

## **From *Reawakening The Spirit In Work:* *The Power of Dharmic Management* by Jack Hawley**

The growing examination of real leadership has made it painfully clear that much of our sophisticated management isn't working in today's world. We have to reach past even superb management.

Leadership comes from a more spiritual place than good management. Managers are concerned with goals and objectives; leaders are concerned with vision. Managers are interested in honesty; leaders are interested in integrity. Managers work with priorities; leaders are stewards of basic values. Managers create plans and strategies; leaders effect and maintain a state of mind. Management is the evaluation and correction of performance; leadership is more a matter of acknowledging and appreciating contributions. Managers are fundamentally "getters" (of budget, staff, etc.); leaders are basically givers. Leaders work at the more abstract level of people's energy, heart, and spirit—they deal in organizational culture and a sense of community.

Heeding one's inner knowing is at the center of real leadership. When leaders follow their hearts, others rise to those heights. They bring forth an endorsement of superordinate goals that provide a general sense of sanction and *meaning*. They bestow an awareness of something larger than ordinary life, they feed people's hunger for Spirit.

### ***Vision-Call Questions:***

- Who are you?
- By and large, are you living your inner truth? What are you called to do? What needs in the world are you moved to meet?
- What are your gifts? What do you have to contribute that's unique? What special knowledge do you have?
- What should you be especially grateful for?
- What do you value? What do you believe in?
- What do you do when you're really up against it?
- What activities have "heart" for you? What do you love doing?
- What does your environment need from you? What do you need from your environment?
- How *can* you break through to the next level?

As a leader your state of mind is more important than your well-knit strategies and perfectly laid-out plans. You need *equanimity*—a depth of composure, an unaffectedness, a steadiness in the face of any circumstance, a fortitude so unfaltering that it results in feelings of deep happiness. It is a matter of how you react—with poise, perspective, peace of mind, and patience. It involves *detachment*, which allows you to stand aside, to witness, to be in the game yet uncaught by it, closer to your higher consciousness. It can be achieved through a power of will, of *intentionality*. Together these create a state of *relaxed attention*. You achieve and retain this state by being quiet and putting your attention on it—and by believing in it. You *know* with absolute assurance that deep inside you are already there.

It is an imperfect world, in which you need to be true to yourself. In the end you've got to be your own person, alone. That's all you've got. It's the profound reality that *the* truth is inside rather than in theories and concepts that come from outside. This, after all, is *dharma*; this is the ultimate spirituality.

This book is about human spirit, respect, and dignity. It's also about living life gracefully, about living a full life, about being more alive while we're here. The key questions for today's managers and leaders are no longer issues of task and structure but questions of spirit. The word *dharmic* is Sanskrit for deep, deep integrity—living by your inner truth. *Dharmic management* means bringing that truth with you when you go to work every day. It's the fusing of spirit, character, human values, and decency in the workplace and in life as a whole. It's about the things we're all concerned about: purpose and meaning, inner peace, health, happiness, love, life, and death; about being powerful; about making the most of the heartbeats you've been given; about caring more and carrying on. This is a spiritual book, not a religious book. It's about an adventure, moving toward one's source—an inquiry into true Self.

- **Respiriting** points to how important it is for us to live in a state of *constant spiritual awareness*.
- **Revering** addresses a cornerstone spiritual value—deep caring for others, a respect so intense it becomes reverence.
- **Repowering** comprises five powerful ideas: (1) *Belief* is the force that conveys our essence to us. (2) We can use *thought power* to shape our lives and our organizations. (3) *Already-thereness* conveys that life is not a matter of trying to become, it's a matter of realizing and being. (4) The notion of *instantaneousness* reflects the daring idea that massive personal and organizational change can, and often does, happen in the blink of an eye. (5) *Untethering* refers to the important understanding that true freedom comes from being unhooked, about the basic inner power of personal freedom.
- **Recharactering** is about how to actually live by one's inner truth. It asserts that character is what makes the recipe of life work, determining whether we gag on life or savor it. The concept of *dharmā*<sup>1</sup> is affixed to integrity, drawing to it the energies of goodness, spirit, fearlessness, creating a sort of superintegrity.
- **Reinspiring** helps us understand that all leadership is spiritual because the leader seeks to liberate the best in people and the best is always linked to one's higher self. Thus we come back full circle to spirit, to living by one's inner truth. When leaders follow their hearts, others rise to those heights.

The key questions for today's managers and leaders are no longer issues of task and structure but questions of spirit. The usual issues of productivity, organization, finances, costs, profits, and so forth are of course still with us—and will remain as critical as ever. And remaining with us also will be our concerns about the humanness and health of the organization including things like culture, communications, relationships, and morale. But people hearing of an agenda with spirit in it signal something even beyond that. It gets to purpose and meaning, to whether care and respect for others in work really pays off, to how much people really believe in their work—or how they can begin to believe again. Imagine a management model of four overlapping rings, each symbolizing an agenda for managers: The head refers to the linear thinking and logic, the issues of shaping and running the organization, the intellectual foundation upon which the enterprise is built. The heart brings in the feeling side of management. The body is concerned

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<sup>1</sup> "Right action."

about wellness in the workplace. The spirit agenda takes us into such questions as What is my purpose here (at work, in life)? Where is it leading me? What about contentment? Meaning?

*The Reverence Continuum*—In the Polite Organization, people are at least minimally considerate and attentive to one another, but compulsive politeness leads to distancing, separation from real feelings, which deadens you to improvement. In the Caring Organization members are more concerned and more attentive. They watch out for one another and for customers. In the Respectful Organization people like and value each other and are kind and genuine toward one another. In the Reverent Organization you see dedication, eagerness, enthusiasm, deep admiration, and respect. There's devotedness and deep conviction, fondness, deep appreciation, and gratitude.

If respect and reverence can be such an effective way of operating a business, why are business people so reluctant to acknowledge the legitimacy of love in their organizations? And too often we fall into the real opposite of love: fear. We lumber through life at a pace fast enough not to get caught by heavy love, yet the real thing is effortlessly pacing beside us all the way. Though elbow to elbow with it, brushing against it, we seldom recognize it.

- Love as *desire* only has to do with grasping, craving, possessiveness, and envy.
- Love as *feelings* consists of fairly straightforward, open, bright, upbeat feelings—a super-magnified liking of somebody.
- Love as *action* is the landscape where people perform acts of kindness, giving, helping, sharing, being patient, and tolerant. Love as *giving* shows a naturalness, a simplicity—we've left some baggage behind. There's less fear here, no strings attached, it's given freely; it's habitual, even unconscious.
- Love as *energy* reaches out and touches the world and every soul in it. Love at this level is the altitude of real leadership—being open to, and able to draw upon, this energy is a requirement of both superb management and adroit leadership. Love here is will—the power of intentionality, the power in reaching out toward others, to accept and be receptive, to grow toward personal improvement, the urge to unity, the summons to wholeness and integrity.
- Love as *spirit* bursts free; it is so immense we find few words for it: *fundamental, simple, uncomplicated, trusting, expansive, infinite, forever*. It is absolutely unattached, non-needy; there is nothing to fear, so nothing to lose or gain. This is the place where we speak of Self, where there is peace of mind, where truth and love are one. The more we live with it, the more it gains essence.

Some executives are concerned that the cold, hard parts of their jobs fly in the face of loving, that love isn't relevant in the business world, and our answer is: it depends. If we come from the place where fear resides then the answer is perhaps not. If we come from our higher selves, the answer is: certainly! We can do all those hard things, but do them from love rather than from fear. Love at work is beyond softness and niceness. It includes whether people really respect and care about one another, whether they protect one another's dignity. The reality of this world is that we have to be effective within the system. But dump the idea that love has to be soft. Real love can be hard or soft.

Belief is faith, confidence and trust. It is not only the foundation of spirituality, but also the basis of character, management, and organization. Just possessing a strong belief is the healing force. Sai Baba says, "There are no 'healers.' All healing comes from connecting with the Power that heals." We all know of, and have been part of, various organizations: some believe in themselves and some don't. Whatever method we use, the message is clear: if thoughts really are a force in ordering our worldly lives and our spiritual selves, we'd better be good at thinking. Shifting to good thoughts can be done without too much effort. This doesn't mean we attempt to stifle negatives; more so, it's being aware of them, learning whatever there is to learn from them, and then choosing to spin on our heels and walk away from them. Rather than letting our thoughts steal our vigor, we can pick thoughts that nourish.

We already are what we seek. Life is a matter of being what we are, not trying to become it. And that goes for our organizations as well. This is fundamentally a spiritual posture. The term *space bending* fits, because that's what we do when we proclaim we're already "there." Management consultants have always set goals with clients and planned how to get there. But we're on the other side, now, where one of the rules is, "You're already there!" *Being* has more power in it than *becoming*. Simply take residence, take the leap! The good leader-manager does this more than we realize. Take Lococca's heralded rescue of Chrysler. He kept saying, "We are healthy. We are okay. Our cars are already good. Our labor contracts will be good."

*Instantaneousness leading to transformation, rather than process leading to change.*

Zen master

Instantaneousness is the daring idea that massive change can, and often does, happen in the blink of an eye. Many of my old friends shout, "That can't be! Everybody knows change takes a long time!" I would say, "Well, it's a matter of what you believe. If you believe change takes a very long time, it will. My belief is that there are situations where change can and does occur in what is for the person or organization a mere finger snap. And these situations are far more prevalent than we allow. All they need is a spark. (In one consultation, after the reports of the inquiry teams, "J.J." clears his throat and nervously starts to talk.) "I don't want to believe that feedback. I didn't sleep very well last night. But, as much as it hurts, I do believe it...we all must believe it...and we have to do something about it." That's the instant! His truth speaks for all. Energy surges through the group; it's the vitality that comes with integrity. The atmosphere in the room crackles as archaic ways die. The managers spend the remaining two days looking one another in the eye and hammering out the tough agreements and action plans that eventually bring about that miraculous ending. Lots of follow-up will be needed afterward, but instantaneousness has struck.

We all become snared by worldly things that we think are important but really aren't. Thus tied up, we're held back from our real mission, which is to move toward spirit and achieve a fuller experience of life. To detach from things is to become uncaught by them. Rather than running faster to collect more (whether it's possessions, power, affection, or prestige), it is better to detach and make space for spirit. Detachment means letting go of attitudes and beliefs that hold us back. It requires lopping off old emotional traumas that consume energy and interfere with moving ahead. This is a mental leave-taking, not a physical one. And it's not enjoyment that is being given up—it's desire, need, sorrow, and lack of peace.

Sai Baba comes out on the verandah and talks with several people about living life in tune with Spirit. Someone says, "But the spiritual life is such hard work." Baba feigns surprise. "What? Hard work?" he says, a mock frown on his face. He extends a clenched fist, palm

upward, gripping a handkerchief, saying, "Holding on is hard work." Then he flips it over and lets it drop. "Letting go is easy," he says and walks away.

The term "character" refers to a cluster of interlaced ideas and social virtues that include morality, ethics, honesty, and human values. In the management workplace, character consists of integrity and dharma. Integrity is having the courage and self-discipline to live by your inner truth. We've all had times during some era in our lives when we've been able to live and act fully in concert with our own deep truth. It's a great feeling. This involves *wholeness* (totality, soundness, completeness), *goodness* (human decency, fairness, kindness, respect), *courage* (not the absence of fear but proceeding in spite of it), *self-discipline* (strengthening yourself to act in accordance with your inner promptings, the cultivation of inner capabilities), *living by inner truth* (continually turning inward, asking so that the subtle signals become clearer—"Is this the way I want to live my life?").

Integrity, rooted as it is in our fiercely secularized Western society, doesn't openly embrace spirituality. Yet people are bemoaning that "something missing" in their lives. *Dharma* is often translated from Sanskrit into English as "right action." The proverb *Dharma chara* means "do the right thing." The translation is okay but the Westerner, from a culture so oriented to action, naturally emphasizes the word *do* and tends to underemphasize the word *right*. There's a personal-fit aspect of dharma. This idea of exclusive dharma is the insight that shines through in poet Emerson's line about "the inner law of one's life." As with any law, we have to comply with it or suffer the consequences. Those times when we're unaware of or disregard that inner formula are the time when we feel insufficient. Our life veers off course or gets stuck, or we become sick.

Of course dharma applies within the organization. There's a collective dharma, an organizational inner law—and each organization has its own. The traits of courage, self-discipline, goodness, and doing *right* are the marks of collective character, just as they are of individual character. Each organization must also follow its own collective heart and soul. The manager's dharma is more demanding, more obligated to rightness and to being full of care. The U.S. Forest Service stands out as one of the most effective performers in the country that also shares strong spiritual values even if they don't call them that. It is, despite its diversity, amazingly coordinated and cohesive, and its people all have something terribly important in common: their love of the land is where the organizational character comes from.

#### ***Fourteen How-Tos for Assigning Character:***

1. *In the system, yet not the system.* Deliberately detach your mind from what is bad and adhere only to what is good in the system.
2. *Personal might, organizational power.* When you have to go against the system, be bold, be brave, be firm, be friendly, be wise—and be careful. The reason organizations are often protective and rigid is not because they're so strong, it's because they're so fragile.
3. *Personal credo.* Draw up a personal mission statement and use it as a life policy.
4. *The power of acceptance.* Affirm, acknowledge, and embrace life.
5. *Be the boss.* Hard, tough decisions still have to be made. Just do these things with integrity. Don't ever violate character, ever.

6. *Inner listening.* Adjust your antennae inward. Be quiet, believe, ask for inner guidance, listen, and trust.
7. *Do no harm.* It's not a clear-cut matter of choosing light over darkness. We'd always make the right choice if that were the case. The point is to never go so far that it harms others or yourself. Never go even a little beyond your own sense of rightness.
8. *Always pay.* Be beholden to anyone or anything, and thus be ever strong.
9. *Love it, change it, or leave it.* Don't stay stuck or give your power over by blaming the system. Opt for the healing that comes with acceptance, or wage change to the point where you can begin to accept it, and if neither works, move somewhere else. In an extreme case you may even build a different life.
10. *Ceiling on desires.* Notice if you're suffering from the common disease of "More." Unless you tame your desires, they consume you.
11. *Empower purity.* When you feel contaminated, put your attention on what you want to become.
12. *Think character.* Talk, visualize, smell it.
13. *Regrow wholeness.* Whatever you lost—openness, heart, courage, purity—grow it back. It will take persistence and planning—no mountains to climb, just habits to drop one by one.
14. *Rx for recharactering human systems.* When the character of an organization needs work, if not you, then who? This is your chance to move the system toward its higher self by (a) taking the lead yourself, (b) being crystal clear about organization values and integrity, (c) granting space and voice so that others can arrive at clarity on ethical standards, and (d) actually *conferring* character—endow your people with heart and grit to live by integrity, require self-discipline, expect that they live by their inner truth.