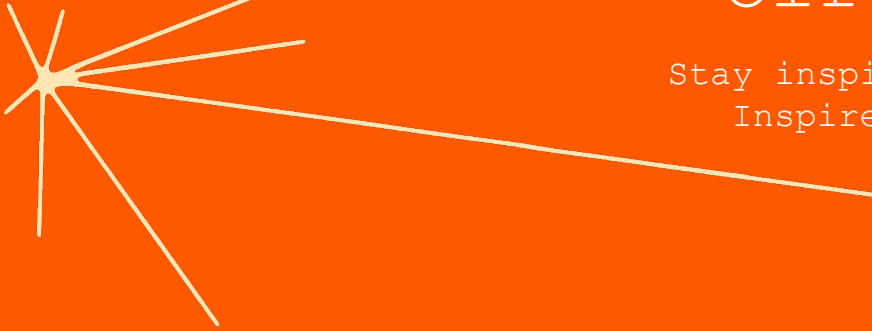


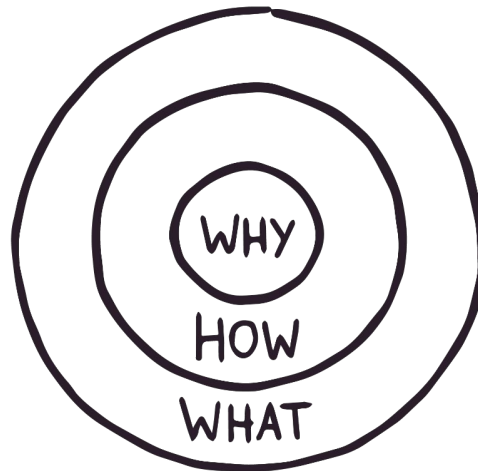
The Golden Circle

Stay inspired.
Inspire others.



Imagine a world in which the vast majority of us wake up every single morning inspired, feel safe wherever they are, and end the day fulfilled by the work they do. We feel that we are contributing toward something greater than ourselves. We believe The Golden Circle can help bring us closer to this brighter world.

Discovered in 2006 by Simon Sinek, and popularized in his TED Talk and book *Start With WHY*, this presentation is designed to share the concept of The Golden Circle with you, and to help you share it with others.

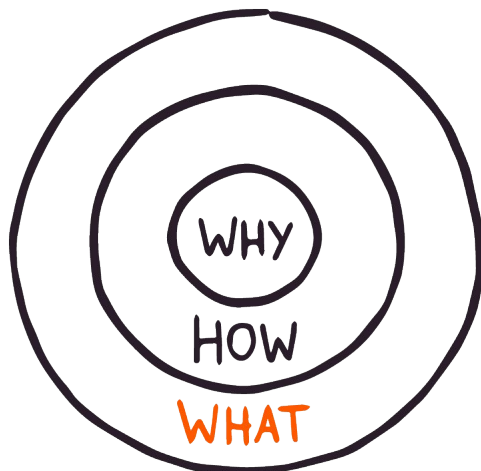


The Golden Circle for Individuals

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So, why are some individuals able to achieve and sustain tremendous success year after year? It turns out that all great and inspiring people think, act, and communicate in the same way...and it happens to be the exact opposite way from the rest of us. They all function on three levels: WHAT they do, HOW they do it, and WHY they do it. This is The Golden Circle.

The ideas The Golden Circle illustrates are certainly not new. Simon did not invent purpose. What he has been able to do is capture this idea, that has been around for millennia, in a way that is simple, easy to understand, and actionable. The hope is that people use and share these ideas with others so that, together, each of us can change our world for the better.

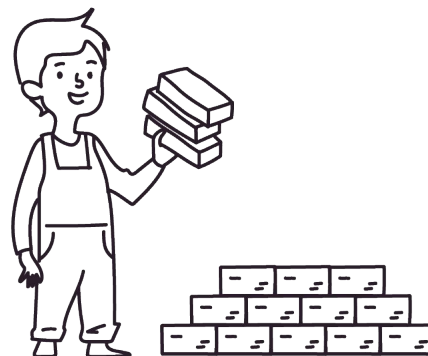
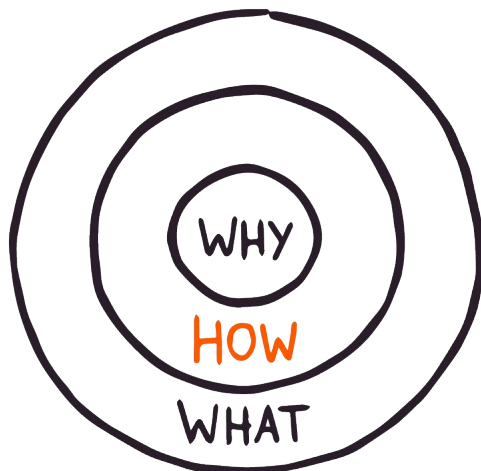


The Golden Circle for Individuals

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Everyone knows WHAT they do. These are the jobs we do, professionally and personally.

This is Oliver, and he's a bricklayer. He's also a husband, father, and friend.



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Some individuals know HOW they do what they do. HOWs are meant to communicate what makes us special or sets us apart from others who do something similar. HOWs are an individual's strengths and guiding principles.

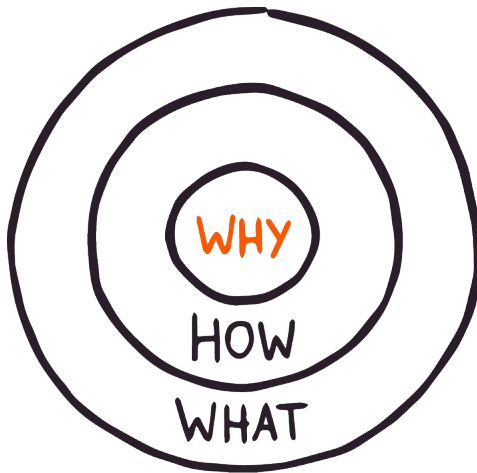
Oliver is great at seeing the big picture due to his years of experience. He knows what the finished product will look like before he lays the first brick. He also approaches every new project with enthusiasm.

For example:

Say you have two educators who teach the same subject, at the same school and for the same age group. The content in their curriculum—their WHAT—is identical. The way in which they teach—their HOWs—could differ.

One educator approaches the content from an analytical perspective, and the other approaches it from an interactive and collaborative perspective. Different students will be attracted to different approaches.

While you may do the same thing as someone else, the way in which you do it is unique.



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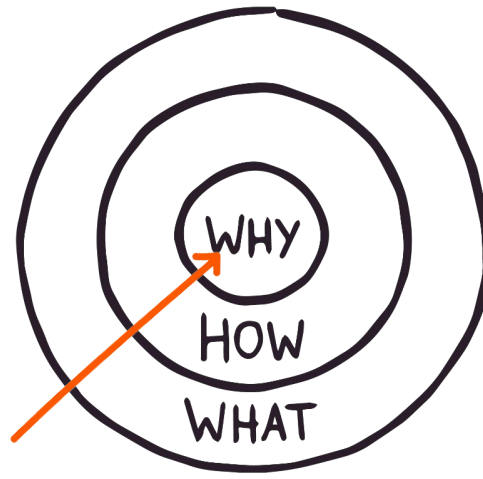
Though they know WHAT they do and HOW they do it, very few people can clearly articulate WHY they do what they do.

The WHY is the purpose or belief that drives every one of us. It provides a clear answer to the questions:

- *Why do you get out of bed every morning?*
- *Why do you exist, beyond earning a paycheck?*
- *Why should anyone care?*

Making money is NOT a WHY. Salaries, bonuses, and other monetary measurements are simply results of WHAT we do. The WHY is about our contribution to impact and serve others. The WHY inspires us.

Oliver, like many of us, hasn't really ever thought about WHY he does what he does.



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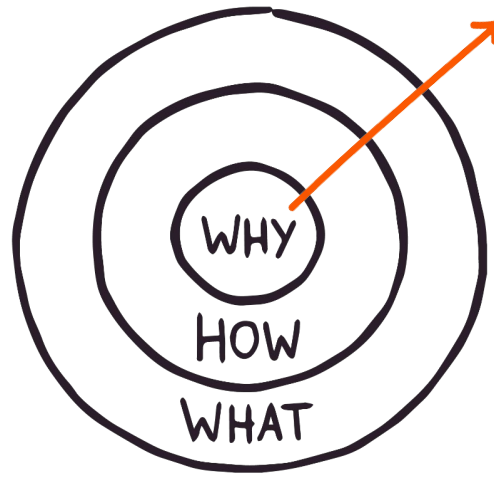
People naturally communicate from the outside-in. We typically go from the easiest thing to explain or understand to the hardest thing.

We tell people **WHAT** we do, we tell them **HOW** we are different or better, and then expect some sort of behavior or result.

Take Oliver for example:

- **WHAT:** I'm a bricklayer
- **HOW:** I'm more enthusiastic than other bricklayers and have been doing it for many years.
- **Behavior:** Wanna hire me to build your house for you?

The problem is that **WHAT** and **HOW** do not inspire action. Though the facts are important and make rational sense, people do not, however, make decisions purely based on facts and figures. Starting with **WHAT** commodifies our value. We are asking someone to compare the attitude of all the other bricklayers and how many years they've been working. But there is more to what makes us, us. How will someone know we can be trusted? How will someone know if we are the right person to work with them?



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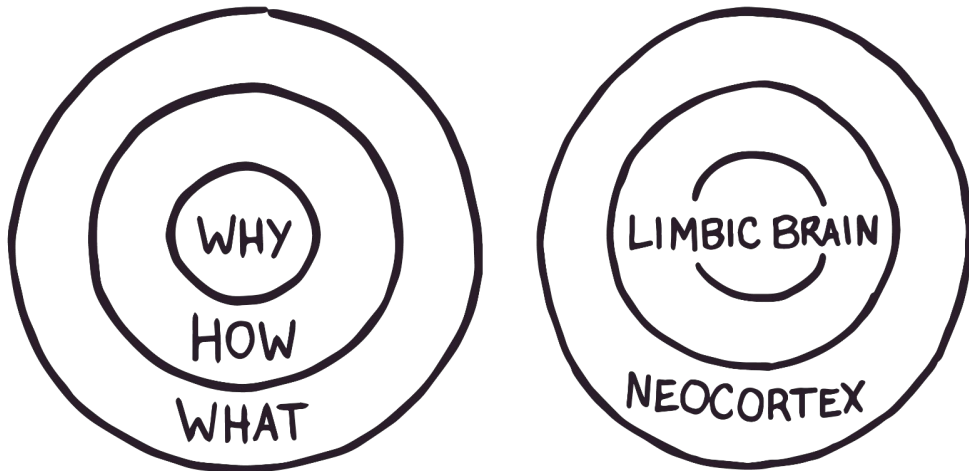
Individuals with the capacity to inspire all think, act, and communicate from the **inside-out**. They start with their **WHY**.

When they communicate their purpose or belief first, they tap into the part of the brain that influences behavior. This is why we say they inspire.

Let's think about our bricklayer again, except this time starting with **WHY**.

- **WHY:** To provide a space for all, so that everyone feels warm, safe, and comfortable.
- **HOW:** I have a positive attitude and great enthusiasm, as well as many years of experience.
- **WHAT:** I am a qualified bricklayer who cares, and wants you to truly feel at home.

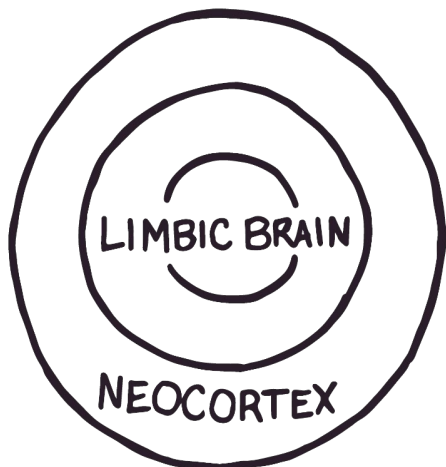
If Oliver actually believes in his **WHY** and thinks, acts, and communicates starting with **WHY**, he will attract people who believe what he believes and who want to be a part of the cause.



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None of this is opinion. The concept of WHY is grounded in the tenets of biology. The Golden Circle aligns exactly with how our brain works. A cross-section of the human brain shows that its layout perfectly correlates with the three major components of The Golden Circle.



Neocortex

The part of the brain responsible for all of our rational, analytical thoughts and language.

Limbic Brain

The part of the brain responsible for all of our feelings, like trust and loyalty. It's also responsible for behavior and decision-making, but has no capacity for language.

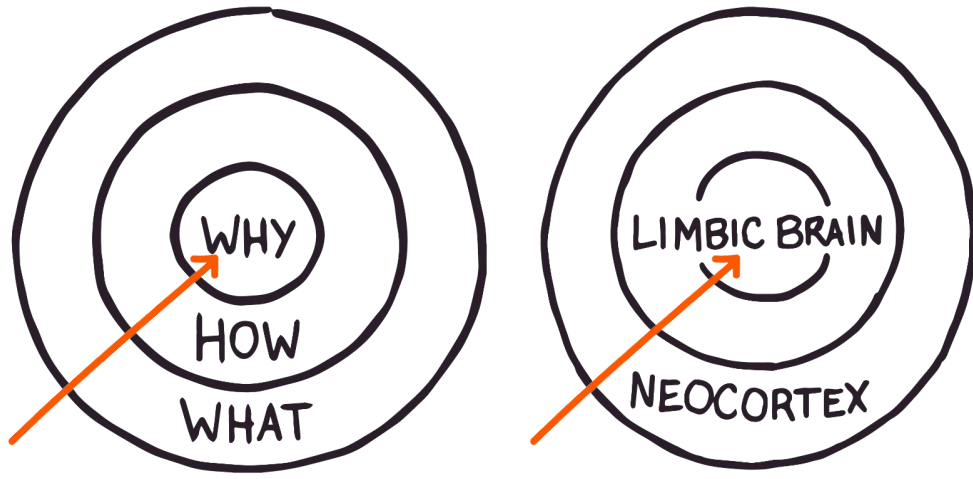
The outside of the brain is the neocortex, which corresponds with the WHAT level of The Golden Circle. The neocortex is the newest brain or Homo sapien brain.

It is responsible for all rational and analytical thought. It helps us understand facts, figures, and features. The neocortex is also responsible for language.

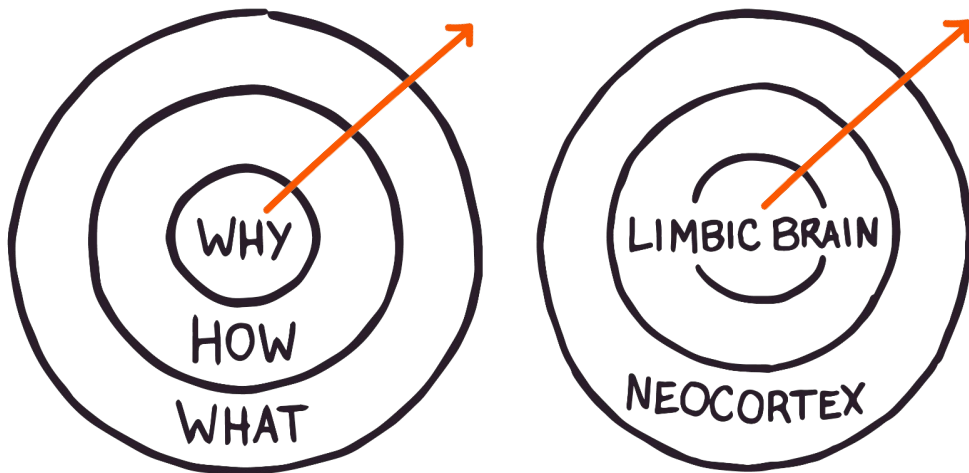
The middle two sections of The Golden Circle—the WHY and HOW—correspond to the middle section of the brain, the limbic system. This is the part of the brain that drives our behavior and decision making. It's also responsible for our feelings, like trust and loyalty.

But unlike the neocortex, the limbic system has no capacity for language. This is the biological reason we sometimes find it difficult to put our feelings into words (“I love you more than words can say.”), explain our actions (“The devil made me do it!”) or justify our decisions (“I don't know, it just felt right.”).

This is where “gut feelings” come from. It's not our stomach that has decision-making receptors. It's a feeling we get about a decision we have to make that we struggle to explain. That comes from the limbic brain and our neocortex rationalizes the feeling, behavior, or decision in language.



In other words, communicate from the **outside-in** and people can understand vast amounts of complicated information, like features, facts, and figures. You simply won't inspire or drive human behavior.



The Golden Circle for Individuals

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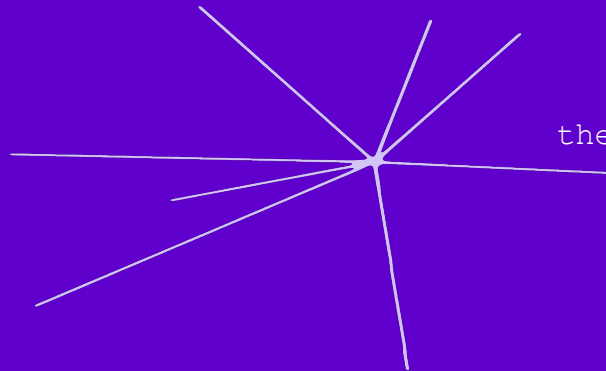
Communicate from the **inside-out** and you speak directly to the part of the brain that drives emotions, behavior, and decision-making. But, if asked the reason they choose one thing over another, the decision-maker often cites the features, facts, or figures. *What's the reasoning behind that?*

The neocortex, the thinking part of the brain, is always trying to understand and make sense of the world. This is the reason we think we are rational beings when we are really not. If we were, we would never buy a product or service simply because of how it makes us feel. We would never be loyal; we would always choose the best deal. We would never care about trust or relationships; we would only evaluate the numbers. We know we don't do that. We do choose one product, service, or company over another because of the way it makes us *feel*.

The limbic system drives our emotions, feelings, and decision-making, but remember it has no capacity for language. We make decisions based on the feeling generated by our limbic system and the neocortex helps us to rationalize and communicate those decisions. This idea plays out in the difference between repeat business and loyalty. Repeat business means that you are willing to do business with someone more than once. It's a transaction, or maybe even a series of transactions. There is little to no feeling associated with this type of activity. Perhaps their prices are a little cheaper, or maybe they provide you some level of convenience. As soon as one or more of those things no longer holds true, then you might complain or take your business elsewhere.

Loyalty is quite different. As a loyal consumer, you may choose to suffer some sort of inconvenience to continue doing business with someone. You will pay more, travel farther, proudly defend and champion your brand, even if their product or service is more expensive, farther away, or somehow less convenient. From a purely rational perspective, that doesn't make sense. However, loyalty comes from feelings like trust, love, and commitment (among others), which are driven by the limbic brain.

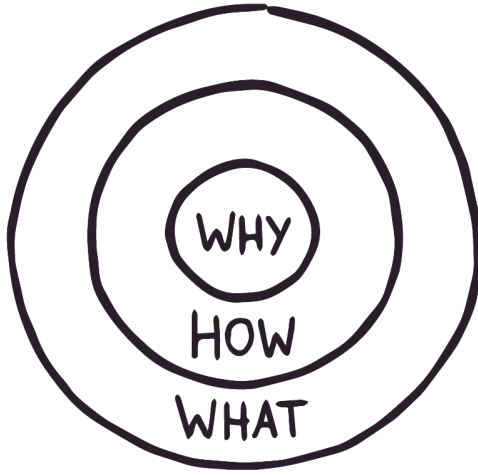
People don't buy
WHAT you do,



they buy WHY
you do it.

-Simon Sinek

This is the reason we can say that people don't buy WHAT you do, they buy WHY you do it. And WHAT you do simply serves as the tangible proof of what you believe.



Clarity of **WHY**

Your purpose, cause, or belief

Discipline of **HOW**

Your strengths, values, and guiding principles

Consistency of **WHAT**

What you say and what you do

The Golden Circle for Individuals

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For The Golden Circle to work properly, you must have:

1. Clarity of **WHY**
2. Discipline of **HOW**
3. Consistency of **WHAT**

No one section of The Golden Circle is more important than the other. The most important thing is balance across all three.

• **WHY**

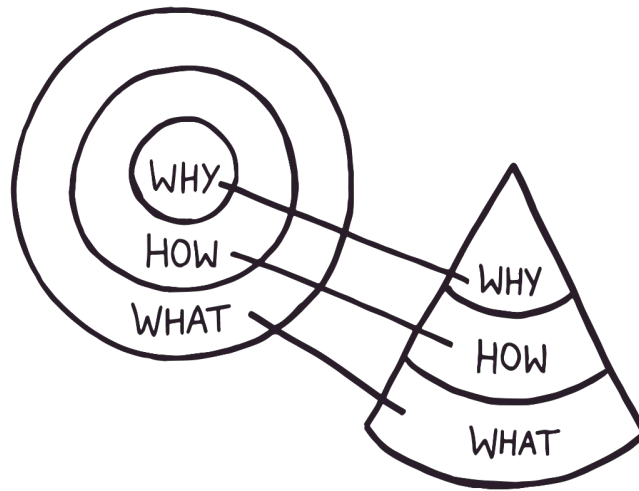
If you don't know **WHY** you do **WHAT** you do, how can you expect anyone else to know? For others to know your **WHY**, you must first have that clarity yourself.

• **HOW**

In order to bring your **WHY** to life, you must be disciplined in living your **HOWs**. You must behave in ways that are aligned with your values, guiding principles, and strengths.

• **WHAT**

Everything you say and do must be consistent with what you believe. After all, we live in the tangible world. The only way people will know what you believe is if you say and do the things you actually believe. This is what it truly means to be authentic.



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The Golden Circle is not just a communication tool; it also provides insight into the way we take action. If we imagine The Golden Circle as a three-dimensional model, it's a top-down view of a cone. The cone represents how an individual functions.

- At the top of the system, you have your WHY. This is why you get out of bed every morning, and your vision of a better future.
- The next level down, the HOW level, includes the unique traits you're able to use to bring your WHY to life.
- The bottom of the cone is the WHAT, or the things you say and do every day. WHATs are tangible, and should be consistent with your HOWs and WHY.

An individual communicates their WHY through everything they say and do—their job, their relationships, their hobbies, and the decisions they make.



The Golden Circle for Individuals

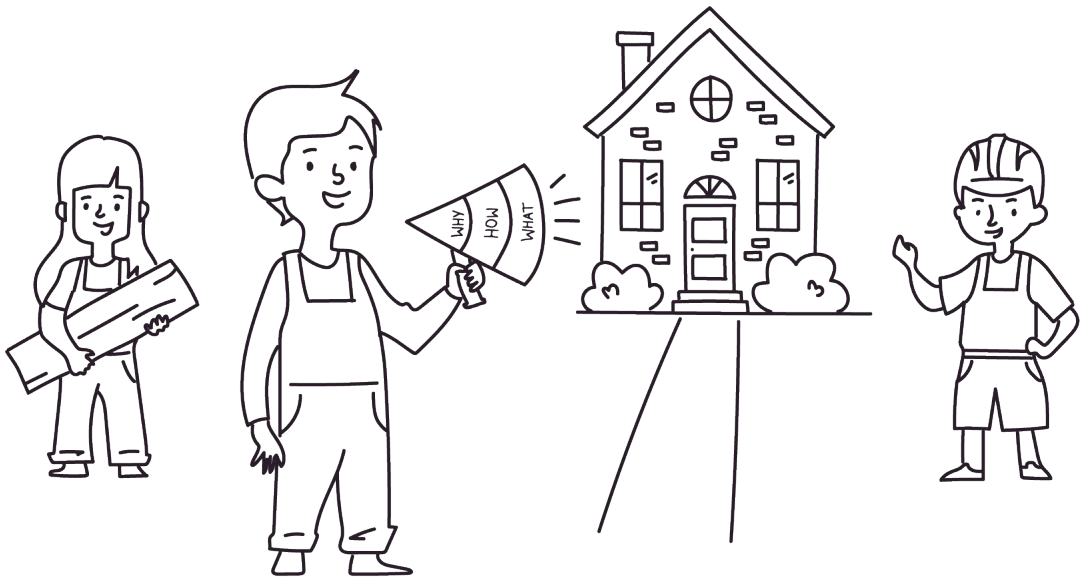
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The cone also serves as a megaphone. For a message to spread, it must be loud AND clear.

Loud is easy. Clear is harder. Clear requires an individual to communicate and exemplify their WHY as the mouthpiece of the megaphone and to cascade that communication and action throughout their lives in a consistent way.

When an individual is clear about their purpose, their WHY, everyone—from friends to coworkers—can understand it. This clarity invites everyone who interacts with you to become champions of the cause, should they so choose. When everything you say and do echoes what you believe, you end up with a message that's loud AND clear.

Oliver's WHY is to provide a unique space for all, so that everyone feels warm, safe, and comfortable. What's your WHY?



The Golden Circle for Individuals

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for more resources

to feel inspired and

to inspire those around you.



A movement only exists when people are inspired to move, to do something, to take up the cause as their own. On behalf of Simon Sinek and the team at Simon Sinek, Inc., we thank you for progressing the movement to inspire and living in service to others.

Inspire on!