

Proposal for

Engaging The Collective Will

A 12 Step Program
For Achieving Our Full Potential
As Leaders of Change

By

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Overview

"Do you want to sell sugar water the rest of your life, or do you want to change the world?"
Steven Jobs to John Scully

Choices, we all have them. Whether consciously or subconsciously, actively or passively we decide among them. This book is about the choices we have. Do we, individually and collectively, want to change the world or as Jobs suggested sell soda water. Do I choose to pursue my destiny, or do I give in to the circumstances of my life and wonder what might have been? Do I, as Robert Kennedy said, "...see things as they are and say: Why? [Or] ...dream things that never were and say: Why not?" At the end of each day, how do I answer the question: Did I make a difference today?

In 1995 with the help of some friends I founded Leaders Anonymous, a 12 Step Program that provides people from throughout organizations and society a safe place, a structured framework, and an on-going support system to look inward and achieve our full potential as leaders of change.

Engaging the Collective Will is a business/leadership book based upon this work. It will appeal, I suspect, to anyone in business and elsewhere who strives to make a difference and desires to maintain balance in their life. My own journey of self-discovery and case studies of other executives will help readers understand that they are not alone in their daily struggles, and that there is hope.

If I have learned anything as I have created and worked our 12 Steps, it's that I cannot change others. So I write this book not to advise but to share experience, strength and hope. My intent is to make the book inclusive, appealing to all regardless of their spiritual or religious beliefs. Readers are invited to take what they want and leave the rest; to challenge and question; and to make the ideas their own.

M. Scott Peck wrote in 1978, "Life is difficult." Since then it has gotten worse.

Dysfunctional organizational cultures and destructive change initiatives have made working in most organizations exhausting and unfulfilling. Changes in societal values and family relationships have eradicated traditional support systems and structures. Restructuring, downsizing and outplacement are the buzzwords of the 90's. We ask as *Time* did in 1987, "Who's in Charge?" But our cry falls on deaf eyes. For as we call for leadership, we find "there is no one home."

But we continue to look outside ourselves for the answers. We invest in new technologies, new CEO's, new strategies, new training programs, and new management methods only to find that the culture and values of our organizations and society have been impacted little. We get promoted and rewarded for being good at manipulating and driving others only to ask: Is this all there is? We improve the bottom line but are too busy to attend our kids soccer game. We talk but are too afraid to trust. We seek explanations but reject the truth.

We pray on Sunday for HIS help but turn on Monday to others for the answers. We justify our acts as necessary for the greater good but wonder during those moments of quiet: Who are we serving? We measure ourselves by possessions, trading our souls in turn.

Engaging the Collective Will is about our challenge as individuals, organizations and nations to accelerate the pace of meaningful change, to achieve our full potential, and to leave a legacy of difference. The only sustainable way to do this, I believe, is to nurture the growth of leaders - throughout organizations and society — who can engage the collective will in substantive rather than politicized purpose. Such leaders develop through personal transformation, emerging over time through a process of self-discovery.

This book is a call to action. It's about you and me, each of us, looking inward, transforming ourselves and grabbing hold of this mantle of leadership. It's about facing reality and confronting the paradox - accelerating change by letting go. It's about faith and turning our lives over to the care of Community, as we understand it. It's about making the world a better place to live and work - one person, one organization, one community at a time. It's about vision and purpose, and actions driven by aspiration rather than desperation. It's about asking ourselves at the end of each day one simple question: Did I make a difference today? And, its about the power of The Twelve Steps to turn hope and dreams into reality.

To those looking to heal thy selves, to restore balance to their lives I say welcome. I say that the 12 Steps can certainly restore your life to sanity. But they can do more. As a 12th Stepper you have the chance - and obligation - to do more, to become more, to achieve more. To make a difference not only in your own life but that of others. I say welcome, welcome to our common challenge as leaders of change.

To those who have gone before, who are the symbols and models of what can be I say welcome and thank you. Remember your journey. Remember how you got here. Successful and at peace with yourself remember what it took to let go. Remember our 12th Step, the value of service and the difference you make as you carry our message of hope to others.

To chief executives looking to put our ideas into practice, looking to change their organizational cultures I say welcome. My respect for you, for the obligations you carry, has only increased as I journey forward. Trying to satisfy stakeholder groups with a diverse range of interests - customers, shareholders, employees, suppliers, management, and communities - is nothing short of balancing six balls in the air. I've grown to understand how powerless we are, alone and in isolation. How tiring and frustrating leading change can be. I say, with all respect, there is a better way. Be open. Success and inner peace are not mutually exclusive.

To those trapped in the middle in dysfunctional organizations I say welcome. Take control of your own lives and let go of trying to change and manipulate others. Create your own space. Consider your own purpose, your own destiny. Grow and evolve as a leader. Become a symbol and model of what can be.

To consultants and trainers looking for the next great program to sell I say welcome. Join a group. Start a group. Let go of being a change agent. Stop selling drugs. Come clean. Have faith. Then go out and put what you learn into practice.

To academics looking to find scientific proof I say, forgive me. Faith, hope, love are not based on science. I have tried the scientific method. I have looked at strategy, processes, systems and models. I have tried to teach leadership. I have been a change agent, a change champion, a coach, an influencer and a manipulator. Failing at every turn to be a leader. Maybe for others these methods will work, for me I must look elsewhere. For me, 'Is this all there is,' is not simply a question its a command. A command not to abandon science but to integrate the spiritual into what I do. To open myself up to the forces of nature. To God, to a greater Power, to Community - as I understand it. Welcome.

To everyone who seeks to make a difference, who desires to change the world - to make it a better place to live and work - I say welcome. Our door is always open.

Market Position

Engaging the Collective Will is a cross between *The Fifth Discipline* by Peter Senge (Doubleday), *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey (Simon & Schuster), *Leadership is an Art* by Max Depree (Bantam Doubleday Dell), *On Becoming a Leader* by Warren Bennis (Addison Wesley) and *Codependent No More* by Melody Beattie (HarperCollins).

Many books and articles have been written over the last few years articulating what characteristics the 'new leader' should have; what characteristics we miraculously need to adapt as leaders to increase personal and organizational productivity. Training programs and institutes are infatuated with 360° feedback and mirrors. Neither prescribing an end state or temporary sabbaticals of introspection, however, seem to be working. This is not surprising since most will agree that leaders develop over-time from the inside-out, as Covey suggests. Jack Welch wrote in the General Electric Company 1993 Annual Report, "The compulsion to manage, to control, to direct, is a powerful one, reinforced by a century-old tradition at GE..." And Edgar Schein wrote in *Organizational Dynamics*, "For leaders to reveal to others (and even to themselves) that they are not sure of themselves, that they do not understand all of the assumptions on which they base action, and that they make mistakes in their thinking can be profoundly threatening."

What has been missing is a sustainable framework that can provide people an on-going support system for their journey of self-discovery. Twelve Step Programs such as Leaders Anonymous are a proven method for doing this. As I have talked and worked with people from throughout the country, many have wondered why the 12 Steps have not been applied more broadly to non-recovery areas of life.

My hope is that like *Codependent No More* and *The Saturday Evening Post* article on Alcoholics Anonymous this book will spur the development of Leaders Anonymous

support groups across the country and around the world. I envision a follow-up reader like AA's Blue Book and other supportive material.

Approach

Engaging the Collective Will will be a 200 to 250 page book (60,000 to 75,000 words) that integrates ideas from recovery, business management, leadership, psychology and self-help. The book will begin with my personal journey of self-discovery and how I was impacted by a CEO admitting that he was a recovering alcoholic. I will then discuss what life is like in many organizations, drawing parallels to dependency and co-dependency, and presenting the Twelve Steps and Twelve Principles of Leaders Anonymous as a viable support system for personal transformation. The last part of the book will provide readers with guidelines for working a program, starting support groups and spreading a leadership culture across organizational and societal boundaries.

Outline

Chapter 1: And Then It Happened

Objective: To provide the reader with a sense of hope and a symbol of what can be.

Abstract: Leaders Anonymous has been a decade in the making. Sometimes I think my whole life has been in preparation for what I am doing. My own journey of self-discovery, what happened to change my life, and how Leaders Anonymous has been impacting my life, my family and the lives of others will be discussed. An important point occurred in 1994 when a well respected and very successful CEO stood up in a business meeting and declared himself a recovering alcoholic. He will share his story and his thoughts on how the 12 Steps impacted his life then, 15 years ago, and how he sees the carry-over into his success in business. I will develop the proposition that without leaders throughout an organization who can engage the collective will - in substantive rather than politicized purpose - a tremendous amount of time and energy is wasted, and meaningful organization change will remain an expensive oxymoron. The chapter will end with a discussion of The Twelve Principles of Leaders Anonymous (see below), which articulate a vision for effective personal leadership, and answer the question: What can I do as a leader of change if I let go? To support this model I will review several current and historical models of 'servant leadership,' building a consensus view, and discuss the success and impact several such leaders have had. The language of 12 Step Programs will be interspersed in context without explanation to help the reader 'experience' the language.

As a leader I have purpose outside of Self • I can voice hope for our future • I can be a symbol and model of what can be • I can challenge the boundaries of the impossible • I can reframe the debate I can face my own reality and move forward • I can speak openly and honestly • I can act with integrity, civility and respect • I can listen, remember and learn • I can accept you unconditionally • I can support your growth • But I cannot change you, nor will I try to manipulate you.

Chapter 2: An Exhausting Day

Objective: To help readers understand that they are not alone in what they are feeling.

Abstract: What is life like in most organizations today? What is the price we pay personally and organizationally for our belief in self-power? Who am I and what am I feeling, thinking, doing? I will share a personal story from a consulting assignment that vividly depicts, I have been told, what people in most organizations face everyday. Kets de Vries and others have written about dysfunctional organizational cultures. I will introduce and explore this subject in depth and draw analogies to (1) addictive leadership styles and dependency; (2) executives and others as co-dependents; (3) scientific managers as dry drunks; and (4) future leaders acculturated and trained within dysfunctional organizations as children of alcoholics. Interviews and case studies will support this discussion, and extrapolate these ideas to other non-business arenas. Stories from recovery will help the reader see that what they are feeling, and what alcoholics, etc., feel are quite similar. The chapter will close with a list of characteristics and questions to help readers begin to identify within themselves these prototypes.

Chapter 3: Are We Lemmings or What?

Objective: To give the reader an understanding of why it's so hard for them and others to change.

Abstract: "Insanity is doing the same thing, and expecting different results." Personal change is not a new subject. But most of us are anchored into the status quo; too afraid to take that first step; opting for the safety of the known, regardless of what it is. Many of us look at alcoholics, smokers, over-eaters and wonder why they just don't get it. Just give it up, we say. We wonder aloud that they 'must know' that it's harmful to them and their families. But they continue anyway. But when it comes to us, ourselves, to kick our own compulsive behaviors as managers, supervisors, parents, it's another story. Oh, how we deny, repress and project; get angry at those who dare to confront us; look for a 'safe way out.' Before we let go of our belief in self-power we will try any of the new scientific methods, no matter the cost or effectiveness. This chapter will explore the full range of issues on *Why We Do What We Do* (book title written by Edward Deci), incorporating insights from business, recovery, and psychology.

Chapter 4: Our Common Journey

Objective: To introduce the 12 Steps of Leaders Anonymous as a viable model for personal transformation.

Abstract: In 1977 Abraham Zaleznik, based on the writings of William James in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, introduced the idea of twice-born leaders. In a *Harvard Business Review* article he argued that managers and leaders are different. He writes, "Managers perceive life as a steady progression of positive events, resulting in security at home, in school, in the community, and at work. Leaders are "twice-born" individuals who endure major events that lead to a sense of separateness, or perhaps estrangement, from their environments. As a result, they turn inward in order to reemerge with a created rather than an inherited sense of

identity." Peter Senge talks of "personal mastery," and Manfred F. R. Kets de Vries writes of an "inner theater." I will present stories of current and historical journeys from all walks of life, including my own. Transitional and transformation models will be compared - Bridges, Kubler-Ross, Senge, 12 Steps - to show similarities and differences. In the end this chapter will make the case that what has been missing is not 'what' characteristics we should have as leaders but a sustainable framework and on-going support system for getting there.

Chapter 5-16: The Twelve Steps of Leaders Anonymous

Objective: To help the reader to understand the 12 Steps of Leaders Anonymous.

Abstract: These chapters will discuss each of the 12 Steps of Leaders Anonymous. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps has been received from Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Each chapter will follow the following format: (1) a personal journey/story from business; (2) the nature of this step; (3) insight (strength) derived from this story related to the particular step; (4) insight that can be gained from stories of recovery, important differences; (5) integration of ideas from other authors in related fields; and (6) how these ideas affect our ability to lead change - what if, imagine, obstacles, and challenges. The chapters will be arranged in three sections - Endings, Transformation, and New Beginnings - as discussed below.

The Twelve Steps are reprinted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the twelve Steps does not mean that A.A. is in any way affiliated with this program. A.A. is a program of recovery from alcoholism only - use of the Twelve Steps in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after A.A., but which address other problems, or in any other non-A.A. context, does not imply otherwise.

Endings

- *Chapter 5. Denial* - Step 1. We faced our reality and admitted our part in the making. Issues of denial, unmanageable lives, admission, hitting bottom, aspiration versus desperation.
- *Chapter 6. Openness* - Step 2. Became willing to let go of our belief in self-power. Issues of substitution, open mindedness, self-will, self-sufficiency, spirituality, willingness, humility, and predisposition to trust.
- *Chapter 7. Acting on Faith* - Step 3. Made a decision to turn our lives over to the care of Community, as we understand it. Issues of faith, fear, risk and action.

Transformation

- *Chapter 8. Self-Reflection* - Step 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. Issues of honesty, self-examination, time, repression, projection, attribution, empathy and sharing, pride, ego.

- *Chapter 9. Coming Clean* - Step 5. Admitted to ourselves and others what we had become and what we wished to be. Issues of personal introspection, safety, security, dialogue, strength, sponsors/mentors.
- *Chapter 10. Trust* - Step 6. Became entirely ready to have our Community nurture our growth. Issues of willingness to change, to grow, to evolve.
- *Chapter 11. Humility* - Step 7. Humbly asked our community to help. Issue of humility.
- *Chapter 12. Remembering* - Step 8. Became willing to make amends to those we had harmed. Issues of expectations, manipulation, accountability, guilt.
- *Chapter 13. Courage* - Step 9. Made direct amends and reconciled our differences with others, except when to do so would injure them or others. Issue of action.

New Beginnings

- *Chapter 14. Integrity* - Step 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. Issues of openness, honesty, integrity, monitoring, consistency, admission, values.
- *Chapter 15. Purpose* - Step 11. Sought through dialogue and self-reflective thought to improve our conscious contact with community, as we understand it, seeking only the strength and wisdom to fulfill our destiny. Issues of purpose, choice, destiny, dialogue, self-reflection, meditation, learning, subconscious, Community.
- *Chapter 16. Service* - Step 12. Tried to practice these principles in all our affairs, to remember, and to carry our message of hope to our friends and colleagues. Issues of service, action, putting ideas into practice, remembering, leading by example, voice, acceptance.

Chapter 17: Leaders Anonymous in Society

Objective: To provide readers guidelines for how they might work a program, get involved, and start a group.

Abstract: Guidelines for working 12 Step Programs abound in many different sources. I will borrow (steal) and adapt from them, provide a list of other sources of help, and a list of suggested readings.

Chapter 18: Creating 12 Step Organizations

Objective: To provide executives and others guidelines for integrating Leaders Anonymous into their organizational environments.

Abstract: How can The Twelve Steps of Leaders Anonymous be incorporated into leadership development and organizational change initiatives? I will position LA as a personal operating system using Microsoft's Windows 95 as a metaphor. That is, LA will, over time, enable a leadership culture to spread throughout an organization. And just as Windows 95 enables application programs to run faster and better, LA will enable strategies and change initiatives to work faster with more lasting results. I will also introduce and discuss other leadership

methodologies which are complimentary. Finally I will discuss what Leaders Anonymous is not, and address some of the obstacles to putting our ideas into practice, such as extrinsically driven reward systems.

Chapter 19: Imagine

Objective: To provide the reader with some closing thoughts on what I have learned from writing this book, on my continuing journey of self-discovery, and my hope for the future.

Abstract: I plan to keep a diary of my thoughts as I write this book. This chapter will share these thoughts — my experience, insights gained, and my hope for the future.

Appendix: Costs of Changing Others (COCO)

Objective: To provide readers a way to think about the costs of trying to change and manipulate others.

Abstract: In 1979 Philip Crosby wrote *Quality is Free* which popularized the concept of 'cost of poor quality' and allowed organizations to estimate the amount of time and money that was being wasted because of poor quality. I intend to develop and present a similar concept, 'cost of changing others' which will enable organizations to estimate the time and money being wasted trying to change and manipulate others. Items which can be included in these are many of the expenses and resource time invested in training, consulting, staff meetings, human relations, outplacement, etc.

Credentials

Engaging the Collective Will has grown out of my personal and professional experiences, my research into organizational change and my desire to make a difference. Over my 24 years in industry and consulting I have had the opportunity to work with, befriend, and counsel many young and seasoned executives. I have seen in them, and myself, the stress and strain caused by trying to change and manipulate others. I have seen in a few, and learned from them, that success and balance can be achieved - if we let go.

While teaching as a college professor I discovered the difference between teaching and learning. As a parent and coach I am reminded every day that what I do has meaning, what I say is usually lost. As a husband I must admit that I am a not so perfect, recovering change agent. As a member of Leaders Anonymous I see the difference one person can make.

Professionally I have spent the last 13 years running my own strategy consulting firm. As an independent consultant I have assisted business owners and executives in a full range of manufacturing, construction, healthcare, wholesale/distribution and service organizations. Originally specializing in marketing and strategy development, the focus of my work has evolved over time. Today most of my time is spent writing on issues of leadership and personal transformation, and supporting executives - through dialogue, storytelling, group interaction and mentoring - to think through their roles as leaders of change.

Formerly I held positions in strategic planning, marketing and engineering with GE and Bendix; taught as an assistant professor at Skidmore College; and served with the USMC in Vietnam. I received a Masters in Management from J. L Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, and a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Florida Atlantic University. I have conducted numerous seminars and am considered a dynamic, entertaining and highly effective speaker.

I have published our own Twelve Steps and Twelve Principles of Leaders Anonymous and have written a series of stories that have been well received. One of the stories, An Exhausting Day, was recently published in INNOVATING an academic journal of The Rensselaerville Institute.