and experience to

provide the answers. They had not been taught as leaders how to be or act in this situation. They were consistently in uncharted territory. Suddenly they needed other people to help them access the right answer and sometimes these individuals were reporting to them. In the beginning, these managers frustrated me until I realised and understood their fear. Then I understood we needed to support them with training, guidance and peer coaching.

I realised how important it was to have a deep acceptance of these managers exactly as they were. I needed to have a deeper understanding of why they were different to me. I needed to put myself in their shoes to comprehend their feelings of having a total loss of control. This perspective gave me more insight into the reasons for their negativity about the change. I managed to build a much better relationship with one of the other senior leaders once I understood our differences and respected his fear unconditionally without trying to change him or judge him.

Difference is the second point. It is wonderful that we are all different and uniquely so. It would be an awful world if we were all clones, functioning in exactly the same way. Respecting difference is the key because organisations of the future will need differences to differentiate themselves from their competitors. What better place to start than the differences within, with their own employees, where differences are celebrated, leading to higher diversity and an acceptance of all. In respecting these differences, I think the key is to unlock the judgements we have and the unconscious biases we have been indoctrinated with our entire lives. We need to let go of judgement and grudges, be responsible for ourselves, accepting others unreservedly for what value they add, even if this is different to our own. This might seem difficult for the ego-based competitive animal with the base instinct to survive or compete for the strongest position.



*Have a big enough heart to love unconditionally,  
and a broad enough mind to embrace the  
differences that make each of us unique*

**D. B. Harrop**

When we only focus on our differences there can be no resonance with each other. If I do not see who you really are, how can I connect with you and form a truly meaningful bond. Once we accept our differences we can start to realise that difference differentiates and can make us stronger because we complement each other.

By accepting individuality and authenticity unconditionally, it saves us time and energy in trying to change people. It saves the exertion of energy when judging and coming up against a brick wall when wanting to make someone be more like us. The negativity coming from judging people and trying to change them can consume our lives. It is better to accept other people for who they are and for their unique qualities, respecting that we are not all the same.

This does not mean I need to change my beliefs, it means I need to respect that other people have different beliefs. I need to use my own self-awareness and relationship to other people to point out how they make me feel, when they are in a position of power and I constantly feel they do not value my contribution. I need to spend a moment 'walking in their shoes' to understand how they view the world and things happening in a different light. Once I have come to this realisation, it is easier for me to relate and easier for me to accept.

## **Suspend judgement and let go of grudges**

Judgement is normally seen as a good quality because it allows us to make decisions and come to conclusions. The judgements we need to suspend is when we judge other people based on our biases, impatience, lack of self-awareness or awareness of other people and intolerance. In this element, it is

important to notice the judgements we have about other people, when these thoughts enter our minds. We allow ourselves a moment of pause, to evaluate and realise we are passing judgement. This provides a conscious choice to continue or to withhold.

In one of my corporate roles, I was asked to share my experiences regarding the **three year** cultural programme with a group. I stood in front of the group and drew a few diagrams on a **flipchart** to explain what we had achieved. Next, I sat down to open the discussion and face questions. One of the change specialists from another organisation went to the **flipchart** and also drew a few diagrams. His were based on textbook change models and mine had been based on practical experience. I immediately noticed myself passing judgement. Thinking he had to show his knowledge. I felt my irritation and was silently considering saying something about this situation, after all, I had been asked to share my views. However, I immediately realised my thought pattern and instead of making a biting comment, I decided to acknowledge his expertise and move my mind on from this negative pattern of thought. I had to respect that he needed to demonstrate his skill and importance. Making continual judgements leads to grudges forming, which feed the negative energy around us and into the universe.

Dr John Demartini\* is a specialist in the field of grudges and the effect it has on our physiology. If we are angry with someone and we hold a grudge against them, it can impact our immune, digestive, defence system and our muscles. It also has the ability to seriously impact our mood and underlying happiness.

However, there are several steps we can take to help evaluate the judgement or grudge and rise above it.

- Analyse the behaviour that upsets us and why we feel a strong emotional reaction. Does it relate to one of our identified triggers?
- Have we ever done something similar? We are often irritated by behaviour we recognise unconsciously in ourselves. By being more introspective and turning it to us rather than them, we have more empathy for the other person.
- Our perception is what keeps the grudge alive. If we are able to discuss the topic without an emotional reaction or a trigger, we can come to a different conclusion.

- Move to the next level by asking how this incident can help us to grow and develop. How can it serve us or benefit **us: What** is the learning in this moment?



*Every crisis has a blessing, every challenge has an opportunity and every scar has a star*

**Dr John Demartini**

When I was working with my coach, I noticed I was holding a grudge and judging another senior executive. The behaviour that most disturbed me was how he bullied and undervalued other members of the team openly. My coach asked me if I was ever a bully. It took me by surprise because I had never thought about myself in this way. She explained that I probably recognise the behaviour in myself and subconsciously detest it. At first I was getting irritated with the thought of being a bully. I then relaxed, considered the behaviour and recognised I had the same behaviour with someone who is very competitive and with values very different to mine. Recognising this helped me become softer towards this person and to see myself and the executive in a different light.

Self-regulation is important in this dimension. Watch and contain the instantaneous emotional reaction even if it is only in the mind and the body. Accept other people as they are, suspend judgement and learn to respect difference.

We do not want to live in a psychological prison of grudges and judgements. We want to move towards connected relationships and an acceptance of other people to achieve more out of our time together.



*When you judge others, you do not define them,  
you define yourself*

**Earl Nightingale**

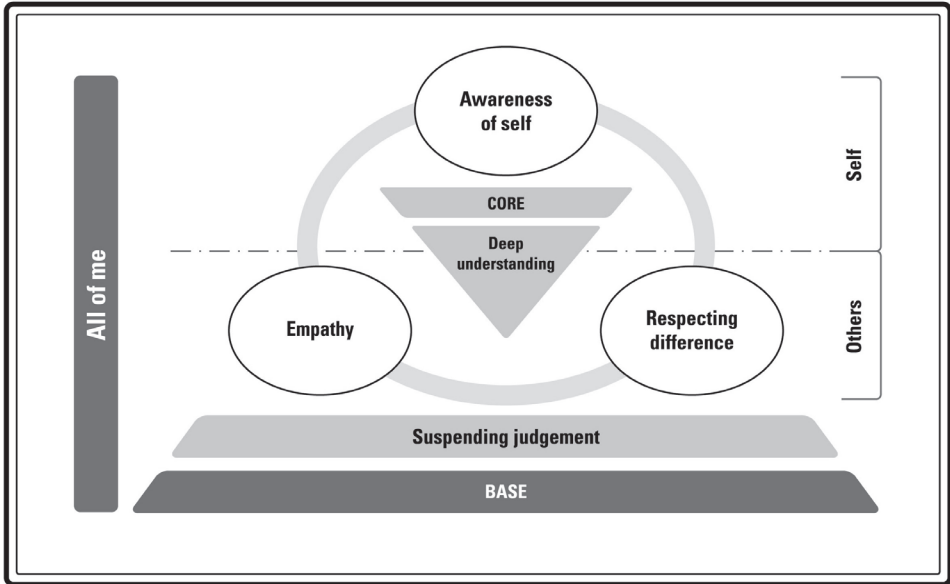
In gaining this deeper understanding of other people and cultivating non-judgement it means we need to listen more and talk less. We have two ears but one mouth and we tend to use the one far more than the other two. I still have to consciously remind myself to listen more attentively and not to formulate everything I want to say next while someone else is speaking. This is also one of those life long journey topics. Depending on how passionate I am about the topic, I might listen less and be pulled to speaking more.

## **Being ourselves, everywhere, all the time**

Being ourselves, everywhere, is about revealing our same personality and our best qualities in all aspects of our life; at home; in the office; and in all relationships. To bring all our creativity and the difference we make in our lives and into our places of work. A convergence of our business and private lives and a true integration can make our lives more meaningful. For example, my team has always felt they are trusted when I share with them facts about my family and myself. We find we have similar experiences in our personal and work lives and we can learn from each other.

Bringing all of ourselves to every interaction is bringing our self-awareness and a deep understanding of our self and other people to every interaction. At the core is this deep understanding of unlocking empathy and a deep respect for difference. This is built on a basis of suspending any judgement of ourselves and of other people, as shown below.

## BEING OURSELVES



We need to bring all of ourselves to every interaction we have; sharing our self unreservedly; and making ourselves fully known. For example, I have never had any difficulties with bringing more of myself into the office and working environment. For me the challenge is the other way round. I have great intuition in the office. I even have what I call 'body resonance'; goose bumps running up and down my body when I speak about the future and the Academy of Authentic Change.

I never experience this same level of intuition at home. After discussing this situation with my coach, I now visualise a button when I enter the door at home. It is my intuition button and I consciously and actively switch it on. I have mentioned how true authenticity is a journey. I am still in the process of actively harnessing my intuition and authentic POWER more in my home environment.

Being ourselves everywhere is not conforming, nor being able to keep ourselves as a separate self and adopting 'a stance' to survive in environments unaligned to ourselves. It is being brave and having the courage of our conviction. It is sharing who we are openly with those around us, even while leading and finally bringing our whole selves to work in all interactions and

especially with other people. It is forming special relationships with people who have similar values and beliefs or interests.

I attended an event in London where a renowned professor of futurology spoke. I was surprised when he mentioned conversations with women during the course of his career. The women shared that they were not always honest with their husbands, for fear of separation or no longer appealing to them. This was absolutely shocking because I believe these relationships are based on fear and inauthenticity.

I was also shocked the same week, when a gender diversity trainer told me she was considering the acting profession to help women cope within corporate life. She explained when women have a lot going on in their lives, they need to be able to act in the office and pretend all is fine. She thought actors could train corporate females to adopt this skill. This will lead to further incongruence and a feeling of separate lives. I would rather support bringing more of ourselves into the **work place**, than to pretend to be something we are not. From experience I have found this to be more effective. When I have been more distant to my team, they have not understood who I am. They understand far better when I explain I had a bad night, that my daughter did not sleep well and that I am not quiet, I am tired. If I do not explain what is actually going on, they may think I am not being myself with them and that they have inadvertently done something wrong.

If I were to act all the time, what happens when I no longer know who I really am or when I pretend or act more than I am really being me? When I learn to act in my working life, will I feel compelled to bring it into my private life, to survive there, as well? Soon I will feel as if I am a fraud and I can no longer control everything. This is when my **wellbeing** is impacted and I put my mental health at risk. I might not even realise what I have started to become, a pretender. Sometimes this situation becomes so ingrained in people that they do not notice nor realise the harm being done, until it has consumed them totally.

I always think about the deathbed analogy. I do not want to be on my deathbed and say: "I wish I had the courage in my life to be me, more often." There must be more to life than this immense void created by inauthenticity and duplicity around us.

## Business or corporate life – connectedness and collaboration

The question in my mind is how to be authentic, connect at a deeper level and collaborate well, when those around me are not being authentic, especially in corporate and business life.

In the past, I have thought to myself: "Would I be friends with this person if I was not at work?" However, because I might have to discipline or challenge the person at work, I prefer not to make the effort, which might lead to me being disappointed or exposed later. When I recognise this behaviour, it saddens me. I am sacrificing an important human connection because of a fear of something, which might emerge, or be required later.

In my corporate life, it was really important to me, to be true to myself within an organisation. I wanted to share more of myself with those people I led and encountered in business. This was valid for the deeper relationships I cultivated with individuals I was developing within organisations or for partners I encountered, where there was a spark of connection. I mentioned the credibility of myself as Chief Financial Officer before and what I found hardest was to show more of myself when there was no deeper connection or I was not developing the individual, for example with fellow directors until I knew them better. It is normal on an Executive Board of eight, not to have an instantaneous deeper connection with everyone present. Especially when they might have different objectives, points of view and they are supposed to challenge each other regularly. When this happened to me, I tried to have more lunch meetings with that person, where we could discuss private aspects of our lives, because this helped to find commonality and forged a deeper connection.

It is just as important to know what your values and core beliefs are in corporate life and to be honest about them and not to play games. I have known many managers who play games with their team for self-preservation or because they think leading is acting. I believe they get caught out and become outcasts when people see them for what they really are, inauthentic beings driven by an ego state that demands they are the best and win continually. We only have one reputation. When it is lost, it takes a long time to rebuild. When people understand who you are and what drives you, they will trust you to do the right thing for them and for their teams. True collaboration and a deeper connection is sacrificed in this leadership example and undermines trust and emotional safety.

I do not see ambition in a negative light. It is only ambition at all cost, especially at the cost of the team, yourself or other individuals that drives inauthenticity.

## **The corporate clone, the chameleon and/or the pretender**

In corporate life you are often told you need to adapt to fit in. The concept of the corporate clone, the chameleon and the pretender has taught me acceptance. It was one of the most challenging learning experiences for me, but also it unlocked my greatest personal growth when I understood the secret. Learning to accept difference unconditionally and without judgement.

### ***The corporate clone***

I sometimes wonder why some people need to move themselves mentally into 'the work zone' on a Sunday evening. They already feel a bit depressed, cannot have too much time with their friends and need to prepare mentally for the next day. Many people I know hate Sunday evenings, purely because they are mentally in that place where they need to compromise themselves and plan for how they need to 'be' the next day.

This is because of the cloak we wear for the interactions we dread. It is a cloak that helps us to survive the inauthentic world and to get through each day. It also helps us to survive the inauthentic relationships we sometimes have with other people at work. It allows us to be a certain way and have something to blame it on, when we are not happy in this environment. Very often managers can use the culture of an organisation as an excuse to say that someone just does not fit in and needs to change their behaviour. I have met many fabulous women who have been told to tone down their quirkiness if they want to progress. They have all conformed and left or lost some tiny little piece of themselves or learned to express themselves in a different way.

It has also taken me a long time to realise that sometimes people will simply not be honest with me in the corporate environment because of the seniority of my previous role. It really frustrates me and is why I build more connected relationships, where individuals are more likely to speak up and tell me what they really think.

I always remain as true to myself as I can. Occasionally, I also got sucked into this world. I have always been very cheeky by nature. I used this cheekiness to

bring my authenticity to the forefront in corporate life and trump the corporate clone. It was no surprise when my first German boss nicknamed me 'Cheeky'. I sometimes use this 'cheek' to my advantage, to say things in a humoristic way when I do not agree with something. It does not offend as much as when I am serious. It is the same as using appropriate humour. The more senior I became, the more I used this cheek, but being cautious to ensure I was always respectful. I recall one review meeting where we had two senior executives in attendance and a group of 20 people around a table. I was presenting the financial results and one of these executives challenged me that we were lowballing the financial results. I answered: "We are being cautious to ensure we reach the result and certainty is what you pay us for. We want to make sure we achieve our goals even when unexpected risks might occur." In hindsight, I was horrified that I had been so cheeky with him in front of a room full of people. Other people came to me afterwards and commented on how I stood up for myself. I had known the senior executive for a long time and worked with him before and our relationship was fine for this type of interaction. However, I did wonder if I had gone too far, given the other senior people present.

What is the moral of being cheeky? I bring more of myself to work by being cheeky. I stay true to this nickname and I refuse to do what I see as ludicrous, for example simply following orders because someone told me to. With greater self-awareness, I understand that I use it to speak up when things are not exactly the way I feel they should be or when my values are crossed. I mainly use this in the corporate environment and refer to it as my corporate clone challenge language.

I have always considered myself a bit of a positive deviant, meaning that I take actions that other people think are too hard or cannot be done. I flex the rules and the framework to make it happen. For example, I once consciously wore a denim skirt to a no jeans event. I used the skirt as an analogy to show my team that I was not breaking a rule, I was simply flexing within the framework.

I have met many individuals who are able to thrive in the corporate environment and I thrived in it for 22 years. These individuals are able to stay true to themselves, to push and challenge the boundaries, and they drive change in an intrapreneurial way within corporates. These individuals make a difference every day through understanding themselves and the environment and adapting continuously. The trick is to understand the corporate language, use

it when you need to, but remain who you are; being as authentic as you can be, in all interactions and never compromising who you are or your core values, by using a high level of self-awareness and an awareness of the environment.

### ***The chameleon***



*The whole chameleon thing about acting. That's why I'm moving towards directing - it's a much more healthy occupation.*

**Andy Serkis**

I had always thought that being a chameleon was negative until I met the pretenders. I realised the error in my thinking. I had to meet the pretenders to understand the difference. The pretenders are responsible for my biggest growth and an understanding of how to let go of judgement and grudges.

A chameleon essentially remains the same animal while it changes its colours to fit into the external environment. At its core, it is still the same animal. It has the same values and set of ethics and the same underlying set of beliefs. When it needs to change to fit in or survive, it uses an adaptive skill to adjust its colour tone to its external perspective. Usually, it is also quite easy to spot the chameleon changing its colour, especially when you know the chameleon well.

Many leaders lead from a place where they either take the credit or they blame their team members. I have experienced countless leaders and executives who are excellent examples throughout 22 years in corporate life and business. They know how to play politics to serve their greatest intentions. Climbing the corporate ladder is tantamount to their success and they need to look good at all times. Often they do not buy into a concept but will allow their teams to work in them or even drive the projects. I realised it was because they could look good when the projects are successful. If it is not successful, they are

willing to say, it was the team's idea and they simply went along with it. We do not need to blame them for this situation because their drivers are survival of self and always looking good. Historically this might have served them well in the command and control type organisations they had the pleasure of growing up in. I have seen this many times, where executives go with the idea of a subordinate and if it is a success, they look good through it. If it fails they turn the employee into the sacrificial lamb. I realised relatively early in my career this was how many of my managers worked. I knew the game and was willing to go along with it because I never embarked on anything I did not believe in. I always attacked every new project with the necessary passion to ensure a level of success. I knew this was the way these leaders worked and I did not respect them any less for it. It was their survival mechanism and I chose to play in this world for many years. The type of chameleons I just described, are not strong ethically based leaders. Corporate cultures are also changing to require more skilled leaders that inspire and motivate teams.

There is another type of chameleon adept at playing politics and who knows the rules of the game. These chameleons are different because they are steeped in core values, with ethics at the heart. This type can be respected and engaged and are normally good leaders.

Sometimes being a mirror for them and pointing out their behaviour also helps. They might realise what they have become, especially when they use the other hues or politics and not the core colours of the chameleon.

For example, one of the senior leaders I respected most was an ethical man and he had taken on a new position. From day one, he was convinced everything was done better and more effectively in his previous position. That is what it seemed like at the outset. However, as an organisation we had been through the economic crisis and had multiple executive changes at the top. The organisation had been through a very difficult period to achieve its cost targets. He questioned everything relentlessly. He compared everything we did to the company he came from and we always fell short. It was soul destroying and I felt as if everything we had achieved had not been good enough. He was pressing my 'not good enough' button repeatedly. I tried for weeks to do better, to be unaffected by him and accept his challenges. However, one afternoon I had enough and I decided to speak to him, share my feelings and show my vulnerability.

Looking back, this was where my real shift to becoming a more authentic self, started to emerge. We sat down in our meeting and I explained how it made me feel every time he questioned our actions in such a vociferous way. I said it made me feel as if we had done everything wrong and it made me feel worthless and not good enough as the Chief Financial Officer. The good thing about sharing my feelings was that no one could disagree with them because they were uniquely mine. Explaining this almost had the same effect as a physical assault on him due to his strong sense of ethics. He physically got up and took a step back before going to his desk for a breather. He came back to me a few moments later and apologised profusely.

In that moment, one of the deepest and most satisfying working relationships I have ever had the pleasure of working in, was born. It all started because I was driven to be brutally honest and truly authentic. I showed my own vulnerabilities and exposed my own patterns of behaviour. To this day, I have an excellent relationship with him and he became a true ally for me in the change journey I embarked on a few years later. Our business relationship is now characterised by mutual respect and a deep understanding of each other's values and ethics. I also became a sounding board for him when he needed to share his frustrations. The bottom line for me is that we can be who we are, be true to ourselves and play the organisational politics when needed. The key is to ensure we do not lose sight of who we are and what our underlying values are. We should never compromise the core needs that feed our soul, no matter how scary or fearful it might be.

### ***The pretenders – the gazelle, the lion or the crocodile?***

The pretenders are different, because they never present themselves in one form, like the chameleon. I am not able to assess the game they play, let alone the rules of his game. One moment they are the gazelles frolicking on the African plains waiting for the lion to pounce. The next moment they are the lions pouncing, or the crocodiles slithering underneath the water, ready to grab the gazelle and pull it under. With a lion, you can see him coming, with the crocodile there is no warning. From one day to the next, you do not know if you will be encountering the harmless gazelle or the hidden danger below the surface.

After I met the pretenders, I decided I would rather encounter the chameleons because they are easier to understand. After letting go of judgement and

learning to respect difference, I understand both are a survival mechanism and a way of being to protect the inner self. I could never determine what the pretenders stood for, what their values were and what they really believed in. One day I would think I understood them, only to find the next day they showed me a different side that my analytical mind could not relate to. The new traits did not fit the picture I had already built from the previous interactions. It drove me to despair and frustrated me terribly. I wanted the pretenders to be more like me, show themselves and just be done with it. Unfortunately, pretenders choose the way to behave based on their needs for survival. I do not know how much of what they do is a manipulation of other people and how much is pure survival mechanism. I shared my frustrations with a colleague who similarly hates it when she encounters a pretender in her group of colleagues or friends. One day he kisses her on the cheek when he greets her and the next time they meet, he shakes her hand. This immediately makes her feel she must have angered him, to deserve his hand. I suggested she use her cheeky side and says: "I am not having the hand today; we normally kiss." I also suggested she avoid overanalysing or overthinking the situation.

The way I accept the pretenders is to visualise them where they would be most authentic, their home life. I see the pretence for what it is, their coping mechanism. Who am I to judge how another human being copes, chooses to be, or how they lead?

As soon as I feel angry with them in a situation, I visualise them with their wife, partner or husband and children at home, with no mask and no pretence, simply being who they are. Sometimes I even visualise giving them a big hug before I next meet them. This puts me in a much better place in these types of relationships.

If pretending is what propels you through the day, I am not here to judge. If you think you might be in this category, the following steps might help you.

- Analyse the coping mechanisms you use to counter the pretending.
- Gain a conscious understanding of yourself, seeing the behaviour for what it is.
- Visualise moving away from the behaviour, to look at it more clinically and with detachment.

- Decide consciously without the emotion of being in it, whether you want to change. The answer might be to do nothing for a long time, which is fine because the behaviour has at least been consciously recognised.

A pretender, leading a team, might find that people say: "I simply do not get him/her." This is because people cannot relate to the pretender. People need a certain level of consistency and transparency from those that lead them to feel comfortable with the interactions. Team members generally need someone to look up to, someone to follow and respect. The easiest way for them to achieve this, is when they see something they can relate to. They need emotional safety and trust as a basis to relate to someone. This would be similar in private relationships. Individuals would rather be with other people that they are able to understand and relate to.

If you feel you want to remain a pretender, it is absolutely **fine. Though**, I would take a look at the relationships around you, especially those most precious to you, the current and the past ones. Are you sometimes bringing this pretender to these interactions? Do you sometimes change without realising? Only you can determine if you want to have these deeply important relationships, shaped by aspects that are untrue and not really you. Sometimes these types of relationships end in ruins and it is not surprising. It is all about a deeper understanding of the behaviour and the consequences it can lead to. True collaboration is not possible while pretending because trust will be lost.

After this description of the types of 'animals' found in corporate, business and even private life **you** might recognise these behavioural traits in your own working environment. If you feel compromised by this environment too often, there is a conscious choice to be made. Do you continue or do you find an environment that more closely aligns to your true authenticity and your core values? If you believe you need to move, you might feel the instantaneous fear flowing from this realisation. Remember that fear can lead us to great possibilities and our greatest potential.

### Personal life and relationships

Another question to ask yourself is how to be authentic and connect at a deeper level if the people in your personal relationships and private life are not

authentic. Somehow I think the answer is easier in personal life. Do we really need relationships that are not sustaining who we really are and want to be? We spend so much of our time working and the reality is that we will be faced with inauthentic behaviour in the working environment. By accepting personal relationships, in addition to the working relationships not based in authenticity, seems like too much of a compromise, which is forgoing a type of nurturing required by our core or soul to be truly happy and fulfilled.

When your relationships compromise who you are at your core, your values and ethics, then you need to assess if you want to live in this incongruence and out of sync with yourself. If you choose this path, be aware exhaustion might follow. Making decisions consciously and understanding the consequences that might follow is a first step to a higher level of self-awareness. Sometimes it might be painful to let go of a relationship. However, in the long-term it might be good for your authenticity and wellbeing.

## Collaboration

Collaboration is commonly defined as working with other people or organisations to reach shared goals. The current collaboration model as experienced in corporate life and business is one where individuals in the group or teams are more important than the ultimate outcome for which they are working together. This needs to change with higher authenticity to ensure the outcome is more important than the individuals. The sum becomes bigger than the whole of its individual parts and they reach duality.

We increase collaboration with other people to find the best solutions to problems. We do this through greater diversity of thought or cognitive diversity from bringing different experiences into the solutions that lead to decisions. True collaboration is honouring different perspectives by taking them into account. It is about the diversity of thought and ensuring we have reached the best result by using all possible skills and information to our advantage.

Cultural paradigms and hierarchy can withhold us from realising true collaboration. For example, in many cultures the man is perceived to be the head of the house. I have a friend who lives this paradigm every day. He sees himself as the leader of the house and charges himself with the enormity of providing for his family. His wife is actually an equal contributor. Somehow he is

unable to see it for what it truly is, a collaborative purpose-driven partnership. A partnership raising and educating children together and providing them with the best set of opportunities is the purpose. Unlocking this reality and honouring the contribution of both parties, unlocks the connectedness and their true authentic alignment.



*Collaboration isn't about giving up our individuality;  
it's about realising our greater potential*

**Joseph Rain**

Hierarchy in organisations sometimes comes with the preconceived idea that we can get to the best results by only relying on our history and past success. With the fast pace of change we will need more creativity and ways of doing things differently. Using the natural diversity and authenticity of individuals through purpose-driven collaboration can help. When we are truly authentic and say what we actually think, we will probably come to very different solutions to the everyday issues that face us at work and in business. Instead we behave the way we think we should to get ahead in a certain environment or to attain a certain result. When we are all more open about our real views, we can connect with each other more deeply, without fear of retribution and we will bring about more authenticity and trust. When we lose the fear of failure as organisations and individuals and unlock true learning, connectedness and collaboration flow, we will have created truly authentic organisations where interactions are based on trust and learning.

What is really important is that we create companies and a world where:

- people can be themselves every day;
- employees can resonate with authentic customers;
- organisations and businesses are invested in employee engagement for all generational levels, genders, sexual preference and ethnicity;
- people are accepted for who they are authentically; and
- we deeply respect difference.

We use diversity of thought resulting from greater authenticity to foster collaboration, to ensure we propel ourselves to the highest possibility of innovation and creativity. To ensure we are successful, **stay** ahead of the robots and **drive** profit in this ever-changing fast-paced world.

Collaboration brings out our collective intelligence and inherent diversity of thought. Combined with connectedness and our emotional intelligence **we** reach true authenticity and the state of being. We are now ready to harness our authentic POWER.

## REFLECTIONS AND INSIGHTS

- Cultivate a deep respect for difference; we are stronger together when we understand more about each other.
- Recognise the value in other people, their individual uniqueness.
- Suspend judgement and let go of grudges to connect at a deeper level and have a more meaningful life.
- True integration and seamless movement between home and work life means that we are being ourselves everywhere, all the time.
- Connectedness in business and corporate life can be a challenge.
- Being the corporate clone, the chameleon or the pretender are survival mechanisms to deal with inauthentic environments.
- The purpose of collaboration is greater than our own individuality.
- Collaboration is my purpose, your purpose, our shared purpose and: 'Who am I with you?'
- The duality in collaboration means the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.
- Identify your collaborative purpose-driven partnerships to provide more meaning and authentic alignment.

A large, dark gray number '9' is positioned in the upper right quadrant. Below it, a series of concentric, wavy lines in varying shades of gray flow from the left side towards the right, creating a sense of movement and depth.

# 9

## **Where Consciousness and Connectedness Collide**

The integrated being – driven by intuition  
and purpose



*We are afraid of the enormity of the possible*

Emile M Cioran



# 9

## **H**arnessing authentic POWER

When we fully and equally live the Me and Us **di** dimensions we are connected and conscious, emotionally and socially intelligent and we can harness the inner POWER that redefined authenticity brings. There has to be a desire to connect to all the elements and both the dimensions equally, to embrace a journey of development and unlock this POWER. This POWER is seated in the core of who we are, it provides us with confidence and a deep sense of purpose aligned to our core being. It helps to dispel those deep-seated limiting self-beliefs and fears because we have shone a powerful light on them and brought them into our conscious understanding. We are seeing them for what they really are; the state of doing.

I use the acronym POWER because it resonates deeply with my experiences. It has helped me to guide and navigate through the challenges I have faced with multifaceted leaders and employees during my time in corporate life. Some of these individuals have been more self-aware than others. Some have still been on their journey of finding out who they really are. Most of them are still battling the inner beasts, either the ego or some form of fear holding them back.

The **POWER** of authenticity will not be revealed overnight. It is a journey of deeper understanding, a journey of self-discovery and has multiple facets. I have self-developed in every new role I performed and I have been fortunate to have life coaches supporting me on my journey. These have not been for long periods of time or continuously, but enough of an impulse to push me to the next stage of my growth and development. My journey is not complete. I still need to harness the full potential of my intuition equally in all the various aspects of my life.

I have never understood why some people are so afraid to develop and grow? Why they attend a conference or a training programme with dread for the activities and learning to come. I have also felt trepidation in these situations but not an overarching dislike or negativity around being developed or finding out new ways to develop myself. If this is often how you feel, I think there is a deeper topic that needs shining a light on to bring the underlying fear into your consciousness. Perhaps it has to do with looking stupid in front of other people or being found out to be an imposter. You can unlock this mystery and see it for what it really is; another limiting self-belief.

POWER through authenticity:

- allows **P**resence;
- **O**vercomes fear;
- creates a **W**hole integrated being;
- allows **E**ffortless flow; and
- creates **R**esonance with purpose.

### Presence

Sometimes presence is referred to as gravitas; that quiet inner confidence. The presence when you enter a room; when you are on stage or the focus of attention; the feeling of 'I belong in my skin' and 'I am proud of who I am'. This is resonance with 'authentically me and allowed to be' - referring to the being you are. Presence is the confidence that radiates from you when you know who you are, what you stand for and your true purpose resonates and flows through your veins.

It is an inner strength that develops over time as you have more clarity regarding your values, your essential truths and have dispelled some of your most limiting self-beliefs. It is the higher level of self-awareness you have gained through authenticity. It is when the analysis of all your positive and negative drivers, stemming from your experiences as a child or young adult, have helped you to recognise behavioural patterns in yourself. From doing this you have a deep-seated confidence in who you are, where you are going and what you are ultimately here to achieve. Even if you have only unlocked a third of the drivers and beliefs, you will already see a change and an inner strength emerging.

I have experienced this with multiple leaders who have been coached, helped or developed in these elements. The more insight they gain about themselves, the higher the level of clarity becomes, and the more confidence emerges, providing the gravitas that makes them stand taller and helps them to square their shoulders and breathe from a more freeing space.

## Overcoming fear



*Everything you want is on the other side of fear*

**Jack Canfield**

You have already read about the theory of fear and the fear releasing technique in Chapter 3. Understanding your fear is the way to conquer it. Playing with fear and using the fear releasing techniques are the keys to unlock and minimise its power forever. We all face the inherent fear of failure or ridicule, which is behaviour-driven. By unlocking our deepest desire and true potential we will overcome this fear and be closer to our true calling.

As soon as we see the fears, we can move towards ridiculing them; in the nicest, most gentle and humorous possible way. To start our journey and enable us to understand the amazing possibilities that lie behind some fears.

The fears I have most commonly encountered in my work, during the last 22 years, include:

- not **been** good enough;
- being caught out as a fraud;
- being inadequate;
- being wrong and looking stupid;
- not being the best we can be;
- not being able to add value and make a difference;
- disappointing someone really important in our lives;
- letting others down, because we have not performed as expected;
- being judged; and
- not being liked.

The fear of not being liked is a very prevalent fear in relationships at work and in homes. We may adapt our behaviour to ensure that other people will like us and warm to us. This is very ironic because the fear can drive us to be more inauthentic. We can end up in the wrong relationships because we succumb to this fear; we might hide ourselves from people close to us because we fear they will not like the real us. We can become locked in relationships, fearing to be ourselves and to being found out as imposters. The real choice here is to determine if we want to live a lie with the consequential pressure it puts on the human being, especially mentally. Or we can choose to live authentically, face the consequences and own up to who we truly are and love to be, irrespective of what might follow. An excellent book on fear and overcoming it is *Feel the fear and do it anyway*, by Susan Jeffers.

I have already mentioned my greatest fear of leaving the corporate world, which had been a safety net for me for more than 22 years. I had a steady income and career prospects that so easily awaited me. However, if I had remained locked on this pathway of safety, I would have never started to write, impact and help to develop other individuals.

Do not underestimate the power inherent in the fear, because it also acts as a driver and has driven me to achieve and change. As with many things in life, it is about balance. It is having the ability to see the new world and opportunities that lie behind the fears and to engage the best parts of yourself and your greatest abilities to move towards it.

In my case, this will be creating the Academy of Authentic Change\* and creating an authenticity revolution. The concept of true authenticity, which allows people to bring all parts of themselves to all the interactions they have and in all aspects of their lives.

## Whole integrated being

The whole being is well and healthy. The integrated being is both conscious and connected. The whole integrated being is connected to all four parts of its being, equally. I am my mind, my body, my heart and my soul and they are all equally important. To escape from this constant state of doing, the state of being demands we connect with all four elements in a more balanced approach.

The mind is where most of us 'live' and dwell daily. The heart is an entirely different matter and the soul is what some of us consider ethereal or some spirit, which leaves your body when you die.

We focus mostly on the mind and the activity around it. We replay conversations, work out what we want to do next, rehearse conversations, plan what we need to do; again perpetuating the state of doing. This does not mean we have a healthy mind. A healthy mind is one, which can be quiet. The reason that mindfulness\* has become so increasingly necessary is because we realise we can achieve more when we are able to slow this process of the mind down and become more aware or mindful. Many people now are looking for the 'off button', especially for the mind. Through true authenticity we have high self-awareness, which helps us to become the watcher of the mind and identify the limiting self-beliefs or unhelpful repeats.

In the United Kingdom, a quarter of all people experience mental health problems in any given year; this includes depression. There is an increasing tendency towards wellness issues within the workplace and the world. This stems from not taking proper care of ourselves. The care is not simply for our bodies, but also for our minds, hearts and our spirits. There is also an increase in the suicide rate for people under the age of 45. I believe our separate lives, our disintegration and not connecting properly to all the four elements above exacerbates our stress and health issues.

Many people focus on the physical body and its wellbeing and derive a sense of calm from running, yoga or Pilates, going to the gym or a physical escape, such as 10,000 steps a day. In essence, we are not focussed on all four of the elements equally; the whole being. It is therefore, no wonder we are not whole or integrated, by any long stretch of the imagination.

Next to the brain, the heart is the most powerful organ in the body. Many people suffer from heart disease or disconnection from the heart. The heart is what makes us human and what also creates a strong connection to other people. The heart is the route to our humanity and our empathy. I have already described how we need to connect and unlock our heart more. However, I never felt my heart before I tried to connect with it during my daily meditations. This focus on my heart, breathing through it and sending love from it has changed my relationship with my heart and with other people. It took me a while to understand how my heart connects me to my humanity and to other people. It helps me to be soft when my warrior energy wants to engage and I realise all people want to do good, even if they are not like me or as driven as I am.

The soul or spirit and the deeper connection is what gives true meaning to our lives. The soul is commonly thought of as the immortal essence of all living beings. I prefer to focus on intuition and this spirit connection. Intuition or the 'gut feeling' can be unlocked when we are closer to our soul or spirit. There are practices that can increase our intuition and our spirit connection. Intuition is described as our inner guidance and an instinctive knowing without logical thought. When I have become more connected to people, my spirit or intuition increases in conversations with them. I have already mentioned the goose bumps I can feel. When we are both conscious and connected the spirit connection, intuition or gut emerges more frequently.



*Intuition is a spiritual faculty and does not explain,  
but simply points the way*

**Florence Scovel Shinn**

## Effortless flow

Traditionally, we were good at keeping the various aspects of our lives separate; work life, social life and personal life. People are spending more and more time at the office or working remotely. It is often mentioned that we are now expected to be 'always switched on'. The technology revolution has meant we are not able to separate the different parts of our life as seamlessly as before with this 'always switched on' phenomenon. For example, we can read our email anytime, anywhere and respond anytime and anywhere. We are always connected to some form of technology. Downtime and time for self and the inner relaxation of mind and body is becoming less and less. I can feel this need for my being to be well and for more relaxation and downtime. For example, we might be with a group of friends having lunch and we write a tweet regarding our work. Or we have an instant message or a text from our partner and quickly have to answer.

We need to question why we feel these habits are necessary; is this to impress someone or create a persona that is not truly authentic? If the answer is yes; this is clearly food for further thought. If the desire is simply to 'always be switched on' and contactable, it becomes increasingly difficult to separate the different worlds and have different personas in each of them. A total separation of all the different aspects of our lives is becoming completely impossible.

Some people may view this offensively because they want to keep their work and personal lives extremely separate. From my own experience, this disconnect is not the way forward in the new modern world. When we spend more of our waking lives at work, we should not be willing to hide who we truly are, for such a large portion of our lives. It is no wonder we are not well; work stress is getting to us, when we pretend to be someone we are not, or regulate too much of who we are at work. People are craving more meaning in their lives and want more out of life. Some people are not able to make sense of life any more, the pressures from relationships, work and generally getting by **everyday** are ever increasing.

We should rather strive for the situation where we can seamlessly move between the various realms of our life; not needing to change who we are between them. Bringing all of ourselves to each and every encounter, at the heart of it, being 'me'.

In my corporate role, when I delivered the large change project in a way that was misaligned to my values of developing people, I felt very disconnected from myself. There was no heart, no soul and no connection to anything. I became very exhausted very quickly and felt as if I was trapped with no way out.

The more aligned we are with who we are and our true purpose, the less we will have to pretend. The less we pretend, the less energy we expend being what we are not. The more we understand about ourselves, the less time we spend in our mind with the voice in our mind telling us we are not good enough, following the thoughts of our limiting self-beliefs. We achieve effortless flow when we move from one interaction or situation to the next, without having to change who we are at our core. When we are consolidated and congruent at a personal and inner level, when we are integrated in all the aspects of our lives and we are ourselves everywhere, we effortlessly flow from one interaction to the next. Improved mental health flows from being more authentically you, in all your interactions.

Being in a state closest to who you really are and in a job or at a company closely aligned to your life purpose and your values will mean you can complete your tasks or play your role without constantly feeling exhausted, with more effortless flow. It will probably mean you can achieve more in less time. It certainly has meant this for me. Due to the congruence between purpose and what you are achieving through your daily tasks, you will be using your inner truth, your natural instinct and moving along effortlessly.

Have you ever watched the water flow down a river or a gorge? There is nothing that stands in its way. It flows with an immense adaptability taking on the form it needs or flowing over or around any obstacle in its way.



*Water is fluid, soft, and yielding. But water will wear away rock, which is rigid and cannot yield. As a rule, whatever is fluid, soft, and yielding will overcome whatever is rigid and hard. This is another paradox: What is soft is strong.*

**Lao Tzu**

Authenticity increases our fluidity, resilience and flow. It will lessen those jarring moments in our lives when we see them for what they truly are. These moments challenge us, help us grow and use our inner strength and connectedness to our being. We will navigate around them, effortlessly like water flowing through the gorge.

Being more authentic in all the various facets of our lives will help us unlock our highest potential and help us be who we are. We will no longer need to pretend and we can have this higher level of integration to seamlessly move between all the facets of our lives; improving our flow and living effortlessly in congruence or unison with our core purpose. We will give more to those around us and to the planet because we are less separate and more connected to the whole.

## Resonance

From the higher state of self-awareness, the resonance is with yourself and your core being. You realise what is at your core and have increased your emotional intelligence. The resonance with other people emerges from the connected relationships and the purpose-driven collaborations, which emerge following the levels of social intelligence in the state of being. When we let go of the ego and of competing and we learn to accept differences and suspend judgement, we can connect more deeply with other people and ourselves; and we start to resonate.

A resonance emerges with your true purpose and your greater purpose on earth. Dr Wayne Dyer describes it as that burning desire, at the core of your being.

For those of us who are not in the position where every moment will be spent in congruence, it is about speaking up when situations hit our core. Making a difference to try and correct it. Mainly, it is about having an awareness of where you are on your journey and developing and understanding who you truly are. It is working in congruence with this purpose and aligning what you do, to your inner desire.

Create the desire to find your purpose, focus an intention on it and plan activities such as, reading; attending a workshop or talk; and creating a vision board, to place the necessary attention on finding and unlocking your purpose. This process took me about six months until I started to see the purpose emerge. It was a further year before my purpose was really clear and I saw the Academy and the revolution emerging.

When we resonate more deeply with other people, our passions and ourselves, we start to understand the interconnectedness of all things far better and we want to do more for the planet and our purpose on it and within the world.

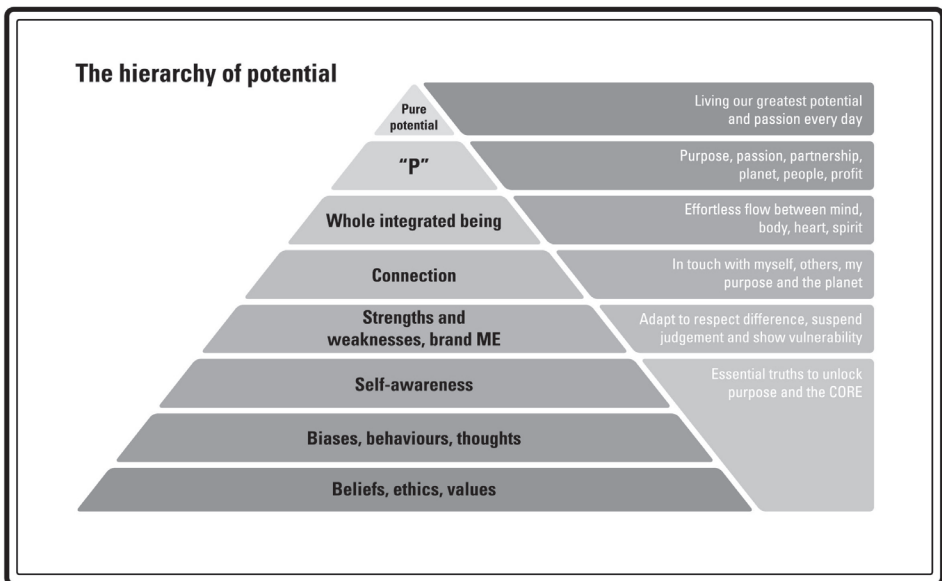
### **Pure potential**

When we are more connected, conscious and harnessing our authentic POWER, we have reached a position of pure potential. At this level we are **focussed** on our intuition and there is more purpose to everything we do. The whole becomes greater than the sum of the parts and we enter a selfless interaction based on empathy with intuition and purpose at the heart. Our humanity shines through in everything we do and we start driving the extended Ps; of purpose, passion and partnership through our everyday lives. We unlock our pure potential.

This is to achieve the hierarchy of potential in the following diagram, with the build-up of the two dimensions of emotional and social intelligence. We adapt to respect differences, suspend judgement and show vulnerability to ensure a true connection and purpose driving what we do.

It is no longer what other people can do for us, or what we can do for other people; it is what we can 'create and be' together, to secure a better future for the planet. We enter a stage of reciprocity and 'paying it forward'; where the social and sharing economy drives us and our interactions with other people. What is missing today is the true connectedness and purpose-driven collaboration and the bringing of our advanced intuition to these interactions.

## THE HIERARCHY OF POTENTIAL



## Connected to purpose

It really does not matter what we call it; it matters that we see it for what it is; the truth of why we are here and the object of our desires; the path to true happiness. It is the essence that matters and not the label, such as, religion or belief. We are here to attain something greater than ourselves, more specifically bigger than the ego state, to live closer in connectedness with other human beings. Whichever way we view this, we are here to connect with each other, to help people and action a level of social good. Only then will we feel truly fulfilled and happy. When we give up the ego state, where we always have to feel we are right, we have won, or we are better than other people and we have more. When we relinquish the need for control, we can find our purpose and deliver on it.

Work is so integral to our lives that 'work is life'. The sooner we recognise this and change how we are at work, the sooner we can unlock more happiness into our lives.

Connectedness and integration in all aspects of our lives is what we should desire and foster within organisations because it will lead to higher efficiency and reduced **wellbeing** issues. This also fits better with the principles of **business** 'doing good'; for their employees and for their customers and their contextual environment.

Businesses 'doing good'  is not simply about providing social activities in the community or what they want people to recognise them for. It includes a social responsibility to have employees working in the way that best suits them to ensure they excel and have a higher level of motivation, growth, development and engagement.

If our place of work is seen as a place to develop our relationships with each other; a place where we can develop and grow our levels of consciousness and our connectedness to other people and everyone accepted this , then a fundamental shift will occur. We want organisations to provide the platform for this connection and allow people to be who they are. We know happy employees are engaged employees. Engaged employees are willing to give more because they enjoy what they are doing and they can be themselves. Creativity is unleashed allowing a higher sense of resonance with customers, other people and the organisation. Organisations are seen as a way to further social good and provide back to the community.

My hope is that this connection to purpose brings us to a higher connection with the planet and to all things connected. We are here for a greater good and we need to sustain this planet and 'give back'; living in connectedness with other people.

We start giving true meaning to giving back when we enter an era of the social economy and not only socially responsible business, but businesses based on sustaining society. A core pillar of a business purpose in the future will be to give back based on the products and services they offer. Perhaps it is an 80/20 or a 60/40 principle, where 60-80% is based on profit generation and 20-40% is based on giving back to society. I see this as companies collaborating

with future customers and users in a more 'open sourced' way; where new partnerships are formed and connections made to sustain mother earth.

It will be a world where new partnerships are formed that were not thought of before, perhaps with previous competitors. In the changing world, with the Internet of Things new partnerships are emerging that are mutually beneficial and the sharing economy is being developed further.

## The sharing economy

The sharing economy is an eco-system around sharing different resources. Currently this sharing economy is still in its infancy and is still being developed. A sharing economy puts people and planet at the heart of the economic system. Goods and services within a sharing economy are designed for sustainability and obsolescence is avoided by the reuse of resources. A positive effect for the planet is driven through this economy. The sharing economy promotes society and a collective culture striving for greater good. Diversity is celebrated and purpose-driven collaboration is at the heart of everything.

I met many new connections in the year before I left corporate life. Most new people I met were willing to connect me to their contacts without expecting anything in return. Sometimes I was able to introduce them to contacts who were interesting for them, other times there was nothing evident given in return. A few months later, however, I noticed it became clear there might be other possible connections or we would simply stay in contact, meeting up regularly. I see this way of unlocking contacts to the benefit of other people as a micro-sharing economy starting to evolve.

## Intuition



*The only real valuable thing is intuition*

**Albert Einstein**

Intuition is the ability to understand something instinctively without any conscious reasoning. In his book, *Intuition - Knowing beyond logic*, Osho refers to the known, unknown and the unknowable. The known has already been scientifically proved. The unknown is still to be discovered and the unknowable is the mystery of the universe. Intuition is part of this unknowable mystery.

Many people describe intuition as coming from an inner knowing. Our instincts and intellect can also create an inner knowing. However, instincts are derived from past experiences and provide us with the ability to survive. The intellect is part of our rational mind and the place where most people operate from, on a daily basis. The intellect is not able to explain intuition. Intuition is at a higher level than intellect.

Intuition can be developed over time. The senses can act as a porthole to a higher level of intuition. For us to be intuitive, we need to turn off the mind activity and be fully present. We also need to fully embrace our emotions. I can access my intuition more readily when I am being mindful and when I meditate every day. My intuition is stronger when I work aligned to my purpose and develop and grow individuals. As I have mentioned, I can feel goose bumps when I say something that truly resonates with my core.

The part of my journey to being truly authentic, which still needs to be developed and harnessed to its full potential, is growing my own intuition.

## What is not authentic?

Authenticity does not mean I can say whatever I think and call it being authentically me. Other people have feelings and authenticity does not

allow us to have an excuse to be disrespectful or lose common values and courtesy. It means respecting many aspects in life even more because of recognising our true purpose, unlocking our hearts, our higher awareness and the interconnectedness of all beings.

Respecting differences and suspending judgement are cornerstones of true authenticity. Three categories of respect are critically important to ensure authenticity is maintained and not used as an excuse for bad behaviour. These include the following.

- Respect the audience.
- Respect vulnerabilities.
- Respect and honour commitments.

## Respect the audience

It is always important to keep in mind that all people are uniquely different. What can be fine for me, might be perceived differently by someone else. I have already mentioned cultivating a deep respect for difference. Therefore, it follows that we should think about the audience we address and engage with. For example, in meetings or relationships, when we meet someone new for the first time. We are in uncharted waters until we have a deeper sense of the other person or counterpart and therefore, it is important to think about our differences and engage this deeper respect for difference. When we meet someone new, it is better to reveal ourselves fully when there is a deeper connection. We should not simply show our deepest vulnerabilities or all of ourselves in overdrive from the very first moment. I already mentioned the example of connecting to the same frequency and dialling up our passion for maximum effect when there is a deeper connection and understanding of each other. I am not saying we should hide who we are, we should simply choose the moment when we are connected at a deeper level and dial up the intensity then.

For example, at a dinner one of my peers asked if authenticity meant being a dictator was acceptable. This would mean a loss of societal values and little or no recognition of the rights of others, which means no respect for difference and total inauthenticity.

At the last company I worked in, we changed the dress code to allow individuals to dress more authentically. One of the only prerequisites was to

respect the audience you were meeting. For example, if your guests were bankers and they all arrived in suits, respect for them would mean to dress similarly. If you were only meeting with internal people, jeans would be fine, if preferred. Authenticity is similar, based on a deeper recognition of difference and immense respect for this difference.

### **Respect vulnerabilities**

I have already described the tsunami of tears that was the result when I did not respect my emotions enough to acknowledge them. Respect the emotions and 'vulnerable you' enough to share it in measures you are comfortable with. Vulnerability will unlock the true connections and leave your soul feeling satisfied. The journey is not easy; from personal experience with the tsunami of tears; however, it is well worth it.

Also respect other people have vulnerabilities and when they share these, it might be hard for them. Treat this sharing with kindness and an openness of both the mind and the heart to deepen the connection.

### **Respect and honour commitments**

Authenticity should never be used as a reason for poor performance because the job or relationship you chose is no longer aligned to your purpose. Respect the choice you made and exit with dignity. Find another position aligned to your purpose and work in your authentic POWER. There might be immediate **fear based** reactions when you realise you are in the incorrect organisation, relationship or position.

It took me almost two years from the day I first had a glimpse of what it is I should really do, to the day I left my last corporate role. In this time it was very important to me to honour the commitment I had made to the company and my team and bring the best of me to fulfilling my role. At times this was not easy and respect and honour for my commitment was a guiding light, helping me to navigate through this period.

Inauthenticity has no power or resonance. But how can you survive the inauthenticity of others? Through acceptance, suspending judgement, respecting difference and unlocking your heart to those people who are different from you.

## REFLECTIONS AND INSIGHTS

- Living authenticity as redefined allows us to harness our authentic POWER.
- POWER = Presence, Overcoming fear, Whole integrated being, Effortless flow and Resonance.
- The integrated being is equally connected to the mind, body, heart and spirit or soul.
- Meditation provides time to be alone with ourselves without interruption and provides renewal.
- Meditation can help us to connect to different parts of the body.
- Resonance is with other people, our purpose, the planet and our core being.
- Where consciousness and connectedness collide, intuition and purpose prevail.
- Purpose in everyday life, purpose for the planet.
- The whole is bigger than the sum of its parts.
- The future can unlock growth in the sharing economy and a higher connection to the planet.
- Business can change to be based on sustaining society and the people within, providing a platform for people to develop and connect to other people.
- Respect is very important; for the audience, for our vulnerabilities and for our commitments.
- We accept the inauthenticity of other people through respecting difference, suspending judgement and unlocking our hearts.



# 10

## Be the **change**

Make a difference and create a ripple of authentic change in the world



*Be the change you want to see in the world*

**Mahatma Ghandi**



# 10

**D**o you want to help create a world where:

- we return to our humanity;
- we are deeply authentic in all aspects of our lives;
- we are conscious and connected;
- we deeply respect difference;
- we are equally connected to our mind, body, heart and spirit;
- we unlock our full potential through intuition and purpose;
- passion, purpose and partnership permeates everything we do;
- there is more meaning to life;
- we work in alignment and partnership to a greater good for the planet;
- we actively support the social economy and organisations live the rule of 80/60 for profit and 20/40 giving back or social good;
- **where** organisations partner to bring about social change as opposed to competing for profit;
- organisations are platforms where individuals are able to be themselves to grow, develop and connect with other people, including customers and clients;

- organisational cultures are more authentic, because they engage employees and customers; and
- social change is a reality.

Small changes made by us all, through our interactions with friends, colleagues or loved ones can manifest these changes.

Every change we make can be an incremental gain to create a ripple effect in the universe. It can be a ripple, which gains momentum and creates an authenticity movement and gradually demands a revolution of authentic change. A world where every little change is incremental towards building the overall change we want to create in the world. We are stronger together; together we can go further.



*A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history*

**Mahatma Gandhi**

Visit my website at [www.authenticityresolved.com](http://www.authenticityresolved.com) to download your knowledge gift – an Authenticity Toolkit - which includes the following tools and techniques to help you on your journey to true authenticity.

- Daily gratitude and journaling
- Capture negative feelings to achieve a shift or release in your life
- Analyse your biggest fear
- Be coached
- Practise guided meditation
- Practise mindfulness
- Develop and harness your intuition
- Receive a daily TUT inspiration from the universe
- Create a level of resilience – your energy angels
- Use tools to analyse your strengths
- Have a trusted sounding board
- Receive feedback from other people
- Use the 'I see you' Connection Game

I hope you have found my continuous journey insightful. I wish you well on your journey of discovery.

If the Authenticity POWER Model and this book has resonated with you; you want to be authentic in all aspects of your life; and you want to be part of the authentic change community, find out how you can help me create the Academy of Authentic Change by going to the following link on my website [www.authenticityresolved.com/academy](http://www.authenticityresolved.com/academy)

Please contact me in any of the following ways:

Website: [www.authenticityresolved.com](http://www.authenticityresolved.com)  
 Email: [enquiries@authenticityresolved.com](mailto:enquiries@authenticityresolved.com)  
 Facebook: [www.facebook.com/AuthenticityResolved](https://www.facebook.com/AuthenticityResolved)  
 Twitter: [twitter.com/AuthenticityRes](https://twitter.com/AuthenticityRes)



# Acknowledgements

## My editor and book coach Wendy Yorke

Your patience and support has helped me to clarify my thoughts. Without you my message would not have reached the world.

## My supportive Beta Readers

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Peter – thank you so much for your insights. The mix between your analytical mind, your curiosity and your empathetic side shaped the structure of the book and brought it to life.

Helen – thank you for always being there and for your unwavering belief in me.

Michelle – thank you for your support, the butterfly and the angel wings. I know you always have my back.

## My wonderful colleagues

Adam – the model really came to life when we discussed it and you challenged the idea. Thank you for your support and willingness to try something new.

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Susan – without your support every day I would not be pursuing my dream.

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Sara Boas – thank you for commencing my journey of development with me; for helping me to grow and teaching me about life and the joy of dancing it.

Dr Sam – thank you for your inspiration on Making a Difference and being an intrapreneur within a corporation.

Gosia – thank you for being responsible for the transformation of the butterfly. Without your strength, intuition and guidance my wings would never have developed fully.

Finally Rob – you inspired me to achieve more and to go further than I ever thought possible. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

# Footnotes and References

## Chapter 1

### Fourth Industrial Revolution

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is predicted by a Global Expert Challenge Insight Report, *The Future of Jobs – Employment, Skills and Workforce Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution*, published by the World Economic Forum in January 2016. It reveals how the top ten skills required to thrive in the business sector will change from 2015 to 2020. The report can be accessed from this link. [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Future\\_of\\_Jobs.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs.pdf)

### Top Ten Skills Required

#### 2020

|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Complex problem solving         | 1  |
| Critical thinking               | 2  |
| Creativity                      | 3  |
| People management               | 4  |
| Co-ordinating with other people | 5  |
| Emotional intelligence          | 6  |
| Judgement and decision making   | 7  |
| Service orientation             | 8  |
| Negotiation                     | 9  |
| Cognitive flexibility           | 10 |

#### 2015

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| Complex problem solving         |
| Co-ordinating with other people |
| People management               |
| Critical thinking               |
| Negotiation                     |
| Quality control                 |
| Service orientation             |
| Judgement and decision making   |
| Active listening                |
| Creativity                      |

### Athena Doctrine

*The Athena Doctrine - How women (and the men who think like them) will rule the future* is a book written by John Gerzema and Michael D'Antonio. The Ted talk about it can be accessed from this link. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YxgTsyL4y0E>

### Deloitte Millennial Study

Deloitte University published (2015) *The Radical Transformation of Diversity and Inclusion - The Millennial Influence*, which estimates that by 2025, 75% of the global workforce will be Generation Y. A copy can be accessed from this link. <http://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/radical-transformation-of-diversity-and-inclusion.html>

## **Millennials**

Millennials are the people referred to as Generation Y or Digital Natives. They are the generational cohort born between 1980 and 2000. Currently, they are the most studied and talked about generation to date.

## **Internet of Things (IoT)**

The Internet of Things is the network of physical objects; devices, vehicles, buildings and other items embedded with electronics, software, sensors and network connectivity, which enables these objects to collect and exchange data.

## **Chapter 2**

### **FTSE 100**

Financial Times Stock Exchange 100 companies listed on the London Stock Exchange with the highest market capitalisation.

### **C Suite**

C suite is used to collectively refer to a company's most important senior executives. The titles tend to start with the capital letter 'C', including: Chief Executive Officer (CEO); Chief Financial Officer (CFO); Chief Operations Officer (COO); and Chief Information Officer (CIO) etc.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Imposter Syndrome**

Imposter syndrome (also known as the impostor phenomenon or fraud syndrome) was a term coined in 1978 by clinical psychologists Dr. Pauline R. Clance and Suzanne A. Imes. It refers to high-achieving individuals marked by an inability to internalise their accomplishments and a persistent fear of being exposed as a fraud despite external evidence of their competence. Those people exhibiting the syndrome remain convinced they are frauds and do not deserve the success they have achieved. Proof of success is dismissed as luck, timing, or as a result of deceiving other people into thinking they are more intelligent and competent than they believe themselves to be.

### **Gosia Gorna**

Gosia Gorna an award-winning transformational life coach and trainer, who works with clients from across the world, with a particular focus in the United

Kingdom. Gosia uses intuitive insight and a range of highly effective techniques to bring about a profound transformation in people's lives. Gosia was awarded the Transformational Coach of the Year Award in the UK, in 2014. You can find more about her from these links.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgz7OCG41Mo>

<http://www.gosiagorna.com>

## Chapter 4

### Medtronic

Medtronic is a global company leading in medical technology, services and solutions. The company is headquartered in Dublin, Ireland with operational headquarters in Fridley, Minnesota USA.

## Chapter 6

### Dr Wayne Dyer

Dr Wayne Dyer was an American philosopher, author of self-development and motivational books and a motivational speaker. His first book, *Your Erroneous Zones*, has sold an estimated 35 million copies to date. He died on August 29, 2015. This is a link to his official website. [www.drwaynedyer.com](http://www.drwaynedyer.com)

Wayne Dyer is one of Hay House's most beloved authors, known worldwide as 'the father of self-motivation'. Wayne had been at the forefront of personal transformation for three decades. Audio downloads and an omnibus of his most powerful works can also be accessed from this link.

<http://www.hayhouse.co.uk/the-essential-wayne-dyer-collection>

### Academy of Authentic Change

The Academy of Authentic  change will be a place where we can connect with like-minded individuals and organisations. My vision is to create a new platform for individuals and companies believing in authentic change. It is a platform for individuals to grow and develop and share their experiences and for organisations committed to drive change from within. One pillar of the academy is about bringing about social change and making a difference in the social sphere.

### Deepak Chopra

Deepak Chopra is an Indian American author, public speaker, alternative medicine advocate and a prominent figure in the New Age movement. Deepak

is sometimes referred to as the 'mind-body pioneer'. He is a medical doctor specialising in internal medicine and endocrinology and belongs to many renowned medical bodies.

<http://www.chopra.com/about-us/deepak-chopra-md>

<https://www.deepakchopra.com/>

### **Squash Falconer**

Squash Falconer is an adventurer, motivational speaker and presenter. She has spent her life seeking out and fulfilling adventures. She has climbed Mount Everest and achieved many impressive adventures on multiple continents.

<http://www.squashfalconer.com/>

### **Vision Board**

A vision board is a collection of visual images. The images represent pictures of what you want to achieve for your future. They can contain inspirational words and meaningful personal images. It is a way of reminding yourself where you are heading. The vision helps to focus attention by stimulating networks in the brain. Images help the brain to map the path to your goals outside of your conscious mind or awareness. The following Harvard Business Review article contains further information.

<https://hbr.org/2014/03/to-reach-your-goals-make-a-mental-movie>

### **Aspire Workshop**

Aspire predominantly focusses on the coaching and development of female leaders. Aspire runs various workshops and webinars focussed on personal growth and development.

<http://www.aspirewomen.co.uk/index.php/>

The Aspire Foundation is a not for profit organisation, aiming to positively impact and make a difference to the lives of one billion women by 2020.

<http://www.theaspirefoundation.org/>

### **Dr Sam Collins**

Dr Sam Collins is the founder of Aspire and has been named 'One of the Top 200 Women to Impact Business and Industry' by Her Majesty the Queen. Dr Collins was named as one of the Top Ten Coaches by The Independent.

[http://www.aspirewomen.co.uk/index.php/about\\_aspire/dr\\_collins/](http://www.aspirewomen.co.uk/index.php/about_aspire/dr_collins/)

## **Chrissy Rucker**

Chrissy Rucker MBE  is the founder of the White Company in the UK and a British businesswoman. She started the White Company in 1994, was awarded an MBE in 2010 and in 2012 was chosen as the Private Businesswoman of the Year by the Financial Times. The link below is to a Telegraph interview with her. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/interiors/chrissie-rucker-the-white-company-interiors-design-decor-style-white-21/>

## **Chapter 7**

### **TUT**

A TUT from the universe is a note from the universe, inspiring people and reminding them to believe in something magical and greater than themselves. <http://www.tut.com/>

### **Meditation**

Meditation is a practice to train the mind and induce a level of consciousness. It is done to achieve a benefit for the mind and body. It is often used as a form of relaxation. <http://goodlifezen.com/how-to-start-meditating-ten-important-tips/>

I use a guided meditation by Gosia Gorna. <http://www.gosiagorna.com/products.html>

### **Brita Fernandez Schmidt**

Brita Fernandez Schmidt is the Executive Director of Women for Women International in the United Kingdom. <http://www.womenforwomen.org.uk/about-us/leadership/brita-fernandez-schmidt>  
<http://www.womenforwomen.org.uk/dame-helen-mirrer> 

### **Sara Boas**

Sara Boas is the founding director, principal coach and creator of the boas 'tools for transformation' and the director of training for the boas professional coach certification boas pcc™. She is a Master Certified Coach and co-chair of the Credentialing and Program Accreditation Committee of the International Coach Federation, which defines global standards for coaching. She is an

elected member of the European College of Coaches, a panel of foremost executive coaches who play a leading role in the profession.

<http://www.boastl.com/our-team/sara-boas>

### **Dr John Demartini**

Dr Demartini is considered one of the world's leading authorities on human behaviour and personal development. He is the founder of the Demartini Institute, a private research and education organization with a curriculum of more than 72 different courses covering multiple aspects of human development. His trademarked methodologies, the Demartini Method and the Demartini Value Determination, are the culmination of 42 years of cross-disciplinary research and study. His work has been incorporated into human development industries across the world.

<https://drdemartini.com/>

## **Chapter 9**

### **Mindfulness**

Mindfulness is the quality or state of being conscious or aware. It is a mental state achieved by focusing on the present moment, for example by focusing on the body and the breath. It is used as a therapeutic technique.

### **Boas elemental leadership™**

Elemental leadership is an approach to leadership development, which connects us with our common humanity and our unity with nature. It draws on the four elements of earth, air, fire and water. It enables participants to discover their core strengths and to reawaken neglected powers and sensitivities.

<http://www.boastl.com/sites/default/files/boas%20Elemental%20Leadership%20article.pdf>

### **Headspace**

Headspace is a form of mindful meditation and is a way to train your mind.

[www.headspace.com/](http://www.headspace.com/)

# Quotation References

## Chapter 1

Charles Darwin - English naturalist and geologist, died 1882

## Chapter 2

Brian Tracey - Author, born 1944

## Chapter 3

Henry Cloud - Clinical psychologist, acclaimed leadership expert and best-selling self-help author, born 1956

Marilyn Ferguson - American author, editor and public speaker, died 2008

Dale Carnegie - American writer, lecturer and developer of famous courses in self-improvement, died 1955

## Chapter 4

Ursula Burns - American, business woman, born 1958

## Chapter 5

Albert Einstein - German physicist, died 1955

Mahatma Gandhi - Indian, leader of nationalism in British-ruled India, died 1948

Winston Churchill - British statesman, writer and artist, died 1965

## Chapter 6

Confucius - Chinese, teacher, editor, politician and philosopher, died 479

Teal Scott - Author, speaker and spiritual catalyst, born 1984

Mark Twain - American writer (born Samuel Longhorne Clemens) died 1910

Oliver Wendell Holmes - Physician, poet, professor, lecturer and author, died 1894

## **Chapter 7**

**Oprah Winfrey** - American media proprietor, talk show host, actress, producer and philanthropist, born 1954

**Deepak Chopra** - Indian American author, public speaker, alternative medicine advocate, born 1947

**Albert Einstein** - German physicist, died 1955

**Mike Dooley** - American, best-selling author, speaker and entrepreneur in the philosophical New Thought movement, born 1961

**Henry Ford** - American industrialist, died 1947

**Queen Latifa** - American singer, songwriter, actress, model, television producer, comedian and talk show host, born 1970

**Marissa Mayer** - American business executive and computer scientist, born 1975

**Brené Brown** - American scholar, author and public speaker, born 1975

## **Chapter 8**

**Henry Ford** - American industrialist, died 1947

**D.B. Harrop** - Author

**Dr John Demartini** - American researcher, author, international educator and public speaker in human behaviour, born 1954

**Earl Nightingale** - American radio personality, writer, speaker and author, named as the 'Dean of Personal Development', died 1889

**Andy Serkis** - English film actor, director and author, born 1964

**Joseph Rain** - English entrepreneur, author, speaker and researcher

## Chapter 9

Emile M. Cioran - Romanian philosopher and essayist, died 1995

Jack Canfield - American author, motivational speaker, trainer and entrepreneur, born 1944

Florence Scovel Shinn - Artist, book illustrator, spiritual teacher and metaphysical writer, died 1940

Lao Tzu - Chinese, ancient philosopher and writer, legendary figure of the 6th Century BC