



# The Ultimate Why™

CULTURE CURRICULUM

# THE DILEMMA OF OUR WORK LIFE

## The Idea

Work. You've got to go to work. It's Monday. What a drag. Your waking hours are consumed with your work life. Most see work as sucking the life out of them, according to most surveys. It fills you with a so-what, must-do, drudgery kind of feeling. You think, if you can just make a bit more money, or if you had a different boss, or if you had more control, things could be better. Or after many years you just give up and resign to the reality that work is never going to get better. Sure, there are those out there on the internet somewhere living the dream, but most of us climb the corporate ladder only to find that at the top it is the same as down below. You are in a crisis. How can your work life be more than merely tolerable? What motivates you is the big question?

**We all long for work that makes us feel alive, but we settle and just make due.**

## What's the one thing you live your life for?

If you knew what that was, how would that change your world? What if you knew the one thing that motivates all people, would that be a game-changer for your leadership and your organization? Unfortunately, 99% of people we talk to don't know what that one thing is, and they don't believe it exists. So their leadership and the people they lead never find it. We call this one thing The Ultimate Why™ and to truly motivate your work lives there is nothing more critical then to know what Ultimate Why is.

## It's a Motivation Crisis

A lack of motivation cripples organizations. Studies by Gallup of 30 million people across the world, workers report that 50% of employees are disengaged and are actively looking for new jobs; 20% are disgruntled and oppositional, leaving only 30% engaged with work. Imagine a football team where 5 out of 10 players didn't care who won 2 out of 10 wanted you to lose and only 3 were playing to win. Would this team have any hope of winning, and would you enjoy playing on this team? NO. But according to Gallup, this is how the average organization lines up each day. Ready to lose. As a result, the average workplace is losing 22% profits, losing 37% of employees to turnover, and losing 21% in productivity. All this is due to a lack of motivation. We are spiraling into a crisis of motivation and the last people to realize this will be the first to lose.

# As leaders we strive to motivate others but are frustrated because we don't know how.

## The Story

Tyler was 38 and a rung below VP at a national insurance company. He now had a team that reported to him in the IT department. He had a huge pile on his desk of his own projects and still had his teams to manage. Most days he was stressed and angry but he put on the right face for everyone to see, which took just that much more energy. Unfortunately by the time he got home that energy was gone and his wife and kids bore the brunt of it. His doctor was telling him to get to the gym and warning of worsening cholesterol levels. In his 20's it all seemed worth it, work hard and climb the corporate ladder, it wasn't fun, the top of the ladder was supposed to bring that happiness, but Tyler was finding this wasn't the reality and leadership didn't provide the freedom and safety that he envisioned. Now his team complained about him and his policies. He had annual performance reviews to do, and he had his lists of what he'd like to fix in everyone. He had one superstar, and then the rest of the team, this wasn't going to be fun. He had to hire a new programmer to replace his other star that had recently gone on to a competitor. Tyler made good money, but there were always more payments, and it was never enough. Perhaps if he made VP it would be better, but he was not so sure anymore. Maybe he should jump ship and start his own company and it would be better. Maybe if he could follow his own dream it would all come together. The key to what was motivating him eluded him. Getting his team to do just their jobs was often a challenge, let alone hitting the home-runs that would get him that VP slot. It seemed impossible and was questioning if it was worth it.

## The Exercise

- 1 On a scale of 1-10, 1 being I feel completely discouraged and 10 being I feel alive and energized, how would you rate your life's work experience?
- 2 What do you think is the one thing that motivates all people to work and be engaged?
- 3 What work experience in your life has given you the most joy?

## The Science

According to Gallup Studies:

- 70% of employees are disengaged
- 18% of employees are cynical, disgruntled and oppositional
- 51% of employees are actively looking for a new job
- 80% dislike their jobs according to a Deloitte Poll

"To me, the most troubling statistics focus on our friendships. In a survey given in 1985, people were asked to list their friends in response to the question, "Over the last six months, who are the people with whom you discussed matters important to you?" The most common number of friends listed was three; 59 percent of respondents listed three or more friends fitting this description. The same survey was given again in 2004. This time the most common number of friends listed was zero. And only 37 percent of respondents listed three or more friends. Back in 1985, only 10 percent indicated that they had zero confidants. In 2004, this number skyrocketed to 25 percent. One out of every four of us is walking around with no one to share our lives with. Being social makes our lives better. Yet every indication is that we are becoming less social, not more."

— *Matthew D. Lieberman, PhD, Social: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Connect*

# THE FALSE GODS OF MOTIVATION



## The Idea

False gods are something you pursue thinking it will give you what you want. Only when you serve them, they turn out to be empty and powerless to deliver. They are shiny and others are flocking to their temples so it seems like they should deliver, but in the end, they are just impotent images that leave you feeling empty.

When most people are asked to name what motivates everyone to work the big three always come up, money, power, and achievement. These are the shiny objects in our field of vision in the workplace. They are offered up by leaders and gurus as the stuff you want. And you think that you should want it, everyone else seems to want it.

## Making it Worse

And, tragically, using these three as motivators has the opposite effect and they end up de-motivating people. According to the motivation expert, Paul Marciano, Ph.D. carrots and sticks will only make things worse. Study after study concludes that extrinsic rewards will work briefly, and then result in ever-diminishing results. They act in the same way an addiction does, a brief high that can never really satisfy and then a low, followed by a downward spiral. Being unaware of what motivates all people results in this vicious cycle of demotivation. Let's take a look at each one of these false gods and why they have a hold on people.

### Money

Money, we all need it, can't live without it. Money is one of the outcomes of labor. Yet is it the "why" you work? Is it the single motivational factor that moves all people? Ancient wisdom labels the love of money as the root of all evil. Country songs tell you, it won't buy you happiness. Again, it is a temporary high at best. You do get a hit of dopamine when you get some or spend some, yet studies show that even mega-lottery winners in a few months feel the same or worse than before they got their millions. Because it is a dopamine hit. It requires more and more to make us happy next time. So, it becomes an endless treadmill of I'll be happy when... and when never seems to come.

### Power

Next are Power and Influence. It seems to put you in the center of things. You feel if you can control your world you can insulate yourself from the pain of people hurting you, and people will seek you out. Only to find you are not the only ones seeking this false safety. Others attack, or criticize, out of envy. It is a constant battle to live a life based on power

and influence. At best, it provides temporary relief. We envy those who have power and imagine that they are somehow in this bubble of constant peace and happiness. But the truth is usually quite the opposite.

### Achievement

Finally, there is achievement. The great business, the work of art, the act of charity are all things of great achievement seen by others that you get credit for. This credit does feel good, again a hit of dopamine, yet it doesn't seem to last either, even though it seems more noble and acceptable a pursuit. Often the issue is that you are pursuing the cause and see the people they are serving as objects rather than seeing them. Often those who serve this god are constantly looking to the next project to bring them more significance. Often they are out of balance, and those working with these visionaries get worn out. The adrenaline of the next task pulls them through life. The problem is the project never lasts. They always need one more and they jump on the treadmill again.

So, if all of these leave you feeling empty, what is left? What are you to do?

### The story

I was raised in a church that had missionaries come from behind the iron curtain to tell how they smuggled in bibles and started the underground church. They would tell stories of how they defied armed border guards and endured prison and went on to do great achievements. I figured that was it. Adventure, nobility, significance...what else could someone want for a lifetime? So, at 20 years of age I stepped off the plane onto foreign soil as a missionary. I was going to live a life of great achievement. There was one flaw in the plan. There were others there trying to serve this same false god.

What ensued was not a work of passionate service for others, but a miserable experience of shame and manipulation by my bosses who were pursuing "achievement" ahead of me. In pursuit of their achievement goals they pushed and manipulated me and the team. It was the ultimate let down, thinking I would reach the pinnacle of work life. I found only pain and brokenness. There is nothing more crushing than thinking you have the greatest thing in life, and once obtained you find it to be empty and disappointing.

I kept pursuing this goal for years in different forms, until he reached my own midlife crisis and realized this just wasn't going to ever bring me the joy in work and life I was seeking.

## The Exercise

- 1 Which of the false gods appeals most to you?
- 2 When did it really hit you that these "gods" might be false?
- 3 Do you see people in the media or in advertisements that the false gods seem to work for them? What do you think is the whole picture?

## The Science

Dopamine is the hit we get when we get money, obtain power and influence, or accomplish something significant. It does feel good, but like false gods, it requires your soul. Our brain down-regulates after each hit, meaning it takes more of the "drug" to make us feel that same euphoria as last time. We end up living lives of addiction, slavishly working for the next hit. Eventually, in our honest moments we despair of this, but usually, we don't have any other options.

— Dr. Robert Lustig, *The Hacking of the American Mind: The Science Behind the Corporate Takeover of Our Bodies and Brains*

"Somewhere along the line, the pursuit of happiness got confused with the pursuit of income and career advancement."

— Matthew D. Lieberman, PhD, *Social: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Connect*

**There is nothing worse than pursuing what we think will be the pinnacle of happiness only to find it empty or fleeting.**

# THE ULTIMATE WHY™

## The Idea

Our hearts aren't stupid. When they are served up false gods for motivation they know that there is something inherently off with it. That is why when Gallup takes surveys so many respond that they are disengaged. It's not because they are bad or lazy people. It's just the culture, advertising, and our education that can't see beyond the false gods of motivation to the Ultimate Why that motivates us all. So really these surveys show you how in tune to yourselves you really are. You know you haven't found what we are looking for. This is why understanding the Ultimate Why™ is critical for everyone and especially leaders of any organization.

## So What is The ULTIMATE WHY™ ? What is the one thing that motivates all people? You actually already know.

When we ask people what the Ultimate Why™ is they try to answer it with their "left brain," and they cannot come up with the answer, they say "I don't know" or something like money. But when you reframe the question nearly 100% of people answer it correctly and immediately, because this reframed question appeals to the right brain. It is called the Eternity Question:

### What is the one thing you could live with for all Eternity?

1. Money alone and nothing else?
2. Power alone and nothing else?
3. Great achievements alone and nothing else?
4. Or to be surrounded by people who love and care for you for all eternity?

Nearly everyone we ask answers "people who love and care for me" And that's it...Loving Connection is the Ultimate Why™. It is the one thing that people want more than anything else in this world. Loving connection is the Ultimate Why, the ultimate motivation behind all we do. Everyone knows in

their gut it's true because they have experienced it in life. And in fact, the other options are ridiculous in comparison. What is more, psychologists and researchers confirm this conclusion that loving connection is the base of human motivation: Studies by

- Dr. Sue Johnson
- Dr. Allen Schore
- Dr. Jim Wilder
- Dr. Jim Loehr
- Dr. Matthew Lieberman
- Dr. Barbra Fredrickson and more.

In one study where researchers followed Harvard Grads for over 80 years, the longest study of its kind. The one thing that made the biggest difference in outcomes for health, wealth, wellness and happiness was loving connection, the Ultimate Why. Our gut and researchers agree that we are created for connection, we are inherently social beings. Our social brain (right brain) is the most influential part of our brain it knows the Ultimate Why is the one motivator. The brain releases serotonin and other neurotransmitters that bring a feeling of joy and contentment when we experience loving connection. Other pleasures make us happy for a moment but then leave us unsatisfied and wanting ever-increasing rewards to feel even slightly motivated.

The Ultimate Why™ of loving connection motivates us to do the biggest and greatest things in our lives, and we feel good about doing it. This isn't a hippie, romantic, or infatuated kind of love. It's a dedicated love—getting up with kids at 3 a.m., staying late to keep a promise to a client, firefighters running into the fire to save a stranger, calming an irate customer, taking a bullet for your country, working 40 years to support kids and grandkids. This kind of love motivates and sustains us all. It is the Ultimate Why™.

## The Story

Bill had chased success his whole life. He was pretty good at his work in Corporate Law. He was a partner in one of the small firms in his city. They did good work and were growing. His team worked hard and was professional. There were a few that were partner material on his team, one that was even smarter and sharper than he and that made him nervous, and Bill didn't like this feeling. There was a lot of pressure on Bill to "create new work" with his clients. He knew what this meant, it never was unethical, but sometimes the client didn't really need what his team suggested as legally important. He was beginning to experience that midlife crisis. He was never going to be as big as he envisioned in his 20s and knew how much work it would take to get there, where ever there was. Why was he doing all this anyway?

Bill's firm then started to adopt the Ultimate Why as a guiding principle. At first, Bill thought they would get soft and not produce, but liked the direction. As they began to practice the Ultimate Why the team actually began to pull together and work better. Bill began rooting for his precocious team member to succeed; other teams helped each other rather than stay siloed and competitive, like in the past. Bill began to notice what was really important in life, the people around him. He began working on a new area of law that would help one of his smaller clients. What surprised Bill was that his team was doing more than before, in less time. Gone was the pretense of looking super busy and now it was how can we help each other get home to our families on time. It was telling clients honestly when they didn't need the extra work, yet there always seemed to be new work coming in by word of mouth.

It was an adjustment, and it took time to lose old habits, but there was a real cultural shift that the whole team was taking on. They began to take on a reputation as a great place to work. Bill's work life was getting a second wind at a point in life when he was beginning to despair. The Ultimate Why of loving connection was anything but soft. It was engaging and caused real outcomes for Bill's team and the firm.

## The Exercise

- 1 Would you choose loving connection over all of the false gods combined?
- 2 How does it feel when you do something motivated by giving?
- 3 Are there people in your life who seem to live life from the Ultimate Why? What are they like?

## The Science

According to the Harvard Longevity Study people that had healthy loving relationships lived long lives full of joy and thrived in many areas of their work lives as well.

Sue Johnson, PhD points out in her book that loving connection is the core desire of every human being. It is wired into us at birth and it is the motivation for our behavior as adults.

"Living for others [is] such a relief from the impossible task of trying to satisfy oneself."

— *Matthew D. Lieberman, PhD, Social: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Connect*

"It's hard to find meaning in what we do if at some level it doesn't help someone else or make someone happier."

— *Matthew D. Lieberman, PhD, Social: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Connect*

Serotonin is a neurotransmitter released when we experience positive connections. It is not down-regulated and leaves us with a sense of contentment and a feeling that we don't need more. It is a deep sense of joy that we experience. It is a sustainable and constructive way of living.

— *Sue Johnson, Love Sense*

# LOVE IS SERIOUS BUSINESS

## The Idea

Imagine if work in the workplace was fueled by the Ultimate Why. But is that even possible? The workplace seems to be a world of profits, competition, and dogs eating dogs. Wouldn't those organizations inspired by loving connections be kicked to the curb by ruthless competition? Where does loving connection fit in the world of commerce?

Let's look at a simplified exchange in the marketplace. Thomas has flat land where he grows wheat and he agrees to grow wheat for John whose land is hilly so he raises sheep. They agree to exchange sheep for wheat (if you have played the game Catan you can identify). They set a value so many sheep for so much wheat. They exchange the goods and both are happy and grateful, both have labored for the other. Both appreciate the service that the other has rendered for them. Doing things that they themselves were not capable of doing. So this is how loving connection is manifested in business, in mutual service, or giving. If Thomas or John fails to produce a good product, moldy wheat or sickly sheep, the other will feel a sense that the other has not really cared for them. If your service is fueled by concern for the person receiving the good or service. Your service will truly be a noble act that leaves both parties satisfied.

At its core the act of service or creation of goods for another is actually an act of love. Far from being a soft approach to economics love is the foundation of any healthy economy. Jeffrey Tucker, think tank economist, author and CEO, argues that greed is not the core of economics. "Many degrees of love, as traditionally understood, are at the core of what it means to exchange, invent, speculate, and produce. An economy based on the love of others cannot neglect the institutions of ownership, exchange, volition and creation."

In fact, work is the hardest form of love. It is many long hours of labor for other people. It is the laying down one's life for the other or even loving your enemy. The hard stuff. The showing up for 8 hard hours of work to serve others well. It causes firemen to go into burning buildings for strangers and customer service reps to calm down an irate caller and still serve them well. This isn't the fluffy hold hands and smile hippy love. This is the type of love that pushes you to create even better products for those we serve. It pushes you to treat yourself, your team and your customers not as commodities, but as people. This shift takes you into places where people work and do business because they want to, not because they are compelled to. This is loving connection in action.

So your business might produce a product like a tool for farmers. You would craft, sell and service that tool motivated by the Ultimate Why. Your act of service is to produce a great tool that will help the farmer's life better. Or you might render a service like providing insurance. Your service helps protect your clients from financial harm. So how each business "lovingly connects" with the people who buy their product or service is different. One a tool, and another financial protection. Yet the why they are doing business is the same. That is why it is the Ultimate Why. It is the universal motivation for all business.

## The Story

I had just checked my bags at the desk at 5am. The desk clerk was bleary-eyed and perfunctory. He did his job, with minimal eye contact and curt to the point questions and my bags were on the plane. There was little human connection. A few minutes later I was in line behind an immigrant family in the TSA line. The mom was flying with two little children. And the TSA agent, I noticed, was engaging and kind, very real. She looked directly at the mom with kindness and explained to her about a special line she could go in to get through quickly with her two children. She checked her papers and sent them on with a smile. She proceeded to treat me the same way, not in a sappy kind of pasted on happiness, but an "I am glad that you are here and I am happy to serve you" kind of way. I was beyond impressed. Government workers make no more money for their government by doing their work with loving connection. But this agent certainly found it within herself to do so. It made a difference to me and the immigrant family. I thought about how the TSA agent must have felt, and as a fellow human, I could empathize that working like that would feel good. I contrasted that with how the bag checkers likely felt. They felt low energy they felt theirs was just a job, customers were a burden, life was a drag, especially at 5am. It was a contrast that has stuck with me to this day. The "why" we work affects our own lives as well as those around us. Those who show up with the Ultimate Why as their motivation can do just about anything and find meaning and life's energy in it. Those who show up with the "what's in this for me" attitude make work misery for themselves and those they work for and with.

**We exchange stored labor, money, for the labor of another, and we both say thank you.**

## The Exercise

- 1 When do you feel the best at work?
- 2 How do you feel when a co-worker, client or customer is even slightly upset with you? Does this disconnection overshadow your whole day?
- 3 When you genuinely give and serve, do you feel that you get back more than you give?

## The Science

The Drucker Institute has done extensive studies into what drives successful companies. They all have very high ratings of employee engagement. Meaning they have cultures that value their people and value their customers in loving exchanges.

Sociopaths are people without conscience, they can act without any relational empathy toward others. Sociopaths will win at all costs, without regard for others. There is no loving connection. If a business is powered by this force of winning at all costs, it would be sociopathic.

Martha Stout Ph.D. in her book *The Sociopath Next Door, The ruthless vs. the rest of us*. Shows that those without conscience are generally unsuccessful, bitter and unhappy. They are not particularly good at business, because all their lack of love drives them to destruction rather than creative endeavors. She goes on to say that it is loving connection that fuels successful happy living in all areas of life.

Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, the authors of *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*, suggest that economies that give freedom to their people to give and receive freely are the economies and nations that succeed. Communism and Dictators ultimately fail as these forces don't allow us to freely give and thrive as humans. The ability to give freely is the basis of loving connection when we give freely to those around us.

# WHO DO WE LOVE?

## The Idea

In the Ultimate Why who we love is clearly defined. In business there are three objects of our loving connection: the Self, the Team, and the Community. It might seem obvious, but looking at the world through this lens of three “who” is critical, and organizations that don’t keep this focus will constantly have issues. Let’s look in a bit more detail about what it looks like to focus on the Self, the Team, and the Community in a balanced way.

## Loving the Self

The big shift with the Ultimate Why’s focus on loving connection is the shift in direction of energy. Selfish philosophies direct all energy inward, for the purpose of finding personal benefit. Ancient wisdom contradicted this millennia ago with statements like “he who wants to find his life must lose it” or “love your neighbor as yourself.” Now the second statement supposes a self-respect, a self-love, but the point is so that you can love. To put it another way, the goal of the self is to find our best serve or how we love the best. Michelangelo’s best serve was painting and sculpting. Michael Jordan’s was basketball. These were simply their best serves. Not that either couldn’t serve others outside of these capacities The love of the Self, therefore, is the development of the self not for self’s sake but for the sake of those you love. You should pursue your talents, traits, values, strengths likes and proclivities with vigor so that you can love more. As you love yourselves we improve your ability to love and connect with others.

## Loving the Team

The team is your smallest group. Those few people in at work that you routinely speak with and work with. For most people, this ranges from two to twelve. In business, this is the team that you work with routinely. The big question for the

team is how can you help others realize their best self. You use your talents for the success of your team. As you give to each other the team becomes stronger. You are KEEPing our team. Knowing the values, traits, and strengths of your teammates. You use this knowing to emotionally engage with them daily. You make promises to your team to help you grow and become more and give better each day. It is an exciting process of shared growth. The team realizes goals, enjoys each other, helps each other, and works to build on the strengths of one another.

## Loving the Community

In most organizations, there is a community that you come together to serve and lovingly connect with. You make products and services for the benefit of the community. You treat the community with respect the way you do the self and the team. You innovate and create, anticipating the needs of the community. You exchange gifts and thanks with the community. They give you the fruits of their labor, money, and we give them the fruits of yours, your products and services. You usually say thank you, expressing your gratitude for what you have done for one another. If there is no community there is no business. Business exists to serve the community.

## Balance is the key

When the Self is the focus we end up in Narcissism, where the Self always wins, and ironically ends up not happy and neither are those around them. This shows up in businesses where it is about serving a leader’s ego or bank account. Eventually, these organizations implode, too. When organizations focus on the team first to the detriment of those they serve, we end up with bloated corporations out of touch that go bankrupt in their lack of focus on the community. Companies that exist only to extract value out of their communities eventually

wither away. Businesses exist to be constantly serving and anticipating the needs of those they serve. Now if a business is focused exclusively on the community, neglecting or abusing the team and self in the process it will fail as well. Teams can not be chewed up like consumable fuel and see long-term success. When the self is neglected and fails to grow, the group will fail as well. It is when the balance between all of these is achieved that we find the most successful organizations.

## The Story

I've been in business most of my life for myself. I have been affected by the general zeitgeist that says if you win in business life will be good. I gave lip service to good teamwork and serving my clients, but the pull of thinking I'd feel great when I finally succeeded was the false god that kept appearing in my mind with no other focus to take its place. I was more focused on myself and my business in an egocentric kind of way. I wouldn't have said that this was my goal, I'd have said this is just the way things are, business' goal is to get paid and succeed. In my efforts to lead my team, I had a hard time encouraging or helping people grow because I was too busy trying to get things done to get ahead as a business. I also didn't know how to motivate my team. It was a vicious cycle, the team deep down knew I was trying to serve myself and they didn't really want to follow that. When I started turning this all around and focusing on the Self-Team-Community balance things started coming together. I was leading to a goal outside of myself that everyone's ultimate why agreed with. When things get out of whack we need to tune ourselves back to the ultimate why. It could be a lack of focus on creating value for the community. We might not be growing the self into its best serve, just chasing the buck or titles. We might not be seeing our team's purpose is to help one another grow into our best selves and serve and create for our customers. It is a radical departure from my old leadership goals. I can now point to the Ultimate Why as the place I am leading to. Is it still hard work? Yes. Is the work more fulfilling than before? Definitely.

## The Exercise

- 1 How is it challenging to balance between home and work and friends?
- 2 When you truly experience some sort of loving connection do you feel more energized or drained?
- 3 When have you experienced an organization out of balance? What was their main focus? How did it play itself out?

## The Science

"It's hard to find meaning in what we do if at some level it doesn't help someone else or make someone happier."

— *Matthew D. Lieberman, PhD, Social: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Connect*

"For leaders to get results they need all three kinds of focus. Inner focus attunes us to our intuitions, guiding values, and better decisions. Other focus smooths our connections to the people in our lives. And outer focus lets us navigate in the larger world. A leader tuned out of his internal world will be rudderless; one blind to the world of others will be clueless; those indifferent to the larger systems within which they operate will be blindsided."

— *Daniel Goleman PhD, Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence*

**Keeping the balance between caring for customers and caring for team is critical.**

# HOW DO WE LOVE?

## The Idea

The Ultimate Why has three main “hows”. They are Being Known, Emotionally Engaging, and Promising. Imagine a marriage without one of these three. If you don’t feel known and understood, both for who you are and how you live, you feel alone and disconnected. If there is no emotional engagement where you show up in the present and spend time, you’d feel distant and alone. If there is no promise, no commitment that you will always be there, then soon you will feel things slipping away. Knowing how to do connection is essential not only for a marriage but for every significant human relationship these three “hows” of Knowing Engaging and Promising are the foundation. In organizations individuals, teams and communities need to feel known. Organizations need to engage with the present needs of these groups, and they need to keep their promises to the individual the team and the community they serve. This is the Ultimate Why in action. Loving connection is the trifecta of these three aspects: **K**nowing, **E**motional **E**ngagement, and **P**romise. The acronym KEEP helps you to remember it. You are your brother’s KEEPers.

## Knowing

The more you know someone, the more they will feel appreciated by you. The more you know the history, traits, values, and the past of someone, the more you can serve and connect with them in ways that they appreciate. Knowing my wife helps me understand that as an introvert she doesn’t love big parties, and prefers a quiet dinner out. Without knowing, you have a real hard time feeling loved as the other will be out of sync with you. You will not have shared much life with them to really understand their story. The soldiers who have done a tour together in Vietnam have a knowing. Siblings share a knowing. High School friends share a knowing. It is a profound aspect of relating that deepens our experience of one another.

## Emotional Engagement

Second, loving connection requires emotional engagement. This occurs at moments ranging from the simple shared thank you at the checkout line to the profound look a couple shares when they see their child take his first steps. Or the fist bump when your team wins. The shared exhilaration when the deal is closed. It requires doing things, connecting, and sharing it with someone. This is basically when our brains light up with positive feelings saying hey that person gets me we are sharing this moment in the same way. At work, it involves things like respect, honor, trust, appreciation, fun, belonging, clarity, candor and consistency. Emotional engagement is an intentional behavior that results in a positive shared feeling.

## Promise

Third, is promise. It is a bit more straightforward. We get this. It’s a commitment, a decision to be there for someone else. This is a decision that has a vision of a future relational reality. The deeper the promises to one another the deeper and more profound the connection. We make promises to those we serve to create, improve, and be there for them as they use our product or service. Promises at work can fuel a desire to give more, better and deeper in the future. It is a commitment to grow and get better at what we do. Commitments that will cause us to have better gifts and service for others.

It is the weaving together of these three elements that make up the KEEPing of loving connection.



## The Exercise

- 1 How does it feel to be known by someone who knew you since you were young vs. someone you just met?
- 2 What would it feel like to have a parent who sent you checks so you could survive but was always gone and never talked with you?
- 3 How does it feel when you take the time to emotionally engage with people even in small ways like looking a cashier in the eye and saying thank you, rather than not connecting at all?

## The Story

I have two friends and we call each other every month. One of my friends sat across from me in the lunchroom freshman year in high school, and we've been friends ever since, and we survived a 50/50 business partnership and are still friends. The other friend was a partner in the same business too. My kids call them uncle and they all came to my daughter's wedding. There is a long shared history. We know each other. The promises we gave to each other were deep when we were business partners. We pledged our finances, our work, and life energy to a commonly owned task. That business is now gone and promises are less binding, yet there is an implicit understanding our promises that we can call on each other for help and support, we're deep friends. We regularly call each other and connect. We can say a few words and know that it is shared by the other. We engage in life together though we are separated by states. These are relationships that I cherish and yes they are characterized by KEEP.

## Keep is an acronym

**K**nowing  
**E**motional **E**ngagement  
**P**romise

## The Science

Barbara Fredrickson PhD., author of *Love 2.0* calls it positivity resonance. It is a moment in time where two people share a moment of positive connection. This requires two people in a brain state that Allan Schore PhD called inter-subjectivity.

"So many believe that it is love that grows, but it is the knowing that grows and love simply expands to contain it."

— Wm. Paul Young, *The Shack*

"I feel keeping a promise to yourself is a direct reflection of the love you have for yourself. I used to make promises to myself and find them easy to break. Today, I love myself enough to not only make a promise to myself, but I love myself enough to keep that promise"

— Steve Maraboli, *Life, the Truth, and Being Free*

# THE ULTIMATE WHY CULTURE CURRICULUM

## The Idea

Now that you know what the Ultimate Why is there is still a problem. In order to lead people and organizations, it takes more than knowledge of the Ultimate Why. It requires creating a culture based on the Ultimate Why™.

## Culture Creation

Cultures are the embodiment of values, common behaviors and common meanings. Cultures are a powerful force that shapes individuals and groups. If you have lived in other cultures you can experience culture shock when people behave differently than you do, have different histories, and have different meanings that they share. In some cultures people kiss greetings, others find that very awkward. Some interrupt when talking, others find that rude. Some cultures belch to show how they appreciated the food, others think that's gross. You get the idea, cultures shape how we think and act as a group and individuals. It is culture that is the foundation for how groups act, and every organization has a culture. Most culture in organizations is not intentionally cultivated. To change a culture takes an intentional sustained effort. The culture curriculum has a very intentional process to begin to help us find our deepest values in the Ultimate Why. The Ultimate Why™ creates a culture of accountability where everyone is talking, acting and living in the same direction.

## Focus over Time

The Ultimate Why Culture Curriculum™ focuses organizations on the one key motivation. Our curriculum guides your teams to break down the Ultimate Why™ to practical implementation with seminars and weekly discussions. It requires a method to focus on the Ultimate Why, day-in- and day-out. The job of leaders is to focus the mind of the organization on what is important, according to Henry Cloud. Without this focus, the organization will go to disorder. People not focused on their deepest values will begin to lose value in what they are doing. They will get lost in the drudgery of the small things of life.

## New Habits

Growing means becoming more emotionally and socially intelligent. Growing that inner fortitude and wisdom that will allow us to react in loving connecting ways in all of our life's circumstances takes a lifetime. We never become perfect, yet we do see progress as time goes by and we intentionally work at it. It actually involves physically rewiring your brain. As you begin to think and act differently, the physical makeup of your brain will physically change. This change doesn't happen overnight, this is why it is important to persist and to have patience. We have a cycle of activities that focus you on growing for several weeks which is sufficient time to create new habits. These habits will build on each other until your culture is changed.

In Part two of this book, you will unpack this amazing tool for focusing you and your team. It will take over half a year to complete the first time through and then we suggest you do it again to deepen your focus. Using this same workbook or one of our next workbooks that will take you deeper into the Ultimate Why. There is an online component that gives you even more material for your team leaders available at the UltimateWhy.com as well. So let's dive into creating a culture.

## The Story

My personal journey has been a struggle. I have had both a lot of joy in my life and a significant amount of pain. Much of my pain has been in the arena of the workplace. Ironically, a good third of my work life has been in Christian organizations, most of which was very difficult with some notable exceptions. Often these organizations were serving the egos of their leaders, and the communities they served. The teams and individuals were sacrificed and not valued. My personal wiring makes me a thinker more than a relater. I was often drawn to leaders who had a goal or theory on their side, yet they missed the people in their lives. I think they missed the core message of our faith that the focus of Christianity is loving connection. In fact, the Bible makes the bold statement that all of its moral instruction, all its business regulations, all of the everyday life wisdom, all of life is summed up in one statement: Love your neighbor as yourself. Losing this focus in my life and business has brought pain and frustration. Somehow it seems easier to focus on some other goal than on loving connection. As I labor to make this correction in life, I am beginning to realize that I have all I want right in front of me. The people that surround me are the sources of life and joy. Life is about giving and serving them. It is a journey that I am intentionally setting out to grow into. I hope you will join me on this journey.

## The Exercise

- 1 Are you intentionally trying to grow your best serve?
- 2 What would it look like if your team was focused on helping each other grow into the best versions of yourselves?
- 3 What would it look like if you lived in an Ultimate Why Culture?

## The Science

"Directing attention toward where it needs to go is a primal task of leadership."

— Daniel Goleman PhD, *Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence*

"Why is culture so important to a business? Here is a simple way to frame it. The stronger the culture, the less corporate process a company needs. When the culture is strong, you can trust everyone to do the right thing."

— Brian Chesky, *co-founder and CEO, Airbnb*

"Culture is the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously and define in a basic 'taken for granted' fashion an organization's view of its self and its environment."

— Edgar Schein, *Author and former MIT professor*



**Culture changes by intentional focus.**



## About the Author

### **Randal S. Weidenaar**

**GSG Director Of Employee Engagement Consultation**

Corporate culture is the key to changing beliefs and behavior which leads to employee engagement. Randal is the author of GSG's own proprietary Ultimate Why™ methodology. Randal has worked with numerous corporate cultures and worked with people from every continent on the planet, giving him great insight into the world of culture change.

## About Growth Services Group

GSG is a consulting group that has been in existence since 1994. We have been a data driven organization focused on research and outcomes. Our clients range from governments to businesses large and small. We provide intelligence and counsel for strategic growth. We have four key areas of consultation practice:

1. Workforce Analysis
2. Employee Engagement Consulting
3. Market Analysis
4. Economic Development Consulting

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