

# shine

IGNITE YOUR INNER GAME  
TO LEAD CONSCIOUSLY  
AT WORK AND IN THE WORLD

CARLEY HAUCK

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# Introduction

Conscious leadership is not something we typically learn in business school, but today leaders of every generation are being invited into a new era of leadership. Conscious leadership embodies a new mindset, a new operating model of “wholeness” that is connected to the core parts of ourselves, and to what I describe as our *inner game*. Conscious leaders have a strong sense of purpose; they know leadership is about serving and following a calling to positively transform the workplace and the world. They want to reconnect to their inner nature and create and lead soulful organizations that enhance all of life. The inner qualities that enable that kind of leadership, the ways in which real-world leaders bring them to the workplace, and how you too can bring your inner game forward are the subjects of this book.

On Tuesday, January 15, 2018, chief executives of the world’s largest public companies received a letter from the CEO of BlackRock, one of the world’s most influential investment firms, informing them that their companies would need to do more than make a profit if they wanted to receive BlackRock’s financial support. “Society is demanding that companies, both public and private, serve a social purpose,” Laurence D. Fink wrote. “To prosper over time, every company must not only deliver financial performance but also show how it makes a positive contribution to society.”<sup>1</sup>

Fink’s letter highlighted what many of us in the “conscious business” world have known for a long time: that companies, and the men and women who lead them, have enormous power to shape the world. It is up to business leaders, Fink cautioned, to ensure that there are enough resources available for everyone to thrive.

In order to keep up with the rising complexity of our world, a new way of leading and operating is essential. Yet in 2018, when the company Deloitte surveyed more than 14,000 CEOs across twenty-three industries, it found a clear complexity gap in leadership consciousness: leaders didn't feel they had the skills to address the multiple complexities we all face.<sup>2</sup> Working professionals today are dealing with challenges we have not witnessed before, including:

- Disruptive innovations
- More diverse ages in the workforce than ever before, with younger populations desiring a new, more remote, and flexible way of working
- Market volatility
- A worldwide pandemic
- High levels of stress, burnout, and depression
- Systemic issues related to climate change, resource scarcity, and the disruption of ecosystems

For the last decade, I have worked with conscious leaders as a learning architect, leadership development professional, and executive coach. I have observed certain inner qualities that conscious leaders possess and will support this new era of leadership in meeting these complexities. A conscious inner game is the capacity for *self-awareness, emotional intelligence, resilience, love, authenticity, and well-being*. To help encourage and foster these characteristics I developed the Shine Leadership System, a program of experiential practices and skills. I have used this system at companies like LinkedIn, Bank of the West, Pixar, Genentech, Intel, Clif Bar & Company, and high-growth startups. I have found that leaders who possess these qualities create caring, innovative, and collaborative workplaces.

This book will teach you how to lead by helping you grow a strong, conscious inner game that will become the core of your leadership: the internal qualities, beliefs, and values that determine how you show up and navigate life and the workplace. The inner game is your internal operating

system—a set of skills that steadies you and strengthens your mind, body, and heart. A strong inner game supports the flow and release of your emotions and keeps you open, curious, and resilient. And these qualities determine how you lead.

Once you've cultivated and enhanced your inner game, you'll be able to more effectively withstand the storms and challenges of life, solve pressing challenges at work and in the world, and truly shine in your leadership role. Most businesses focus on the outer game or leadership competencies, but to become a strong, conscious leader, you must first develop your inner game skills and add these essential elements to your leadership toolbox—and your life toolbox, too.

Your inner game directs your outer game—how others experience you on the outside, in life and the workplace. Your inner game informs how you communicate, make decisions, and guide and motivate your team, and ultimately, how you align your values in leadership and business. Technology can solve an infinite number of business challenges, but the human element in the workplace can never be replaced by artificial intelligence. Business is fundamentally about relationships and human decision-making, and that's why when we evolve and grow our inner game to positively influence our outer game, we can solve big challenges together—flourishing at work, creating belonging, healing the planet, and repairing the world.

## **My Leadership Journey**

I believe that leaders have vast power to influence businesses and the world as a whole in positive ways. My own journey toward conscious leadership began when, as a child, I watched my father bring work stress home, and home stress to work. We bring our whole selves with us wherever we go, and the way my dad related to stress and life in his leadership role as an attorney was not the way I wanted to navigate my world. I wanted to find a more graceful, resilient, and joyful way to live and lead. And that is exactly what led me to develop the tools and inner-game leadership skills I teach and that are included in this book.

I took the next step of my journey at age nineteen when I read His Holiness the Dalai Lama's book *The Art of Happiness*. I was hooked by its straightforward and clear message of living a life of ease, happiness, and resilience. Because of the book, I began a meditation practice, and over the twenty-plus years since, I have discovered many new gems by sitting and quieting my mind, turning toward and finding refuge in my body, and opening my heart.

I created a curriculum based on these practices while attending graduate school, then moved to San Francisco, where I taught two different courses infused with meditation and embodiment practices at the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco. A few months later, a human resource professional at the law firm Littler Mendelson contacted me to ask if I could come in and teach the lawyers how to increase their resilience to stress. After thinking about it for a moment, I said, "Yes, I can." And that was the turning point, the moment when I stepped into my larger purpose of supporting leaders in accessing their greatest gifts and purpose.

My work with leaders, businesses, students, and faculty at Stanford University and University of California, Berkeley's Haas School of Business is informed by my love of research and human-centered design. I think of the role I play with companies as *healing business*. To do this, I design leadership and development programs for workplaces and foster cultural learning and leadership transformation through initiatives that enhance psychological safety, trust, and caring, and belonging in these settings. The interaction of the mind, body, and heart, and bringing one's wholeness to work and life have always been areas of fascination for me, in both research and implementation.

I'm also interested in the intersection of disease, stress, healing, and organizational health, and my education and career choices have reflected that. I studied health psychology and organizational psychology in graduate school and have always loved research and being part of research studies. Between undergrad and graduate school, I was selected as a National Science Foundation fellow and conducted three months of research in a neuroscience lab at Kent State University, assessing the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) on the body's physiology, particularly the effects of stress hormones. Later, while studying health psychology in graduate school, I developed a ten-week program that integrated meditation,

exercise, and socio-emotional learning for cancer patients. I continued to work with cancer patients at California Pacific Medical Center's Institute for Health & Healing, in the fields of integrative medicine and counseling, and teaching courses to help people train their minds, open their hearts, nourish their bodies, and lead more resilient, healthy, and courageous lives.

While I was working with leaders and companies through my business, *Leading from Wholeness*, I pursued my love of research and became a lead consultant/facilitator on two six-year studies with the University of California, San Francisco's Osher Center for Integrative Medicine, funded by the National Institutes of Health. These studies observed the long-term benefits of mindfulness and other practices to support resilience to stress, reduction of the stress hormone cortisol, weight loss, emotional regulation, well-being, and the prevention of type 2 diabetes. This study confirmed that much of the curriculum I'd been teaching had solid scientific evidence to back it up.

During this time of research and applying these concepts of meditation and healing in the workplace, I also dove more deeply into the study of Buddhism and integrated its wise teachings into my personal and professional life.

Then, in 2013, my life changed in the most amazing way. A friend and colleague, Fred Luskin, called me. He explained that Stanford University was looking for new adjunct faculty and was interested in bringing some new electives into its course curriculum. He had shared my teachings and curriculum with the staff.

"What do you think about teaching at Stanford?" he asked me.

"Fred, you had me at hello," I said.

I've been happily teaching at Stanford ever since, covering a variety of topics related to mindfulness, resilience, healthy conflict, forgiveness, and embodied leadership. After I began teaching at Stanford, Fred and I collaborated and spoke on the subjects of forgiveness, happiness, and emotional intelligence, both at Stanford and at other professional organizations.

I also teach on the subjects of leadership at University of California, Berkeley's Haas School of Business and at other business schools around the country and the world.



I share the highlights of my journey to offer a broad explanation of how I arrived at the tools and techniques you will learn in this book. While the path has not been a straight line, everything I've learned in and out of the lab, has reinforced my belief that there are numerous sources we can draw upon to develop our best selves.

I have found through my teaching, coaching, and serving leaders that when an individual leader is off balance and not leading from a whole and healed place, it will impact the ability of the entire workplace to perform, care for one another, collaborate, and innovate. That means the product or service this business puts out into the world will have a less-than-positive impact. So, the more we can heal and transform on the inside, as individuals (the inner game), the more connected, resilient, innovative, and caring our workplaces will be (the outer game). And because *the workplace and our natural world are connected*, business can be a platform for positive change that prioritizes the well-being of people and the planet first. That connection is the primary motivation in my work and was the impetus for this book.

## Healing the Workplace and the World

I first heard internal whispers of protecting people and the planet when I was a young child walking along the beach in St. Augustine, Florida, my family's summer vacation spot. There, I found lots of trash and plastic and, inevitably, plastic bags that I filled with litter. I brought these stuffed bags back to the condo my family rented.

I remember my mom looking at me with a bewildered expression and saying, "Carley, what am I supposed to do with these bags of trash?"

"Mom, the trash isn't supposed to be in the ocean or on the beach," I said. "A sea turtle is going to think it's a jellyfish and eat it."

This desire to be a good steward of the Earth didn't stop there. Five years ago, I was playing with my then four-year-old nephew Cooper, who like me has a strong love of the ocean and marine life.

He looked up at me and said, "Auntie Carley, can we save the oceans together?"

I was moved by his invitation and felt responsible for making sure Cooper and all future generations can enjoy a world where healthy coral reefs and marine life still thrive. With a trembling in my heart, I said, “*Yes* sweetheart, we can.” At four years old, he was already connected to the world he was inheriting and had asked me to take a stand with him.

You, my friend, *are* the Earth. The Earth is mostly water and so is your body; you are around 60 percent water. We are living systems, our workplaces are living systems, and the planet is a living system. If any of these systems is unhealthy or imbalanced, it affects the whole. You can't flourish at work or at home if there is no clean air, water, or soil, right?

We will continue to explore this interconnection throughout the book, focusing on how realigning and upgrading your inner game will positively impact the possibilities of business and the health of the planet. In other words, the inner transformation will create the collective outer transformation. I wrote this book because I want to live in a world with conscious, resilient, caring, and courageous leaders who speak up and align their actions around what matters. We desperately need leaders who are self-aware enough to lead from their hearts and prioritize people and the planet. I am taking a stand to inspire leaders and businesses to do the right thing: to be a platform for positive change and to create new systems and ways of doing business to cultivate a flourishing Mother Earth and a world that works for everyone.

## Remeasuring Success

This evolution in leadership is vital because the way we've been leading and doing business is no longer sustainable or smart. The evidence of this is loud and clear. A report issued in October 2018 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a group of scientists convened by the United Nations (UN) to guide world leaders, states that the emissions path we are currently on is likely to take us to 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming by 2040.<sup>3</sup> This means that, as temperatures rise, many of the biggest cities in the Middle East and South Asia will become lethally hot in the summer. We will experience more dramatic food shortages, wildfires, and a mass die-off of coral reefs.

The UN advises that to prevent this, we must reduce 2010's greenhouse gas emissions by 45 percent by 2030.<sup>4</sup> As I write, that date is only ten years away. Businesses must be prepared for the adverse impact and damage of climate change, such as mega-fires, mega-storms, and increased heat.

The emergency of climate change is the most important issue of our lifetime. It also offers the biggest business opportunity of the twenty-first century: that of harnessing greater efficiencies from the world's natural resources, business models, and supply chains. Leaders and businesses must transcend their commercial and self-interests and factor climate sustainability into their growth operations. The inspiring leaders I will introduce you to in this book do this well.

In 2016, 70 percent of CEOs believed the UN's Sustainable Development Goals would create a clear framework to structure sustainability efforts, and in 2019, 48 percent of CEOs implemented sustainability into their operations.<sup>5</sup> Since we created the climate crisis, we can uncreate it. But to shift the tide, we must awaken to a new paradigm in leadership. And when you bring a strong inner game forward in your own workplace and in your life as a whole, you can be part of that.

## Leading the Way

The next population of leaders and workers, Millennials and Generation Z, are a force to be reckoned with, and they are already leading the way in conscious leadership and business. Generation Z alone makes up 25 percent of the population, a larger cohort than Baby Boomers or Millennials. They are predicted to account for 40 percent of all consumers by the time this book is published.<sup>6</sup> Millennial and Generation Z employees and leaders want to know they're making a difference, and they choose employers who expect them to step up to this commitment.<sup>7</sup>

In a 2016 workplace study, 64 percent of Millennials considered a company's social and environmental commitments when deciding where to work; 64 percent wouldn't take a job with a company that didn't have strong corporate social responsibility; and 83 percent said they would be more loyal to

a company if they had opportunities to make a positive impact on social and environmental issues.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, the Deloitte Global Millennial Survey 2020 explores the views of more than 27,500 Millennials and Generation Zs, both before and after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, to understand their perspectives on business, government, climate, and the pandemic, among other issues. The survey reveals that despite the individual challenges and personal sources of anxiety that Millennials and Generation Zs are facing, they have remained focused on larger societal issues, both before and after the onset of the pandemic. If anything, the pandemic has reinforced their desire to help drive positive change in their communities and around the world. And they continue to push for a world in which businesses and governments mirror that same commitment to society, putting people ahead of profits and prioritizing environmental sustainability.<sup>9</sup>

This population of workers and our next generation of leaders value prioritizing people and planet over profit. They want opportunities to learn and grow, work flexible hours, enjoy a work-life balance, and be members of work cultures that encourage diversity, inclusion, and belonging.<sup>10</sup> They are demanding changes in the way business is done, and to keep this rising talent, businesses must nurture these desires.

The good news is that companies that have dedicated themselves to helping the world flourish also do best by the measures that ultimately count—a triple bottom line of people, planet, and profit. When we lead from our hearts, all actions align with that clear vision, purpose, and mission. Companies guided by leaders who are aligned with an altruistic mission and purpose financially outperform the market average by 42 percent!<sup>11</sup> How does the leadership achieve these goals and values? By cultivating a vital culture of trust, loyalty, and commitment, and by leading with a strong, conscious inner game.

## Learning from Others

In these pages, I will introduce you to inspiring thought leaders who have been touched by a deep calling as a result of loss and difficulty. They made

changes, took risks, and committed to learning, growing, and healing. And because they did, they've flourished individually, and their businesses are creating a positive, sustainable impact in the world. I've learned their "recipes" for resilience and have seen the ways in which they acted with courage, made tough decisions, and led from vulnerability.

I know from personal and professional experience that leadership and entrepreneurship can be both difficult and inspiring. In this book, I will share with you the science and data behind the workplace leadership trainings and interventions I've conducted with the Shine Leadership System over the last decade. I have used this system with thousands of team members and emerging, middle, and C-suite (executive) leaders from a variety of industries including finance, health, technology, and startups. That's how I developed the wonderful practices I include in this book, practices that will help you grow your leadership game.

The book also draws upon the latest research on leadership, emotional intelligence, psychological safety, neuroscience, vulnerability, resilience, climate science, sustainable finance, systems theory, corporate social responsibility, and diversity, inclusion, and belonging. All of these topics and values are essential to becoming a conscious leader in business. I also interviewed many incredible experts and business leaders in these fields and share what I have learned from them.

## An Armchair Tour of *Shine*

Here is the adventure that awaits you:

*Shine* is divided into two parts. In part I, *Awaken Your Inner Game*, we will explore in depth the six elements of a strong inner game, with one chapter devoted to each.

Chapter 1 is about *self-awareness*, the foundational inner game that supports you in understanding your strengths, blind spots, motivations, and behaviors, and how these impact others. In chapter 2 you'll develop *emotional intelligence*, learning how to navigate feelings of anger, sadness, and fear with confidence so you can bring your outer game of empathy and