

The **15**

Commitments of

CONSCIOUS

LEADERSHIP

A new paradigm for sustainable success

DISCUSSION GUIDE

The 15 Commitments of Conscious Leadership takes you on a journey to pioneer a way of leadership that results in a positive shift in yourself, in addition to a cultural shift in your team, your family, and your organization. Please use this guide to assist your group in a meaningful discussion and deeper understanding of how The 15 Commitments™ can help you live and lead above the line.

TWO LIVES

In the Introduction, we meet Tim and Sharon. They personify two very different ways of living their lives and leading their organizations:

- Is your style more like Tim or Sharon's?
- What parts of his/her story do you identify with?

LEADING FROM ABOVE THE LINE

Look at the Above and Below the Line model on page 15:

- Can you recall a time when you faced an issue while being open, curious and committed to learning? What was the payoff of being above the line?
- Can you recall a time when you faced an issue while being closed, defensive and committed to being right? What was the cost of going below the line?

COMMITMENT 1: TAKING RADICAL RESPONSIBILITY

At the Executive Team meeting at Common Corp. (p. 45) everyone was trying to find someone else to blame for the low sales figures:

- What happened to the team morale?
- How did the CEO handle a similar situation differently (p. 54) and what was the difference between the two?

COMMITMENT 2: LEARNING THROUGH CURIOSITY

In the *Drift/Shift Model* (p. 68) we see that small things can happen that cause us to drift out of presence and into below the line behavior:

- Recall a time when you felt yourself drift below the line during a situation.
- What happened because of the drift?
- Can you imagine how it might have been different if you had been curious?

COMMITMENT 3: FEELING ALL FEELINGS

When the senior leaders of a company made difficult decisions about cost-cutting layoffs (p. 81) they used all their brainpower to analyze the data but could not come to an agreement:

- What is missing when decisions are made only with IQ and not with EQ?
- What happened when the leaders opened up to all three intelligence centers: head, heart and gut?
- What feelings are you most and least comfortable sharing?

COMMITMENT 4: SPEAKING CANDIDLY

Telling the truth seems so simple. Yet most people either outright lie or they withhold information (such as facts, thoughts, feelings and sensations) and this prevents leadership from seeing their reality clearly:

- How are you and those around you impacted when you lie or withhold information?
- Using the Practice Exercise (p. 130) take turns speaking candidly about an issue you might have felt the urge to lie about or withhold.

COMMITMENT 5: ELIMINATING GOSSIP

Gossip is defined as: any statement about another made by someone with negative intent: any statement about another that the speaker would be unwilling to share, in exactly the same way, if the person being discussed was in the same room:

- Are there people and issues that are regularly gossiped about in your organization, family, or friend groups?
- Review the Separating Fact from Story model (p. 142) and break down the gossip discussed above into what is fact and what is story.
- How can you use this model to eliminate the gossip?

COMMITMENT 6: PRACTICING INTEGRITY

An integrity breach can block the creative and productive energy flow within an individual or an organization:

- How did the integrity breach in the investment firm (p. 153) prevent them from having a high-performing culture?
- How do you make impeccable agreements (p. 161) and how they help to maintain integrity?
- Do you have any agreements that you have broken? Are you willing to clean them up? By when?

COMMITMENT 7: GENERATING APPRECIATION

Appreciation allows the awareness and value of all that is around you to grow. Entitlement is the opposite of appreciation and causes awareness and value to wither:

- How has an attitude of entitlement affected the relationships and productivity of your team?
- Where do you currently feel entitled in your life? (Hint - what do you complain about: the traffic, unhappy customers, not having a higher salary...?)
- How can you genuinely receive appreciation without deflecting it (p. 179)

COMMITMENT 8: EXCELLING IN YOUR ZONE OF GENIUS

When we are not operating in our zone of genius we are holding ourselves back, losing out on the potential in each of us:

- Which of the four zones do you routinely operate in (p. 190)?
- What fears hold you back from living and working in your zone of genius and how can you overcome them?
- Finish this sentence: "I wish I could live more in my genius but..."

COMMITMENT 9: LIVING A LIFE OF PLAY AND REST

A life of play, which honors the need for rest, renewal and rhythm is sorely lacking from many work cultures that foster and brag about a 24/7 work ethic:

- What style of play (p. 211) do you identify with the most?
- What is your relationship to rest during your average day?
- How can you bring the exercises from Practicing the Commitment (p. 221) into your workplace?

COMMITMENT 10: EXPLORING THE OPPOSITE

The CEO founder of a company wanted to move on to new opportunities but he was convinced that if he left the company he founded, it would damage the organization (p. 225). He eventually realized that this was just a “story” he made up:

- When using the *Four Questions* (p. 229) to challenge your “stories” – do the assumptions you have made about situations at work or at home shift?
- Think about a challenging issue in your life and write down all of the things you get to be “right” about as you keep that issue going? Do the work on these statements.
- When doing the *Turnaround Exercise* (p. 231) on a specific problem you have, are you able to see how the opposite of what you believed about it can also be true?

COMMITMENT 11: SOURCING APPROVAL, CONTROL AND SECURITY

People have three core wants: approval, control and security - and these are the foundation for a satisfying life:

- When you do the “*If only ---would ---exercise* (p. 241) do you feel the source of your happiness and satisfaction is “out there?”
- What do the authors mean by saying “there is nothing wrong with approval, control and security, but it is the ‘wanting’ of it that creates dissatisfaction”? (p. 243)

COMMITMENT 12: HAVING ENOUGH OF EVERYTHING

The belief that you don't have enough of something can become the lens through which you view the world. This leads to feelings of resentment and dissatisfaction – a general sense and expectation, that life always has, and always will, come up short:

- In what areas of your life do you feel scarcity, and in what areas do you feel sufficiency?
- What happens when you try to view that area as sufficient, rather than scarce? Are you able to?

COMMITMENT 13: EXPERIENCING THE WORLD AS AN ALLY

The way leaders view people and circumstances dictates whether they are reactive or conscious. The story about Suzanne shares how she saw people and circumstances as standing in the way of her new job (p. 269):

- Was Suzanne being reactive or conscious? How could Suzanne have viewed the people and circumstances differently?
- Think of parts of your life where you feel there are obstacles. Now look at those same parts and come up with reasons why they are allies instead.

COMMITMENT 14: CREATING WIN FOR ALL SOLUTIONS

When two sides in a conflict meet each other with candor, curiosity, sufficiency and a belief in allies, they are then able to create solutions that work for everyone:

- What areas in your life seem like they are win/lose – that there is no way both sides can win, someone has to lose?
- Using the exercise in *Practicing the Commitment* (p. 287) can you shift and create a win for all situation?

COMMITMENT 15: BEING THE RESOLUTION

People can become overwhelmed by the world's, or their own, problems and decide it is all a "lost cause," they then become resentful and apathetic:

- When you look at your world, whether at work or in your personal life, ask what could be even more (beautiful, efficient, aligned, productive)? What is missing?
- Does this move you? Is it an invitation to act? Do you have a full body YES to be the resolution?

THE CHANGE FORMULA

In order to make a change in your life, you need (vision x dissatisfaction) + first steps to overcome your resistant to the change.

- What change have you been wanting to make in your life that you have not yet created?
- How are you dissatisfied with the way it currently is?
- What is the vision you have for the way it could be?
- What is the measurable first step needed to create the change?

NEXT STEPS

In order to learn to live more aware and above the line, you need ways to practice.

- Are you willing to bring more practice into your life?
- If yes, from this list of next steps, what specific steps are you willing to take?