

INTRODUCTION

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Be warned: You are entering a treacherous terrain, a portal of alchemy! This unprecedented anthology simmers up years of powerful collective insights, research, experience, and actionable ideas about doing business and working together. As you join us in this inquisitive journey, you're likely to become infected with the virus of inspiration, the buzz of "Aha!" moments, and the thrill of renewed creativity. A tantalizing proposition at the end of a hard working day, you say? Come along as we point the way to engaging soul and imagination as we stand for excellence in our working communities.

Einstein was a bit like a sorcerer, incubating new theories and inventing revolutionary ideas out of the cauldron of his brilliant mind. Like a sorceress, I ignited the fire under the cauldron of this anthology by conceiving the idea in early 2005 at a conference I attended with publisher Dawson Church. The final creation, however, turned out to be much more potent than I had anticipated. I was setting out to execute my favorite recipe and choose only my preferred ingredients. But then, along the way, unexpected flavors and spices turned up in the pot. I became inspired to write my own manuscript, and Dawson put on the editorial apron. With ingredients from the two of us, plus several contributing editors, the end result will stir up your synapses as a delightful concoction would stir up your taste buds. Perhaps, like us, you have also strayed from your recipes, only to find, in the end, an exciting richness of flavors beyond the reach of your earlier imagination!

As my preconceived notions for this project gradually gave way to a more spacious and engaging endeavor, I've come to see that this anthology is a celebration of inclusiveness. In fact, the book you are holding resembles a microcosm of the typical workplace today. With the different personalities, areas of expertise, and experiences behind these varied authors, we are honoring diversity

rather than uniformity. What's more, I've come to see that diversity and inclusiveness are absolutely essential values in the process of orchestrating our continuity on this planet while we work. Without prioritizing these values, we cannot reverse the dangerous patterns of divisiveness entrenched in our world.

As you read you'll be provoked, informed, and challenged—as well as finding affirmation of your innermost cherished values. At this particular threshold of our evolution, all kinds of people are asking themselves the same questions and holding the same concerns that you have. Much of it boils down to this: How do we work and prosper in harmony and integrity, while co-creating the socially and ecologically sustainable world we need?

Quite simply, at this point on our planet Earth, we can no longer deny that the old “business as usual” approach is taking us straight down the road to our own extinction. In these pages, we are joining the momentum away from the dead end of the status quo. As audacious pioneers, we're running at the pace of the new paradigms emerging in the workplace. Some of the coauthors in this book offer innovative solutions from the macro perspective, revealing imbalances and misguided perceptions that have led to fragmentation in our organizations and institutions. Other contributors, myself included, have taken the micro end of the lens, generating insights about the largely unconscious zone wedged between our personal and professional selves.

One of the questions we have pondered is: What will it take for integrity to prevail in our workplaces? The scandals that have come to light in recent years are just the tip of the iceberg of corporate crime. In her chapter, Riane Eisler reminds us that the business executives responsible for these scandals were able to accomplish their arrogant feats “because of the system under which most of society functions.” Following her 30 years of research, Eisler has identified an alternative approach that simultaneously resolves many of the problems that threaten our existence on this planet. Through her study of relational dynamics, she leads us away from the dualistic mode of our current social and economic frameworks to provide an alternative, a larger, compelling perspective. From this vantage point she invites us into a novel system of partnership. This system offers new social categories to help us make the changes in the social and economic rules that govern our lives so that we can access a more secure, equitable, and sustainable future. In a brilliant analysis of human personality types, Sandra Seagal, another visionary thinker, shows that huge companies like IBM can thrive when they are structured to accommodate human differences.

Julie Gerland is another of several coauthors who address the issue of integrity. Her passionate plea to listen to the voice of conscience, and the conviction that the ends don't justify the means, are an inspired reminder to heed the still, small voice within. Tuning into our soul's wisdom and acting from that place yields an integration of spirit, mind, and body that produces integrity in the workplace. Mandy Ellis Voisey's exuberant description of how she built her global company, Junction 18, using her own moral compass (her colleagues jokingly referred to her as the "Moral Director" of the company), is an example of how an ethical bottom line can reinforce the financial bottom line.

The present flow toward integrity and sustainability in our endeavors has intensified largely because of the increasing influence of women in the workplace. Women in business often bring a perspective that supports the shift toward a more equitable society and away from the patriarchal vestiges of our Western society. And the feminine psyche provides a great counter-balance to the left-brain-dominant, rationally focused tendencies of the masculine mind. In her chapter, Lynne Twist wisely points out that women have a natural inclination toward life-affirming values. This predisposes them to taking a stance for the preservation of their moral principles and integrity. A current example is that of Sherron Watkins who, supported by her mother, had the courage to blow the whistle on the wrongdoings of the Enron Corporation. Bonnie Sarkisian's delightful chapter using gardening as a metaphor emphasizes the power of nurturing when applied to work teams, and Fionnuala Herder-Wynne's eloquent intertwining of her personal and business journeys gives an example of how heart, family, and work can interact in a dynamic, complementary weave of growth and self-understanding.

Yet there's a trap in this growth process, as bestselling author of *Care of the Soul*, Thomas Moore, points out in his chapter "Joyful Ethics." Change agents like you or I can be perceived as a "white knight full of ideals" and alienate colleagues by coming across as holier-than-thou. Instead, he reminds us, we are more effective when we approach people in business with respect, acknowledging their strengths—while skillfully bringing our vision to their attention. "Trying to implant a new vision on them while denigrating their established ways of doing things will never work," Moore warns us. If we lead with an overly intense fervor of idealism ungrounded in current realities, we will only trigger more skepticism and cynicism, thus reinforcing the duality of "us" versus "them."

Aside from ethical issues, our present working society is strained

by many factors, including a continuing perception that fierce competition is the only way for a company to prosper. In his fascinating chapter on what he calls “leapfrogging,” Dawson Church demonstrates that innovation and leaps of consciousness propel some organizations ahead of others. He suggests practical ways to cultivate the consciousness and conditions conducive to leapfrogging. When put into practice, these ways of thinking and behaving also serve to promote the well-being of individuals, not just the company in which they work.

Across any cityscape, office towers are filled with people whose health and energies are being depleted because of increasing demands on them. From corporate take-over to budget restraints and lay offs, more and more employees are doing the work that was once done by several people. Numerous studies indicate that people at work are overly stressed and are working longer hours than they used to. In a 2005 survey of senior Fortune 500 male executives, 84 percent said they’d like to have more time for their personal lives while continuing to pursue their professional aspirations.

In my own coaching practice I have witnessed the pain of professionals working frantically for wealth and financial security, only to realize in mid-life that they’ve become alienated from their authentic selves and life purpose. Ultimately, it is not sustainable to be overly consumed with work while severed from our inner self and soul. This kind of alienation puts us at risk of burning out, having a health crisis, or resigning ourselves while we just hold on until retirement. But rather than dreaming of resting on the beach, we would be wise to take on the inner journey that can lead us to renewal and real engagement. Wholeheartedness is a powerful antidote to exhaustion because it generates energy and motivation. In these pages, you will be inspired to follow your inner guidance, recommit, or make new choices to recover a sense of balance in your personal and professional life.

Quality of life and well-being in a society are the true measure of human development and social progress, not the numbers on the GNP figures (Gross National Product), affirms Hazel Henderson. In her chapter, “Gross National Happiness,” Henderson points out the entrenched bias of economics: “Rather than being a science, it is a political ideology, pure and simple.” With her compelling arguments she brings us to the reality that the field of economics is neither gender-neutral nor value-free. She also turns our attention to the little Buddhist country of Bhutan, where the well-being of its people has been measured through the Gross National Happiness index. This is a reflection of this country’s priorities to promote prosperity while

ensuring that it is shared across their society and balanced with the protection of environment and preservation of cultural traditions.

While at the Quest for Global Healing conference in Bali in May 2006, I delighted in the presence of one of Bhutan's Ministers, the Honorable Lyonpo Jigmi Thinley. He spoke of the joys and challenges of measuring people's perception of their happiness through the surveys that were used to arrive at the Gross National Happiness figures. I was moved by Jigmi Thinley's most gracious way of speaking and inspired by his authentic leadership. He delivered an important message about the heart of happiness, the spirit of interdependence, and about redefining wealth.

While I participated in this conference I also got to know some Balinese people and witnessed the strong bonds that connect them together. It appeared to me that in this culture, every action is taken with the well-being of family and community foremost in heart and mind. Although many Balinese live in material poverty, their inner richness and generosity abounds. Without knowing it, these people are leading the way to embrace Einstein's suggestion: "Try not to be a person of success, but, rather, a person of value."

Leadership is another strong theme that we have embraced in this anthology. We've tackled the thorny issue of bad leaders—people who have great leadership abilities, but use them to take their followers down the garden path—as well as looking at the characteristics of a good leader. Partly since the field of coaching has spread and influenced the culture in workplaces, the top-down, dictate and control, mechanical style of leadership is no longer seen as appropriate or effective. Moreover, the level of complexity and speed of change in our world have demanded a new worldview along with new ways to lead. As you will read, the authors assembled here bring you their own ideas about inspired leadership, collective leadership, and leadership styles we are best to avoid. But as co-authors we join in one narrow place of certainty: that true leadership arises from within. Stephen Covey concludes in his chapter about influence that "There is no such thing as organizational behavior," and instead, "There is only individual behavior and everything else flows out of that."

It's not just the CEO who has the power to change an organization; we all influence people daily in ways of which we are barely aware. When we create changes within ourselves, they manifest as outer change, and when we take 100 percent responsibility for our inner climate, we develop immense leverage to change the outer climate. Donald Trump describes how, when he's feeling down, he makes a conscious decision to "change his altitude," his perspective. The

enormous power we all have to create change is a persistent theme of this book. Hunter Arnold gives surprising examples of how people can catalyze significant change in organizations even without resources additional to those they already have, and Tom Peters points out many concrete ways in which employees on low rungs of the organizational ladder can produce creative shake-ups.

Several coauthors apply the breakthroughs of quantum physics to the business world in practical ways. While we think of the external world as fixed and immutable, the remarkable perspective offered by quantum physics now indicates to us that what happens “out there” is influenced by the observer, as scientist Jeffrey Schwartz and coach David Rock make plain in their chapter. Psychologist Gabriele Hilberg shows how we can use these quantum effects to make changes effortlessly using the quantum field—an approach that’s a far cry from the effort and struggle associated with building the Newtonian business—while consultants Noel McInnis and Douglas Yeaman demonstrate that acting from an absolutely clear outcome conditions every aspect of the intervening reality.

I believe that the best leaders are those who not only “walk the talk” but who have also relinquished their own blocks to greatness within themselves. This requires taking on the arduous journey of moving beyond the limitations that most of us were conditioned to perceive in ourselves. Paradoxically, as we become freer to tap our deepest strengths, we come to peace with the places in ourselves where we often feel challenged. From that inner place of acceptance and humility we can best nourish the relationships that become conduits for a unifying force field that promotes a culture of respect, trust, and innovation. Self-knowledge is a theme of many contributors. Matthew Gilbert’s “Now Thyself,” about developing self-understanding that transcends the sterile classifications of the HR department, is a masterpiece of clarity. Francine Ward, Wally Amos, and Robert Kiyosaki stress the importance of allowing yourself the leeway of making mistakes in the course of the adventure of self-discovery.

In my own chapter about the “Circle Being,” I focus on interdependence and collective intelligence. These values provide an antidote to being overwhelmed and submerged by the enormity of the tasks and problems we often surmount individually at work and in life. As you are witness to an experience of collective intelligence, you will also read about what is conducive to its occurrence in dialogue groups and meetings. You will see that tapping this higher level of wisdom enables us to innovate and be linked together into one masterful mind operating from a more purposeful consciousness.

As we reap the benefits of collective intelligence in the workplace, we can trail-blaze our way into areas that artificial intelligence will never reach.

Margaret Wheatley reminds us, in her chapter, that “no single person or school of thought has the answer, because what’s required is far beyond isolated answers.” As we inquire together here in this book, we reveal bold new perspectives. We can find new ways to live and work in the heat of the cauldron that holds existing challenges and arising possibilities.

This book is ultimately about alchemy, because it has the power to transform apathy into fierce resolve, to shift cynical attitudes into renewed enthusiasm, and to transform denial into consciousness-in-action. With the stimulating flavors you will taste, you are urged to contribute your own special ingredients in the cauldron of your own endeavors. Then we can participate together in the great turning toward the functional global community and the richly imagined future we so yearn for. As Margaret Wheatley suggests, let us “turn to one another as our best hope for inventing and discovering the worlds we are seeking.” Albert Einstein would concur with this suggestion, and I hope you do, too.