

The Call to Self-Leadership

*... Becoming who you were designed to be
in a world that will demand it*

By Terry Musch

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Introduction: The Ultimate How-To

This short book is being written 8 months into a global pandemic, a tension-filled presidential election, out-of-control wild fires, rising evacuations, reality-centered climate change, increasingly visible inequality, alarmingly high rates of depression, plus remote work, distanced education, and massive unemployment. And now, with the recent death of the deeply revered Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the truth about what we value most bubbles to the surface, prompting us to reflect on who and what we want to become.

Why write a book about Conscious Self Leadership now? Because I feel that when the emerging, post-crises world becomes clearer, its foundation will be built on each individual's potential to heal the wounds and co-create a new country, a new planet. When you become a Conscious Self Leader, you bring the best of you to that task.

Rather than raging against the machine, the future is about consciously creating a world that is worthy of the human spirit. Inequality, money in politics, corruption and all their bedfellows are maladies better treated—not by fighting against them—but by evolving beyond them. Late stage capitalism can create an enlightened culture that can reflect and transform it. At the core of a world begging for transformation is individuality based on actualizing, not ruggedness.

The smell of transformation is in the air. These chaotic times mark the transition point from the death of rugged individualism based on competition, to the birth of conscious creation based on collaboration. It's a time that will require each of us to be deeply accountable to our personal uniqueness and fully responsible for its purpose.

In this rapidly evolving world, deciding who you are, what you do, and who you create it with, won't be something other people do for you. Our relevance is our responsibility, and is based on accountability to ourselves first. Personal accountability is the foundation we stand on in order to become responsible to others.

When we realize we are all alone in this together (an intentional oxymoron), and that each of us is called by design to make a positive contribution to the human condition, then we have found the meaning in our existence.

I have always loved the caterpillar-to-butterfly metaphor. Nowhere have I seen transformation better illustrated than in this beautiful process. Comparing our human journey to the birth of a butterfly is seeing the evolution of potential. Conscious Self Leadership is a process along a lifelong path that releases the potential residing in each of us. The CSL journey is your unique path to that miraculous emergence.

Those who choose to travel it will come away knowing the answers to three of life's most important questions: Who am I? Why did I come here? How much is enough? And you will know in your heart that you have lived courageously, that you have been a proud participant in creating a better world in the decade of transformation: the 2020s.

“Your only true job in life is to become who you were designed to be.” ~ TM

I. Where You Are

- 1. Reviewing Your Life**
- 2. The Calling Continuum**
- 3. Contracting and Committing**

1. Reviewing Your Life

I’ve heard it said that when we leave this life, we go through a process of reviewing our life. I’ve read many first-hand stories describing this phenomenon, and as in all things before and after our physical life, it’s a mystery. Our physical lives are bookended by mystery, and I’ve learned to embrace and enjoy my ignorance as I strive to understand the great existential questions. But stay with me to consider the following.

There is tremendous foundational value in consciously reviewing our life as we have experienced it so far, and in this moment. I call it *truthing* as you have to be very honest, beyond the ego’s need to be right, and observe it from your essence and true-self perspective. It has to be a judgment-free zone. It won’t serve you to be less than honest as you work toward becoming the person you consciously choose to be.

Our life, in all its complexity, is a summary of how we feel in the present moment. I have only one intention in asking you to do a life review and that is to reveal whether you *react or respond* to your life. Psychologists call it locus of control. It focuses on whether we believe we create our life or whether we believe our life happens to us, beyond our control. What you believe about where you are headed determines the quality of the path you take to get there. Locus of control is foundational in this work as it helps illuminate the place in your life where you became aware of your personal power.

There are many approaches to this exercise, so let’s start with writing a chart of your life in seven-year stages. The simplest approach to this process is to list on a sheet of paper the various stages of your life in 7-year increments. Start with ages 0 through 7 and list any event in your life that was significant. Was there a move? A death? An accident? A birth? An important teacher? The first time you heard music that moved you? The first time you danced? The first time you fought? Etc. Don’t dwell on the accuracy of the event (your memory might be hazy on the details) as much as how you felt about the experience. The key observation in these experiences is to recall whether you felt in control or not. Did you feel the experience was something that was occurring based on external factors, or something you had chosen to do? You can simply identify each one by marking internal or external. Then move to the next stage: 7 to 14, and so on through to the present.

Each of the 7-year stages of your life has specific tasks. An internet search reveals dozens of experts with opinions of what happens in these stages. They will help you in reviewing your perceptions of your unique experiences. Most agree that these 7-year stages generally unfold this way:

From 0-7 we bond with our mother (or primary parent) and begin to develop our autonomy.

At 7-14 we fight for and commit to life.

14-21 sees us unleash emotions and hormones.

From 21-28 we begin to embrace responsibility.

28-35 reveals a physical body growing into full development.

At 35-42 we begin our existential questioning.

The years 42-49 engage our deep, soul-level searching and embracing of life's mysteries, while 49-56 expands our sense of purpose, our deepening wisdom, our understanding of life's realities.

Ages 56-63 leaves us at the intersection of reflecting on the road ahead and the mastery you have achieved.

63-70 is a time for enjoying your hard-won resources and engaging with prosperity,

while 70 and beyond allows for the embracing of your earned wisdom and the potential for a conscious encore.

Why the Life Review now? Once complete, the Life Review will allow you to reflect on the following:

- Have my choices been conscious and based on awareness?
- Have my choices been unconscious, based on approval of others?
- Have my choices been based on a sense of purpose?
- Have my choices engaged my talents and what I do best?
- Have I always made choices leading to where I know I belong?
- Have I made choices with awareness of the patterns in my decisions?

What I would like you to take away from a current life review is a deep understanding and owning of how you have walked your path to date—without judgment. This is more about where you are going than where you have been. Gradual bad choices can be overcome with sudden good ones. Your only “job” is to become who you were designed to be in a world that does little to accommodate that process. The central concept in Conscious Self Leadership (CSL) is taking full accountability for the path you are creating, where your unique life can unfold.

You have no doubt read numerous books on the Law of Attraction, living in the present moment, mindfulness and so on. Of all the spiritual laws and traditions, the most important is focused clarity. Both your subconscious mind and the supportive universe respond best with clarity of intention, thought, and potential. As you continue to walk the path of moving beyond the gravity of your conditioning, deep fulfillment will come with your emerging clarity about who you are choosing to become.

This new, unfolding coronavirus pandemic and the resulting chaos-based global economy will be most supportive to those who choose to actualize their uniqueness. ***Aligning a calling to how it is compensated*** will be the new Conscious Self Leadership mantra. The critical skill required by the emerging global economy will be knowing how your Calling is valued and compensated in the world. The Life Review process closes the gap between your conscious and unconscious choices, gives you clarity, and allows you to make decisions based on your deepest desires.

Enhancing the Life Review process is what I have called the *Steppingstone* analysis. The general concept is for you to critically review every job you have ever had to date. It looks at why you chose the job, what you accomplished, what you learned about yourself and, importantly, why you chose to leave. This again is an exercise in pattern recognition and awareness. The objective is to heighten your awareness so you can make conscious choices in the job(s) you will choose on the CSL Path.

On a blank piece of paper, put down every job you have had since you started working. Give space to each job and answer the following questions:

- Why did you choose that job?
- What were your key accomplishments?
- What in that job did you learn about yourself?
- Why did you choose to leave that job?

Now, in each of the areas, reflect on the following:

- Were my job choices conscious (I was self-directed and found the job) or did I fall into it based on someone else's recommendation or by chance?
- Did I honor and celebrate my accomplishments?
- Did I allow myself to reflect on my accomplishments and honor what I learned about myself? What was I good at? What brought me fulfillment? What felt purposeful and gave me meaning?
- Why did I leave the job? This is the question that requires great honesty. It will provide the foundation for the clarity needed for where you want to go on your path.

2. The Calling Continuum

There is a spectrum, or continuum, along which a Calling grows from first emergence to deep integration into your life. Picture a series of steps that:

- Begins with a constant urging from your heart and emotions to fulfill something that aligns to the urgings.
- Creates experiences that affirm what you are feeling. Situations that make you feel you should be the central character in what is happening.
- You begin to give a voice to the Calling and form thoughts on how it would show up in your life.
- You look for a job or work that would embrace the Calling.
- You begin to fit your lifestyle into what the job or work would provide.
- You are working with something that feels less like *what* you are, than *who* you truly are.
- The work deepens your fulfillment and self-actualization into your greatest potential and highest self.
- You feel increasing levels of meaning and sense of completion toward a well lived life.
- You transcend your sense of self and reach the level of consciousness the Calling pulled you toward.

Each of us is designed in a unique way. Coupled with this design is an urging from the Source of Life to engage it in a contributory way. Urgings of the heart, messages from the soul, or a crying out in protest of your life's wounds and traumas, can all establish a direct channel to your next indicated step. Our greatest Calling can come from our deepest wound. A Calling transforms our lives by switching our choices from doing what you *think you should* do, to a *knowing* what you *want* to do in order to be deeply fulfilled. If there is a blueprint in your soul that clearly earmarks your life's work, it is brought forth by a Calling in your heart, validated in your gut. There is the felt sense in you of knowing what it is you came here to do and the problem you were born to solve. Things in life that elevate your energy are often indications of what you are designed to do. That which you feel you could do endlessly and with ease are additional markers on your path of evolution.

Within the potential of your Calling are the unique gifts and talents that will enable you to realize it, supported by your motivation and will. Your unconscious and conscious beliefs, in partnership with your deepest intention, provide the background for the manifestation of what you have been called to do. All of your potential is channeled into its application in work, specifically a job, one in which you are hopefully doing something you are highly motivated to do. Being productive in that work is overshadowed by how effective you are in its completion. I feel effectiveness is the parent of productivity. Feeling you are productive is only validated by

knowing you have been effective. Looking back at the personality assessments you have taken throughout your life, a level of pattern clarity and talent recognition emerges. Aligning these talents to a consciously chosen purpose is the portal to creating the work in the world that you, at a very deep level, know you came here to do.

The future of job searching is about to change radically. We can all take a serious look at how 50% of millennial parents are setting up websites for their Gen Alpha children in order to show their progression and growth such that when they enter the world of work, the concept of a resume will have virtually disappeared. If you think remote work and Zoom calls are recent phenomena, you haven't seen anything yet. This is a world we need to embrace now, as the marketing of your services (Purpose) will occur digitally. An ability to articulate your value-added talents to any organization you engage will be a critical competence as well. To show the return on your services to an employer or client will be expected in the near future, and will be a differentiator in marketing yourself in the post pandemic economy. Creating your own onboarding or engagement plan will also separate you from the crowd. Showing a potential client or employer what the initial stages of working with you would look like, creates very positive initial conditions in your work together.

Within the Calling/Purpose lifecycle is what is now expected: lifelong learning. In this context, life-long learning is differentiated from traditional learning by the concept of knowledge gained through experience. As knowledge is now so easy to obtain, it is the wisdom from experiential knowledge that will be valued. The ability to integrate and assimilate knowledge through value-added effort will be considered a critical success factor in the continuum of manifesting your calling. The ability to articulate and demonstrate your success to the organization or client, focusing on revenue stream or compensation, will also be a predictor of your effectiveness. The ability to show evidence-based completion of what you offer will be considered mandatory in the future. Creating metrics and measures of your efforts, in the many forms they can take, will again separate you from others in creating demand for your services.

3. Contracting and Committing

You are a free moral agent in a free will universe. Your choices are either conscious or unconscious. Unconscious choices often come from conditioning and wounding. Conscious choices emerge from awareness and courage. In the Contracting phase of the CSL process, you make a conscious decision to steer your soul (and your essence) toward living this life with authenticity. Creating conscious work that is aligned to your unique talents and intrinsic (want to do it) motivation is the key objective of this phase. Few people make the return to their original essence with the awareness of who they were designed to be. To return to the original unconditioned self is the ultimate act of courage.

The process of deconditioning our "self" is a crucial process on the path of Conscious Self Leadership. It requires looking critically at our current work role to examine what is working and what is not working, what gives us energy and what depletes us, what engages our talents

and what doesn't—and what we believe about it all. Done thoroughly, this process will reveal the conditioning we have been compliant to, and that no longer serves us. Simply put, it's stepping out of your role and into your soul, then stepping back into your role with your soul intact.

The CSL Path will be the most important contract you will ever create. Boastful, but true. If the only thing we take out of this life is the level of consciousness we have evolved to, then every material thing we leave behind means little other than the creature comforts they give to their recipients. Therefore, committing to your own evolution and fulfillment is the journey of the Conscious Self Leader. The Contracting process analyzes the level of effort you need to be honest with yourself. This is a rest-of-your-life journey, so building doable, early success into the process is key. Believing this is a path you can walk is built on the evidence of incremental accomplishments along the way. Setting yourself up for failure is a result of lack of awareness, understanding and self-honesty. The contracting process is, in the end, the process of not allowing your false/adaptive self to sabotage who you know you can be.

The Contracting part of this work is much more mental/emotional/spiritual than it is physical. Once you know what it is you can never turn back from, once you embrace that in a psycho-spiritual way, that's when you know you have met that contract with your higher Self.

Committing to the Conscious Self Leadership Path requires all of you on multiple levels. Courage, will, grit, persistence, discipline and more will be required as you travel your unique path. The ability to use fear as your teacher to reveal more of who you truly are, is mandatory in this journey. Losing any desire for immediate gratification and engaging the long view are key ingredients of this work.

Self-honesty is at the foundation of the work as well. Being honest with the level of effort required and the willingness to postpone gratification will ensure you have a higher probability of success. Understanding the concept within neuroscience titled *Self-Directed Neuroplasticity* is mandatory. Our brains become what we focus on and experience. If you are focused on your purpose and its effectiveness, your brain, and thus your reinforced behavior, will respond accordingly.

“Effectiveness is the parent of productivity.” ~ TM

II. The World Within Your World

- 1. Our World of Work Today**
- 2. The Coming Purpose Economy**
- 3. Live Like You Chose It All**

1. Our World of Work Today

Our world of work today is at best in a state of chaos. Unsettled by a runaway pandemic, increasing levels of inequality, the erosion of traditional career paths, the “Gig” economy, and an education system in breakdown have all conspired to change what work has meant to most of us, into a future of work that is largely unknown. The new normal of working from home—once a small percent of the workforce—has now become a healthy portion of how many are currently performing their jobs. Personal perception of our relationship to work varies greatly based on socio-economic status, family of origin experiences and clarity of desired work through one’s education experience. Our world view of what work is most likely developed through the perceptions of our primary caretakers. Growing up, most of us formed beliefs around what work will be like from our day-to-day observations of our working parents. We watched as they ritually returned home after a day’s work. If our parents weren’t happy, we more than likely decided that work was not something to look forward to. If we were fortunate, we saw our parents actualize their potential and achieve both prosperity and fulfillment in their chosen path.

2. The Coming Purpose Economy

In his 2018 book *The Purpose Economy*, Aaron Hurst articulates a vision for how people will work in the emerging Purpose Economy, where people will transform their relationship to work. This transformation will see people gain clarity over their unique talents and how they consciously want to engage them in making their contribution to the world. A natural evolution from Agrarian to Industrial to today’s Information age, the Purpose Economy will firmly place itself in the coming age, yet to be defined. This next age will clearly focus on the self-actualization process, seeing people deepen their ability to utilize their potential at levels that will transform our relationship to work.

Transforming from ***adaptive workers in a job*** to ***conscious creators with a purpose***, people will make their contributions at levels of fulfillment unheard of for many in the past. To be an “employer of choice,” a company will need to have a compelling purpose and the ability to enable its workforce to create meaning in a socially conscious way.

The Purpose Economy, already here for the early adopters of its framework, could foster the creation of a new kind of company within the structure of the 3rd and 4th industrial revolutions now emerging (see page 26). The great controversy in all of this is whether these companies and corporations will contribute to the unfoldment of a highly evolved humanity? Or will they create some terrible hybrid of *1984* and *The Matrix*?

3. Live Like You Chose It All

Sitting at a red light a few years ago, I felt it was time to create a new mantra for my philosophy of life beyond my then-favorite: “*Love is the answer, now what’s your question?*” Immediately,

without hesitation, ***“Live like you chose it all”*** popped into my awareness. I felt the phrase in my heart and soul. Going back to my spiritual, metaphysical, and recovery studies, I couldn’t help but feel the importance of the foundational choice we all make: Do we believe our life just happens to us? Or is it something we consciously create?

The psychological concept of Locus of Control, as well as the Mindset concept popularized by Carol Dweck, Ph.D., came to mind. The general mystery of life leaves us with the possibility (as many believe) that we create the blueprint for our life, individually designed to both evolve beyond karma and advance our consciousness. As I have often heard, “There are no victims, only volunteers,” the idea that we are the creators of our own destiny and are here to develop our consciousness, is quite appealing to me.

As I struggle to manage some rather serious personal health conditions, I am often stuck in the juxtaposition of “poor me” and “what are you going to do about it?” If the only way out is through, what other option are we left with than moving beyond that which challenges us? The immediate objection is often “Then what about the rape victim, or deeply traumatized individual?” This of course is where it gets tricky. In no way would I ever suggest these aren’t significant emotional and physical events. Justice is a process that needs to be played out. Healing becomes a deeply personal choice. The intersection of catharsis and forgiveness can be very delicate.

I finally consider the possibility that I have a soul, and that it contains a blueprint for how my life can unfold, a life based on limitless possibility and free will. What if I created this blueprint; what if it’s the path I chose for my greatest evolution? From that thought comes the exciting idea that we are not victims of a random, chance-driven life, but rather that we consciously chose the life we are living.

“Love is the answer to every question you will ask yourself.” ~ TM

III. What You Truly Want

1. Deeply Called

2. The Optimized Incarnation

3. Knowing and Owning Your Uniqueness

1. Deeply Called

Of the hundreds of books I have read on the subject of Callings as they relate to a sense of purpose, the one theme that always emerged was that Callings are felt at different levels, in different places in our body and Soul. If you feel a sense of Calling above your shoulders and in

your head, something you're just thinking about, it's likely an inquiry seeking more knowledge. And, though it deserves to be recognized and explored, it's not the same as a Deep Calling.

When you feel a tugging deeply in your heart and there is a sense of *knowing*, you have entered through the portal of a Deep Calling. A Deep Calling is a cosmic mandate that will never allow you to run from it. It becomes the one thing you know you cannot *not do*, and you feel its presence continuously. Your continuous desire to find clarity and congruence with a Deep Calling can be at times disorienting. The self-organizing effort to mitigate disorientation is a critical skill in Conscious Self Leadership. The ability to gain clarity and commitment from a felt sense of a Deep Calling becomes the Conscious Self Leader's critical differentiator.

Understanding and committing to your core talent is mandatory as it will determine the form your Deep Calling will take—as well as your value and relevance—in the coming Purpose Economy.

2. The Optimized Incarnation

For many years I have researched, contemplated and finally accepted the possibility that reincarnation is real. The mystery of having an evolving Soul over multiple lifetimes feels intuitively right to me. I often reflect on how long it has taken me to either learn my lessons, or develop a talent or skill. As I get older, I really appreciate the Eastern philosophy that it takes years and decades to grow and master spiritual competencies. Immediate gratification is the enemy of conscious evolution.

I was once given a reading by a prominent past-life regressionist. In my reading, he said I had lived 1,833 past lives. What: "Was I slow learner," I wondered? To which a friend later answered, "Or maybe you're a teacher." To soothe my traumatized ego, I chose to believe the latter. I have often wondered if the reading was true, and what might possibly be embedded in my Soul after 100,000 years of successive attempts to get it right.

All this contemplation led me to wonder, "What, then, is an optimized incarnation"? How can we, with deep intention and courage, come to a place of clarity and commitment to get the absolute maximum out of our current life to further transform our Soul? If it is true that we come into this life to evolve toward the Source of Life and eternity, how can we become aware of the blueprint in our Essence that will ensure we are on the right path to get there? How can we come to know who we are, what our talents are, what we are called to do? How can we live purposefully, and more importantly, how can we be confident in knowing how *to go where we are invited*, to know where we belong?

As free moral agents in a free will universe, how can we be in alignment with our true self, and in congruence with our true work? How can we tap the wisdom of our wounds and gain insight from our trauma? What does our scar tissue reveal? If aging is the invoice we receive for wisdom, how do we fully utilize that evolving wisdom to become who we were designed to be?

These are of course deep existential questions that we'll address in our work on the CSL path. Through honest self-evaluation and introspection, what is true for you will become clear. Only you can decide about the possibility (or impossibility) of reincarnation. Either way, a life lived consciously toward your highest personal evolution will serve you well—in *this* life and the next.

3. Knowing and Owning Your Uniqueness

Rarely in life is a child acknowledged for his or her talents, least of which their core talent. As children, we learn many things in life to align with our family of origin. How to be educated, for example, and primarily how to become an acceptable and contributing member of the culture. With our conditioning comes our diminishing awareness of what we truly do best and most love to do. All too often we develop skills around tasks that may fulfill a job description, but don't fulfill our Soul.

I have always felt the greatest gift we can ever give another human being is to witness the essence of their uniqueness. To hear it from others until we truly believe it ourselves is true transformation at work. Owning our uniqueness means taking full responsibility and accountability for bringing it into the world and making a contribution to life. Aligning to our uniqueness means we live in harmony with our true, as-designed self. Beyond the psychological masks we wear to shield our true self, our vulnerability is waiting for our courage to remove them. With the exception of a Covid-19 mask, the Conscious Self Leader is mask-less in his/her authentic uniqueness. Being in your own power means crawling out from under your conditioning, your adopted beliefs, and other people's ideas of purpose.

How? Perhaps a look at a piece of my own story will illuminate.

Well into my 40s and 50s, I had little awareness of my core gift. Assessments became great entertainment that left little affirmation of what felt true for me. The first time I took Gallup's Strengthsfinder, for example, I put it aside for three years because it felt too simplistic. And then I met someone more fully qualified to give me an overview of its findings and help me bridge the gap between acknowledging I had talents, and deeply *knowing* them. Discovering that I am, at heart, at my core, an **Ideator** was life-changing for me.

We all have a core talent that when fully and consciously applied, becomes our brilliance, our genius. Key to being an effective and Conscious Self Leader is cultivating a deep relationship with our core talent. So take the tests, explore the assessments, and engage a well-qualified interpreter or coach. Do whatever it takes to know and own your uniqueness.

“Your ego crafts your character. Your essence crafts your soul.” ~ TM

IV. What You Are Truly Willing To Do To Get What You Truly Want

- 1. The Courage to Experience AFGOs**
- 2. Telling Yourself the Truth**
- 3. Allowing the Blueprint of Your Uniqueness to Unfold**

1. The Courage to Experience AFGOs

I learned about AFGOs many years ago; from whom I have no idea. **A**nother **F**...king **G**rowth **O**ppportunity occurs in the space between *“It seemed like a good idea at the time,”* and *“What the hell was I thinking!?”* Often by default, AFGOs are confused with either Freud’s *repetition compulsion* (repeating traumas until we heal them), or the over-and-over, hope-for-a-different-result definition of insanity. The courage to experience AFGOs means cultivating the awareness required to prevent them, and that becomes the aspirational goal. Making conscious choices is usually preceded by having made unenlightened unconscious ones.

Living on the outer perimeters of our comfort zone means we occasionally bounce off the guardrails. It also means we often stand on top of the winner’s podium. The cost of your own evolution is admiring the scar tissue of your learnings. When we respond to life with conscious acceptance and trust in the process of unfoldment, we get better results than when we react unconsciously out of fear. The power of well-informed choices is what is woven throughout Conscious Self Leadership. Knowing who you are, what you truly want, and what you are truly willing to do to get it, is created in rarified air. It is stepping out from the field of your conditioning into the structure of your conscious creation.

It is having the courage to keep learning from every AFGO that comes along, versus running, hiding, denying, or excusing them.

2. Telling Yourself the Truth

At this point we turn to the two key dimensions of the ego—the porous ego and the dense ego. The dense ego, based in fear and the false self, has the compulsion to always be right. The porous ego—based in love and the true, authentic self—has the deep desire to find the truth. The porous ego cares much less about the need to be right, and only cares about the truth leading to authenticity. The porous ego, by its very nature, wants to polish the pearl of uniqueness that creates the evolution of consciousness.

It takes courage to practice self-honesty. But the joy of discovering our uniqueness, of being aligned with our potential, and in congruence with our values is the immeasurable reward.

3. Allowing the Blueprint of Your Uniqueness to Unfold

Through the process of unfolding your uniqueness, the desired state of awareness is allowing, not controlling. Allowing is built on the foundation of trust—trust in a friendly universe and a trust in your own unique design. The compulsion to control, partnered with the dense ego, is usually birthed through having experienced a lack of control at some point in your life. Crying out for healing, the compulsion to control will create a firewall around your desire to become a Conscious Self Leader.

Overcoming the compulsion to control begins with awareness, awareness of your need for control and the effect your attempts to control have on others. Ask a trusted “other” to tell you, without judgment, when they perceive you having a controlling moment. Over time, you’ll begin to recognize them yourself. Healing the compulsion to control is deep inner work, best facilitated by a trained therapist specializing in family-of-origin work.

But the work is well worth it as you begin to feel the benefits of allowing, versus the futility of controlling.

v. Making Your Plan, Creating Your Path

- 1. Telepurpose**
- 2. Going Where You Are Invited**
- 3. Feedpresent**

1. Telepurpose

In 2012, during a conference I gave with colleagues on The Future of Work, I coined the term “Telepurpose” to define the concept of mobile purpose. With its possible comparison to Telehealth, Telepurpose as I conceived it, is a virtual holding place for everything you’ve collected that enables your Purpose and life’s work. Comprised of lifelong learning, current purpose-conscious creations, metrics of performance, and relevant supportive analytics, Telepurpose is an app and a platform that allows the individual to have real-time access to everything that supports his or her Purpose. The root of the word, tele, means “at a distance.” Telepurpose offers the viewer fact-based and anecdotal evidence, at a distance and in real time, of your value-added effort in the workplace.

While still in the conceptual phase of its development, Telepurpose will utilize video, graphics, multi-media, and whatever technologies are available in the future. It will allow you to create content to show visually what your purpose looks like in action.

The ability in the future to show a potential employer or client how our purpose manifests in the world will be an integral part of personal branding. The résumé is phasing out as a

representation of our uniqueness. Your telepurpose platform will create a sense of emotion in others in relation to what you are consciously creating, and that will be a strategic branding advantage. This visual display of the effect your purpose will have on others will also show the relevance of what you do to live a fulfilling life.

2. Going Where You Are Invited

Knowing how to “go where you are invited” is a critical skill that every Conscious Self Leader must possess. It’s the ability to seek and feel environments where you will be seen for who you truly are, where your unique talents will be witnessed and acknowledged. Feeling the positive energy of an authentic workplace moves you toward a sense of belonging. A deep sense of belonging is something everyone aspires to, but unfortunately, it’s an all-too-rare occurrence.

The Conscious Self Leader will hone this critical skill of discernment. Going where you are invited allows you to sense where you can do your best work, to consciously co-create a shared vision. Co-creating a shared vision through common purpose is the process that gives us meaning. An environment where people work at the soul-to-soul level cultivates the highest sense of belonging. At this level, our full potential is released with accountability and responsibility. We cannot be responsible to others unless we are personally accountable to ourselves—accountable for our behavior, and accountable for our potential.

There’s an unspoken social contract in the environments where we feel that keen sense of belonging: “We are here to bring out the best in each other.” It’s worth the effort to cultivate this competence, to know where you are appreciated, to evolve through authentic relationships, to feel you are seen for who you are. I believe it’s what we all desire.

3. Feedpresent

The concept of Feedpresent, as you might have guessed, was created to focus on the present moment. Feedback and Feedforward—reviewing the past and imagining the future—are less relevant as we strive to close the gap between intention and perception. Meant to be used as a way to build more authentic, heartfelt relationships, Feedpresent helps all parties to gain clarity on how each person perceives the other’s intention. Removing our fear-based ego from the equation is paramount. As you can imagine, this takes a strong level of consciousness at the individual level, and could initially require a degree of facilitation until competence in the process is achieved.

The critical path through Feedpresent demands that we develop the competence of suspending judgment. First created to facilitate a difficult executive leadership conversation, Feedpresent was presented as a non-judgmental process of discernment. Each of the two leaders was allowed to articulate their perception (from the “I” position) of what had happened during this highly charged conversation. They were then asked what their intentions were while the other listened with discernment, not judgment. I was surprised at how quickly this process diffused what had become an intense situation. The result was that both leaders experienced a quick

and pronounced elevation in their emotional intelligence. They both began using the Feedpresent process in future meetings to great effect.

As you continue to use the process of Feedpresent, you heighten your level of awareness that your behavior is based on your conscious and unconscious intentions. You can build your interpersonal skills around ensuring your intention is perceived as intended.

Separate knowledge from knowing. Knowing comes from living in the space between a wound and its scar.” ~ TM

VI. Celebration and Continuous Improvement

- 1. Purposism**
- 2. Removal of the Non-Value Added**
- 3. The Namaste Highway**

1. Purposism

The contemporary term for workaholism is workism. After researching the pre-pandemic and pandemic reality of addictive work, and the psyche-numbing effects of living it, I created an antidote called Purposism. Purposism is an ideology that embraces the **full and balanced engagement of our talents in an integrated way through conscious, personal purpose**. It reveals the effect of unconscious busyness by asking us to reflect on how effective our actions really are. Numbing the psyche through unquestioned activity is a red flag on the path of actualization.

Workaholism (addictive work behavior) shows up in many ways. In the Workaholics Anonymous Book of Recovery they list the following symptoms:

- Getting more excited about work than about family
- Fluctuating levels of productivity
- Taking work home and doing it on weekends and on vacation
- Talking about work more than anything else
- Working more than 40 or 50 hours a week
- Turning hobbies into money making ventures
- Being overly responsible for outcomes at work
- Others no longer count on you to be on time
- Taking on work because you don't feel it will get done otherwise
- Underestimation of project duration and a rushed effort to get it done

- Justifying long hours by “loving what I do”
- Impatience with others who don’t value work at your level
- Afraid you’ll lose your job or be a failure
- Worrying about work, even when things are going well
- Constant thinking about work
- Working during meals

While purpose-centered work can certainly contain some or many of these, the difference is that they are driven by passion, not fear. Purpose usually invites balance and boundaries. When purpose becomes dull or dreary, people usually reflect and correct for whatever has caused it. There is a natural desire toward sustainability with those who feel “on purpose” with their work.

2. **Removal of The Non-Value Added**

Having spent the bulk of my corporate career as a process engineer working on continuous improvement and quality programs, I can say with confidence that the focus on wasted or sub-optimized effort was always the central focus. The Conscious Self Leader is always looking for effort that is non-value added, anything that diminishes their effectiveness. With a deep desire to ensure their purpose is continuously adding value, the real time awareness of what is not adding value, is a key priority. Attunement to organizational or client purpose and vision is imperative to the Conscious Self Leader. An integral competence for us all in the new purpose economy will be to ensure that what we do is perceived to have value to others.

Here is what to watch for as you seek to remove non-value added efforts in your work:

- Others cannot readily see how your work adds value
- Improper training
- Assignments that don’t add value to the mission
- Others don’t notice or care about your work
- Ineffective meetings lacking purpose or clear outcomes
- Your productivity does not match your effectiveness
- Ambiguous job description, with much of the work you do not included
- Lack of understanding of team and organization’s strategic goals

3. **The Namaste Highway**

On a road trip with a friend in 2003, the term Namaste Highway popped into my head. Maybe it was Mendocino California energy, but I suddenly felt we should live our whole lives on the lookout for the Divine. Our inner Divinity should always witness the Divinity in people, places and things. The Spirit in each of them is the portal to the deep connection we all seek. Everyone and everything in our life teaches us something about our self. Following that road trip, I

searched for a few years to find a symbolic Namaste Highway and develop my own ability to travel on it, inside of me.

After moving to San Luis Obispo California in 2006, I found my physical Namaste Highway on Highway 1 in Big Sur. My relationship to Big Sur is legend among my family and friends and exemplifies the Namaste Highway to me like no other. I took that three-hour drive from my home to Big Sur almost every weekend for ten years. That road and its destination became my church and gave me an aura fluffing on each and every trip on my personal Namaste Highway. My wish for you is to treat every excursion on your Conscious Self Leadership path as your own personal Namaste Highway, a place where you can:

- Practice staying in the present moment.
- Discover how your Purpose is showing up.
- Look for the meaning you assign to what you are experiencing.
- Let each interaction with another be a witnessing of their uniqueness.
- Intuit what your environment is revealing to you, what you need to see, learn or connect with
- Monitor the effect of your presence.
- See the effectiveness of your boundaries.
- Recognize the congruence between your intention and others' perception of that intention.
- Acknowledge the wisdom gained from reflection.

"Those who die with the most consciousness wins." ~ TM

VII. This Too Shall Evolve

- 1. Metrics and The Meaning of Life**
- 2. When What You Do Is Who You Are**
- 3. Synchronicity as Affirmation You Are On Your True Path**

- 1. Metrics and The Meaning of Life**

There's a workplace mantra that goes "What gets measured, gets done." But what gets measured is often the wrong thing. Not unlike goals, metrics (what we use to measure things) need to be in alignment with our Purpose and the value-added effort it takes to achieve it. What we measure should be based not just on process optimization or revenue streams, but on what is in accordance with the vision created from a well-honed Purpose. In my mind, metrics need to have a direct line of sight to what is improving the human condition.

As the concept of the mind/body connection is now widely recognized, it's well known that our physical body is a representation of what our mind is creating. As this creation resides in our soul, the physical body manifests what the soul is becoming.

The ability to measure not just your productivity, but more importantly your effectiveness, will be key in your evolution toward Conscious Self Leadership. Effectiveness is often overlooked in the measurement of productivity. We have been habituated into thinking a really busy person is productive, while rarely considering whether they are effective.

2. When What You Do Is Who You Are

The pearl that emerges from the friction of our inner work is a state of congruence with our true potential. Being in alignment with our core talent and consciously chosen purpose means we are in that rare harmonious state of creating from deep authenticity.

Sadly, most people have gotten rather good at what they really hate to do. Working and creating from a false sense of self, and worse yet, feeling like an imposter, is like forcing your soul to live in a cell. The cell our soul begins to reside in is reflected in the ever-shrinking world we are unconsciously creating. That cell is created with our fear, our lack of clarity about our uniqueness, and our unwillingness to embrace and nurture our courage. The daily erosion of our true potential from living someone else's passion and purpose, is to witness the slow and agonizing death of our true essence.

Claiming and committing to the unfolding of our uniqueness is a true hero's journey. The act of owning our uniqueness and taking responsibility for its contributions to the world is the intersection you want to reside in. This will be the foundation of your relevance in the emerging post-pandemic, purpose-driven economy. Like a persistent oyster, your task is to go for that pearl, no matter how much friction it takes.

3. Synchronicity as Affirmation You Are on Your True Path

Synchronicity is fun, and deeply affirming. Introduced by Carl Jung in the 1920s, synchronicity in Jung's mind meant "meaningful coincidences" with no causal relationship. They are different for all of us and Jung felt there was great meaning in their occurrence. For me, synchronicity has always meant the universe was affirming I was in harmony with my true path.

Synchronicities represent the mile markers or guiding lights on the runway of my unique journey. I have a close friend who has such a high level of synchronicity in his life we have come to call them "synchro showers." Whether it's a number that always shows up for you (mine is 8:33), or people who know people you know, synchronicity can cause you to raise your awareness around their expected presence as confirmation.

The most effective ways to recognize and make the most of synchronicity are:

- Hold in your awareness the intention to see and experience them
- Ask for the guidance needed to recognize them

- Honor each occurrence of synchronicity with gratitude and affirmation
- Acknowledge what each occurrence affirmed for you on the CSL path

“Your Purpose is the focused energetic expression of your uniqueness in service.”

~TM

VIII. The Conscious Self Leader (CSL) Path

- 1. Practice**
- 2. Potential**
- 3. Purpose**
- 4. Plan**
- 5. Presence**

The path of Conscious Self Leadership is composed of five key elements that you can tailor to your unique journey. They are meant to be guardrails on your path, critical structures of completion necessary to bring your CSL into effective reality. Used by many people over many years, we have removed any effort that is non-value-added. What remains is an elegantly simple process to get you firmly on your unique CSL Path. Feel free to modify or build on these elements if you are called to do so. What is important is maintaining the competencies as defined to actualize Conscious Self-Leadership in you, ready to engage this rapidly evolving world. Working the five elements will build and integrate the following competencies of Conscious Self Leadership:

- *Intrinsic Motivation* — a state of truly wanting to do something
- *Internal Locus of Control* — the belief that you create your experience
- *Clarity of and commitment to Purpose*
- *Talent alignment* — a deep understanding of your gifts and talents
- *Conscious Skill Development* — learning skills based on a deep desire to do so
- *Self-discipline*

1. Practice

Having a personal practice of self-care is essential on your journey. Restorative discipline at the spiritual, mental, emotional and physical levels is mandatory for you to be effective on the CSL Path. What is important in creating your Practice on the Path is acknowledging that self-care will *sustain* you on the path. Critical success factors include:

- Clear connection to feeling of purpose
- Clarity and honesty of current reality

- Clarity of current patterns of behavior
- Clarity and effectiveness of boundaries
- Engagement of talents to build intrinsic skills
- Motivation alignment to create desired results
- Honesty about personal level of will and grit
- Ability to align to value-added priorities
- Self-Acceptance (through positive self-regard)

2. **Potential**

Potential is based on multiple factors. Our numerous intelligences, our talents, our level of will, our motivation map, clarity of want, sense of purpose, ability to nurture authentic relationships and many, many more, comprise our level of potential. All of this is surrounded by our courage. The ability to walk through our fear is the birth canal of our potential. The key elements of potential are:

- Job history effectiveness
- Life events and relationships
- Assessment history analyses
- Feedback, feedpresent, feedforward
- Personal energy effectiveness and process improvement

3. **Purpose**

I define Purpose as *“The focused energetic expression of our uniqueness in service.”*

Understanding what makes us unique is foundational to Conscious Self Leadership. An intimate understanding of our core talent, giving it both a voice and a central role in our lives, creates for us a deep, Soul-level fulfillment. It informs how we show up in the world. Clarity about and effectiveness of our Purpose are the new competencies. Our ability to articulate our Purpose with conviction and commitment will be foundational to what we choose to contribute to the world.

The key transformation occurring in the workforce is the shift from being *a worker in a job*, to being *a creator with a purpose*. This transformation, for those who understand and move in its direction, will prepare us for the future of work, for the co-creation of a brand new world. The key attributes in Purpose are:

- Awareness of unlimited possibilities in creating individual Purpose
- Understanding of available opportunities
- Probability analyses for possibilities
- Values Alignment

4. **Plan**

For the Conscious Self Leader, planning is a blended process of agility and effectiveness, both encased in reality and openness. Magical thinking is seen as a process of denial. Focused activity based on the reality around you creates progression on your path. The key elements in the planning process are:

- Auditing your current use of time
- Talents integration
- Support network development
- Networking and Relationship Mapping
- Scenario Planning

Each of these are studied at length on the CSL path. Proper use of time focusses on priorities. The integration of talents looks at the effectiveness of each. Creating a support network asks you to nourish those relationships which affirm your journey, as well as those you can count on to tell you the truth. Networking and relationship mapping ensure you are deepening those connections who are members of your tribe, who allow you to go where you are invited, who help you feel you belong. Scenario planning is a critical competence for the future. No strategy for your CSL path can remain unexamined, and scenario planning ensures you have built the bridge from possibilities to probabilities.

5. **Presence**

The multi-dimensional aspect of our Presence is the centerpiece of why we walk the path of Conscious Self Leadership. Who we are, how we are perceived, who we are becoming and how we will leave this life are all woven through our Presence. Presence is consciousness, and there are many levels within consciousness. Presence is the catalyst to nurturing authentic relationships.

The old adage that “people like to work with people they like” is a non-negotiable truism. The benefit of Presence comes when we develop a sense of competence within these relationships. We become our best and highest self when we realize our potential—through purpose—in relationship. Key elements of Presence are:

- Current reality understanding
- Reflection and insight
- Feedpresent competence
- Conscious aging and death
- Deep fulfillment

Everyone you meet in this precious life is here to teach you something.” ~ TM

What's Next?

We all have a choice to make, right now.

Significant change is only accelerating, and deciding what role we will play is upon us.

How will we educate ourselves? How will we take the focused action it requires to align our deepest intention with our personal prosperity? While the chaos seems extreme right now, the opportunities for birth are more abundant than ever. Breakdown before breakthrough is the process that creates a butterfly.

As the post pandemic economy begins to emerge, it will be built on the structure of what is called the 3rd Industrial revolution. Some have added features to the 3rd industrial revolution and then called it the 4th Industrial revolution. The 3rd industrial revolution evolved from the 1st and 2nd Industrial revolutions. The 1st centered on textiles, steam power and iron. The 2nd centered on steel, railroads, petroleum, chemicals and electricity. The coming 3rd industrial revolution focuses on the process of manufacturing, embracing digital technologies. These technologies are using software, new materials, robotics, 3D printing and web-based services. The 4th industrial revolution (sometimes referred to as Industry 4.0) is the progressive automation of legacy manufacturing and industrial processes using intelligent technology and integrated machine-to-machine interfaces. The term Internet of Things (IoT) is often associated with the 4th industrial revolution. The IoT focuses on the integrated connection of all our devices, including our automated vehicles that will communicate with each other for optimal efficiency.

You were designed to be a butterfly. And the CSL Path is your chrysalis, a place where the integration of lifelong learning, intrinsic (wanting to) motivation, internal locus of control (I create my reality), connection to my uniqueness and core talent, a clear purpose, and the courage to find your tribe can all be acquired. The CSL Path is the most effective, most loving, most transformative road on the way to whatever will be our new normal.

Come with me ...