

The 15 Commitments of Conscious Leadership

- Most models are built on beliefs of scarcity and win/lose competition
- After a cup of tea, meditate, jog and connect with your loved ones for a few minutes of authentic sharing and appreciation. Check to see if anything is blocking our closeness.
- Learning combined with playing is the holy grail of corporate culture. Don't be focused on being/proving you're right, remain in a state of curiosity and high learning. You will drift in and out of this state but the concept is to identify your drifts.
- It's primal = when the Amygdala (almond shaped part of the limbic brain) senses threat it sounds an alarm and our entire system prepares for survival. Difficult for the body to differentiate between a physical threat and an imagined threat to the ego or identity. Being wrong equates to being dead. In such situations, survival trumps high-level problem solving, creativity and collaboration.
- Knowing when you are below the line is more important than being below the line.
- Shifting above the line is moving from closed to open, from defensive to curious, from wanting to be right to wanting to learn.
- Good leaders pay more attention to how conversations are occurring vs what's being said.
- Life is like a university where we enroll in the classes perfectly design for our education. We can either be "at the effect of" the teacher, the curriculum and the other students or "consciously creating with."
- Instead of asking "Why is this happening to me?" the By Me leader asks questions like, "What can I learn from this?", "How is this situation 'for me'?", "How am I creating this and keeping this going?"
- Moving To Me to By Me = taking radical responsibility for what is occurring in our lives, letting go of blaming anyone (ourselves, others, conditions etc) and opening through the curiosity to learn all that life has to teach us.
- Through me is noticing something beyond ourselves.
- Imagine for a moment how you would lead and live in a world without separation; no separation between you and your employees or you and your competitors or you and the environment.
- Blame is a powerful motivator. Like its cousin guilt and shame, it is one of the most common forms of motivation used by leaders, parents, politicians and clergy. Blame, shame and guilt all come from the same source: TOXIC FEAR. When things don't go the way we think they should the natural human reaction is to become anxious. Once fears kicks in, a common defense mechanism is to blame someone, something or ourselves so we can keep our sense of identity (our ego) intact.
 - Five levels of motivation
 - Toxic fear
 - Extrinsic motivation; money, corner office, title
 - Intrinsic motivation; learning, fulfilling purpose and autonomy
 - Play, creativity, and expressing our "genius" in the world
 - Love.
- Believe that the world isn't the way it should be, they resort to blaming themselves and end up modeling self-blame for others. Self-blame is as toxic as blaming someone else.
- Thought experiment = what if there is no way the world should be and no way the world shouldn't be? What is the world just shows up the way the world shows up? What is the great opportunity of life isn't to bend the world a certain way, but rather learn from what the world provides us? What if curiosity and learning are really the big game, not being right about how things should be?

- Ask yourself and get curious “I keep this issue going by...”
- The entire game changes when we chose to see that we’re creating our experience, and that someone or something is NOT doing it TO US.
- No other commitment is more central to the core of being unconscious people than the one to being right.
- Pick an issue = notice the difference between their need to defend, justify and explain why they are right about this issue and their need to defend $2+2 = 4$, they often have an epiphany. First, not as certain about “rightness”. Second, wanting to be right and being snne as being right, and being validated and appreciated for being right are what they really want. This attachment is all about the ego. What is “right” doesn’t need to be defended. The equation $2+2 = 4$ doesn’t require us to fight about validity.
- Being right doesn’t cause drama, but wanting, proving and fighting to be “right” does.
- Conscious leaders go below the line, it’s survival and how we’re wired. Idea is to pause, take a moment to breathe and ask where am I – above or below the line? If you find yourself below the line don’t blame just accept yourself for being there.
- Presence is the space from which intimate partners can really experience connection and intimacy.
- Most people stay in presence for 4 seconds, then something causes us to drift, our energy goes flat, our body and breath constricts and we start to become reactive and triggered.
- Practice shifting like you’d practice golf.
 - A conscious breath shifts our breathing pattern – 4 conscious breaths of 4 seconds in/out
 - Change your posture
 - Move to wonder by asking questions
 - Value learning over being right
- Wonder questions go beyond our current knowing, our past experience and our current paradigms. “I wonder what outrageous customer service would look like?”
- The head is the go-to center for conversation, heart for EQ
- Emotion = E-motion i.e., energy in motion or said another way feelings are physical sensations
- Anger has a certain set of sensations as does sadness and fear.
- Primary emotions – anger, fear, sadness, joy, sexual
- Hurt = anger and sadness
- Pause in a conversation and ask “What are you feeling right now?” This powerful question invites people to look beyond thinking and see what is occurring in the heart and body.
- They primary learning is this: When asked, if the words “I feel” are followed by “that” or “like you are expressing a thought, not describing a feeling. Once they identify a feeling ask where you feel it in your body.
- Fear = the belly, Anger = the back/shoulders/neck/jaw, Sadness = heart, throat, face, eyes, Joy = spine and core
- Mastery comes from being able to fully release feelings. Feelings are supposed to be released. They release naturally and spontaneously if we don’t prevent it.
- Repression = recycling the feelings which occurs when we get caught in a cognitive/emotive loop.
- Releasing
 - Locate the sensation in your body
 - Breathe

- Allow/accept/appreciate the sensation
- Match your experience with your expression – if this sensation could make a sound what would it be?
- Emotions last at most 90 seconds and come in waves, understand and enjoy the waves
- If you repress or recycle emotion, it can harden into a mood i.e., anger becomes bitterness.
- Anger tells a leader that something is not, or is no longer of service. OR, that something is not aligned and must be changed or destroyed so that something more beneficial can replace it. This emotion tells a leader that a boundary needs to be set or an existing one is being violated.
 - When conscious leaders move from anger to eliminate what is not longer of service, they very often don't look angry on the outside. There is no outburst.
 - Anger below the line looks like blame, righteousness and criticism.
- Fear is a body's way of saying "wake up. Without this fear, leaders, like 16-year-olds, are dangerous to themselves and others. Below the line means a made up future state.
- Sadness tells a leader that something needs be let go of, said goodbye to, moved on from. Sadness is dangerous because they hang on to old ideas, people, projects and dreams long after they have served their purpose. Below the line is "poor me".
- Joy means something needs to be celebrated. Below the line is circumstantial happiness i.e., if my circumstances change, my happiness changes along with it....and I'll just paste a fake smile on my face.
- Sexual feelings are the energy of creativity and creation i.e., burst of a new idea. You can have sex without any sexual feelings i.e., while feeling angry, scared or sad.
- Leadership exercise – if you're feeling anger wonder and get curious about what was no longer of service and needed to be destroyed. Fear, ask what you're supposed to wake up to, pay attention to, and learn from. Sadness, what you need to let go.
- Lying is a problem but not as bad as withholding as there is a decrease in energy and energy flow.
 - One manifestation of it in a couple, for example, is boredom or relational lethargy. Candor is one of the great antidotes to boredom. If couple learn to reveal rather than conceal, boredom is rarely an issue in a relationship.
 - At work, I judge that my boss is disrespectful and I withhold this judgement and withdrawal in the relationship. I don't trust him, I see him through the lens of my judgement and then look for evidence to support that judgement.
- Leaders above the line reveal their thoughts, opinions, judgements and feelings. Not seeing his judgement as right rather as seeing judgements that arise. These judgements are more about him than the other person.
- Don't practice candor to change the other person. Commitment to candor means sharing your judgements and the insight on yourself.
- Listening to gossip is the same as speaking it i.e., I'd prefer you share this judgement directly with the person and not with me.
- Ego lives in a world where we are either right or wrong.
- Clearing model
 - The specific facts are...
 - I make up my story that...
 - I feel...
 - My part in this is...

- And I specifically want...
- Unequivocal yes with your mind, emotions, will and body vs the “corporate nod”.
- Most people wouldn’t refuse a gift, yet they refuse appreciation, which is the emotional equivalent
- Refusing appreciation robs the other person of a chance to give you their gift
- What would happen if you started observing people to catch them doing something good, rather than focusing on things they need to change or improve.
- Team exercise = before an event ask everyone to write 3 to 5 qualities they most appreciate about each person. Run them through a Wordle and present back to the team. Ask team members to figure out which one is theirs.
- Place 3 dimes, heads up, where you can regularly see them. Every day commit to finding 3 people appreciate. Flip a dime every time you deliver an appreciation.
- Excelling in your zone of genius – if it’s a dead-end path dump it, delegate it or do it differently. Whichever you choose, exit your zone of incompetence.
- Zone of Competence = areas where you do fine but others could do just as well. Lacks fulfillment.
- Zone of Excellence = you are good at what you do, it’s comfortable, known but feels like work.
- Upper limits = fear guards the line between the zone of excellence and the ultimate zone of genius:
 - You’re not that special
 - What about your financial responsibilities
 - You’re choosing to abandon others
 - What if it’s a dream and you fail miserably
- Notice when you start thinking that something is “too good” so you can teach the nervous system that the feeling or situation is not only possible, but can be the new normal
 - Nervous system can be trained by “integrating” after a new high i.e., close a deal, get a promo, great weekend with your partner
 - Do something mindless, grounding or ordinary i.e., walk, mow the lawn, sweep the floor, wash the car, flip through a magazine, take a long shower
 - This raises your upper limits
- It is not our failure that we are most afraid of but rather our magnificence. Conscious leaders face the fear by stepping fully into the magnificence. They embrace their magnificence, live and work in their pace of genius and give their gift to the world.
- Fear of failure leaves little room for joy and laughter
- Pay = absorbing and purposeless activity that provide enjoyment and suspends self-consciousness and a sense of time.
- Go do Improv with your team and ask yourself if you are having fun and if this is the way work feels
- Research from NASA – a 30 min nap makes you 35% more productive
 - Honour and commit to monitoring your body’s natural rhythms
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- All of us have different personas, like coats hanging in a closet. We can chose a particular persona as we might an outfit to meet the needs a particular life situation.
- Even good behaviours can be addictive if we do them to avoid being in the moment with what’s happening.
- When you feel the need to get serious and work much harder, consider doing the following – for 30 seconds hop on one foot and flap your arms as you discuss your serious issue.

- Creating a life of play, improvisation, and laughter allow life to unfold easily and energy to be maximized.
- One point of view is too small for the whole truth.
- Exploring the opposite – I recognize that I interpret the world around me and via my stories meaning
- If we are willing to reframe our subjective perspective, we can feel a sense of well-being in a matter of minutes. This practice requires us to let go of being right and get deeply curious about how we see ourselves and the world around us.
 - Is it true?
 - Can you absolutely know that it is true?
 - How do you react, what happens, why you believe that thought?
 - Who would you be without the thought?
- Example
 - (Thought) John is unkind to me
 - (Turn it around) John is kind to me
 - (Other person) I am unkind to John
 - (Yourself) I am unkind to me
- Humans have 3 core wants; approval, control and security
 - Security is safety
 - Approval is the desire to be loved, liked, wanted, valued, appreciated, respected
 - If I can security through approval then I'll get it through control i.e., if I can't earn your approval then I'll try and control you and your life.
- As soon as we want something it implies that we don't have it i.e., wanting comes from the belief in lack
 - When I believe I lack control, then I am always seeking to control people, circumstances and myself
 - I invest huge amounts of energy controlling myself and others
- What if everything in this moment in your life is actually whole, perfect and complete? What if you are lacking nothing?
- I commit to experiencing that I have enough of everything...including time, money, love, energy, space, resources etc.
 - I don't get enough from my relationship i.e., sexually it's not fulfilling and we're not deeply connected anymore
 - Flipside is that I don't give enough to my relationship i.e., I don't have enough energy to give everyone who wants attention from me
- Myths of scarcity
 - Never enough
 - More is better
 - That's just the way it is
- Whenever people experience life from the perspective of "not enough" what immediately follows is competition
- Shift your perspective based on our perspective
- If we think there is not enough time we can examine a 7 hour bike ride vs catching up with an old friend
- Not enough money think back to university days

- Sufficient meditation:
 1. Check in this moment to see what your experience is right now
 2. Bring your attention to your physical body
 3. In this moment now, notice your experience of time
 - When you are fully present in the now moment, you have enough of everything. Everything is perfect because it just is. To experience scarcity, you be outside of yourself and the present moment – anticipating the lack of something in the future or the past
 - Hold your breath for as long as you can and experience not having enough breath. Repeat with shallow breathing and deep breathing. Where you present in the moment for each?
- I commit to seeing all people and circumstances as allies that are perfectly suited to help me learn the most important things for my growth
- To Me Leaders see people as either on their side in getting what they want or obstacles.
- It requires a lot of energy to constantly prove you are better than someone else. It's equally hard work to keep those you perceive as less than you below you.
- To shift out of this state of comparison and competition to see everyone – including yourself – as equally valuable. Everyone is an ally in the bigger game of learning.
- All people support the discovery of an aspect of yourself that you could not have.
- In the experience of growth, pressure plays a critical role, it either causes you to wake up and take action or allows new things to come forth. Athletes know that the workouts that make them faster are the ones that breakdown their muscles – literally tearing the muscle fibers – so they grow back stronger.
- Being willing to let go of your best ideas allows something new to emerge ie., iPhone replacing the iPod.
- Invite healthy fear as a catalyst to wake up and pay attention, rather than be naïve.
- “Would I be willing to see this person and these circumstances as an ally for my learning.” What is it that I could not have experienced without this person/circumstance? What quality in me could not have been developed? How is the universe giving me feedback? How is this helping me to grow?
- For a start-up to succeed, at least one person needed to have a passion for the organization: someone who would eat, sleep, and breathe the business and it's vision.
- Acknowledge your scarcity beliefs and encourage yourself to work from the beliefs that you have enough clients, money, products and time.
- Unconscious leaders see situations as win/lose and create a culture that promotes competition and compromise.
- I commit to being the resolution or solution that is needed: seeing what is missing in the world as an invitation to become that which is required.
- Team members who don't feel heard by unconscious leaders stop caring about making changes and give up on creating solutions that could benefit the organization.
- Most people do not change because of vision alone – they change because of pain. Create enough fear and anxiety of not changing that it outweighs the fear of changing, the resistance.
- Trying is wanting credit for something you never intended to do i.e., I'll try and make it for a drink.
- When we own our resistance, we see that we simply need more motivation: more vision or dissatisfaction. This is not a problem. It is just what is so in this moment.
- www.conscious.is