



the
Art of
Waking
People
Up

Cultivating
Awareness
and
Authenticity
at Work

KENNETH CLOKE
JOAN GOLDSMITH

Authors of The End of Management

"A blueprint for organizational revitalization,
renewal, and regeneration."
—from the Foreword by Warren Bennis

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Warren Bennis". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Warren" and last name "Bennis" written in a single, continuous flow.

A WARREN BENNIS BOOK

This collection of books is devoted exclusively to new and exemplary contributions to management thought and practice. The books in this series are addressed to thoughtful leaders, executives, and managers of all organizations who are struggling with and committed to responsible change. My hope and goal is to spark new intellectual capital by sharing ideas positioned at an angle to conventional thought—in short, to publish books that disturb the present in the service of a better future.

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Cloke, Goldsmith	<i>The Art of Waking People Up</i>

Kenneth Cloke
Joan Goldsmith

The Art of Waking People Up

**Cultivating Awareness and
Authenticity at Work**

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Thank God It's Monday: 14 Values We Need to Humanize the Way We Work, Irwin/McGraw Hill, 1997

Resolving Conflict at Work: A Complete Guide for Everyone on the Job, Jossey-Bass/Wiley, 2000

Resolving Personal and Organizational Conflicts: Stories of Transformation and Forgiveness, Jossey-Bass/Wiley, 2000

The End of Management and the Rise of Organizational Democracy, Jossey-Bass/Wiley, January 2002

BOOKS BY WARREN BENNIS AND JOAN GOLDSMITH

Learning to Lead: A Workbook on Becoming a Leader, Addison Wesley, 1997

BOOKS BY KENNETH CLOKE

Mediating Dangerously: The Frontiers of Conflict Resolution, Jossey-Bass/Wiley, 2001

Mediation, Revenge and the Magic of Forgiveness, Center for Dispute Resolution, Santa Monica, California, 1996

To our mothers, Shirley and Miriam, who encouraged us to wake up, be authentic, and express our values through our work.

Foreword

About twenty years ago I wrote an article titled, with the poignance of a flower child, “Where Have All the Leaders Gone?” What I wonder about today is, Where will the leaders come from? Not too long ago, I did some pro bono consulting for an outstanding research center with a gazillion Nobel laureates on staff. Over the past few years they’ve had a lot of difficulty attracting and then holding on to leadership. The problem seemed simple yet intractable. Anybody who was good enough to pass the rigorous scientific criteria of the search committee didn’t want the job. They wanted to do science. Having served on dozens of search committees for academic deans and presidents, I know the same problem presents itself in many other forums. There is a genuine dearth of people who are accomplished in their disciplines and want to take on leadership and are competent at it. So every other year the aforementioned research institute, after a long, drawn-out process, hired some reluctant soul who, after a year or so, found out he really wanted to go back to his lab, and the search started all over again. Ad nauseam.

Recruiting and sustaining the most talented people possible is the first task of anyone who hopes to create a successful organization and deliver on its promise. The people who can achieve something truly unprecedented have more than enormous talent and intelligence. They have original minds. They see things differently. They can spot the gaps in what we know. They have a knack for discovering interesting, important problems as well as skill in solving them. They want to do the next thing, not the last one. They see connections. Often they have specialized skills, combined with broad interests and multiple frames of

reference. They tend to be deep generalists, not narrow specialists. They are not so immersed in one discipline that they can't see solutions in another. They are problem solvers before they are managers. They can no more stop looking for new relationships and better ways of doing things than they can stop breathing. They have the tenacity that is so important in accomplishing anything of value. And they are aware of what they are doing and bring an authenticity to the process.

Now what's interesting about all this is that more and more of our workers are, to use Peter Drucker's thirty-eight-year-old phrase, "knowledge workers." And today I should add that more and more are "investor workers," bringing their own profitable ideas into their companies. But where will leaders come from to run these new organizations, lead this emerging workforce, and deliver a viable new economy? What about the social contract between employers and employees, that hallowed implicit contract that usually offered some form of loyalty and responsibility to both parties? Roughly 25 percent of the U.S. workforce has been dumped since 1985 and even at present, when the unemployment rate is low, about 6 percent, you can figure on a half to three-quarters of a million employees in flux every year.

An interesting bit of data is that in 1998, about 750,000 workers were laid off or quit or retired, and of those, 92 percent found jobs that either paid more or were equal to what they had been getting. A recent survey reported in the *Wall Street Journal* revealed that four out of ten employees were less than three years in their job, only a third of the workforce works in an old-fashioned nine to five job, and the quit rate this year is 14.5 percent. Ten years ago it was about 3 percent. I figure that the chum of the workforce at any given time is between 20 and 25 percent; that is, the number of workers who are temporarily out of

work or looking for new opportunities is roughly that figure. So what about the social contract, which in our “Temporary Society,” in our “Free Agency Society,” seems to be: “We’re not interested in employing you for a lifetime. . . . That’s not the way we’re thinking about this. It’s a good opportunity for both of us that is probably finite”? Is it all going to be many finite trips?

In light of this constant flux, organizations going for longevity need to discover continued sources of learning, growth, and revitalization. But how do we reach the next generation? Do we continue to do what we have been doing, with just a little bit more? Why fix what ain’t broken? The discrepancy between the promise of available talent and delivery on their potential raises questions we need to consider. Are we providing learning experiences that will build the cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, and leadership competencies that are required for sustained success in the “new economy”? Is there space in our clogged work lives for the philosophy, the metaphysics, the critical thinking of the enterprise? Are we giving our employees a passion for continual learning, a refined, discerning ear for the moral and ethical consequences of their actions, and an understanding of the purpose of work and human organizations?

It is an intense journey to achieve a positive sense of ourselves and to know our abilities and our limitations. We can get there by understanding what it takes for us to learn about ourselves: learning to solicit and integrate feedback from others, continually keeping ourselves open to new experiences and information, and having the ability to hear our own voice and see our own actions.

Is this a tall order for today’s organizations and their leaders? Not when we examine what’s at stake. As we face revelations of corruption and fraud in our workplaces; as

we totter on the brink of economic instability, and swing from disillusion and cynicism to outrage and despair, the times call for us to wake up, call forth integrity, and have the courage to champion the dramatic changes we require.

Cloke and Goldsmith have created a blueprint for organizational revitalization, renewal, and regeneration. The direct, explicit, accessible strategies they prescribe will transform work environments into living, vital learning opportunities that challenge leaders on every level, from CEO's and middle managers to team members and line workers, to apply their wisdom to the systems, structures, and day-to-day interactions of organizational life and better themselves, their experience of work, and their collaborative endeavors.

November 2002

WARREN BENNIS
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Preface

I have often thought that the best way to define a man's character would be to seek out the particular mental or moral attitude in which, when it came upon him, he felt himself most deeply and intensively active and alive. At such moments, there is a voice inside which speaks and says, "This is the real me."

William James

Being "deeply and intensely active and alive" is not only, as philosopher William James describes, the best way of defining our characters, it is how we *create* them. Our characters, along with our attitudes, ideas, emotions, bodies, and spirits, are molded not simply by the events we experience but also by the *ways* we experience them. As a result, the more awake we are, the more we define and create ourselves as aware and authentic human beings.

Why, then, do millions of employees arrive at work every day and immediately slip into a hypnotic, semicomatose state? Why do they become spectators and passive observers of their own work lives? Why do they show up only in order to receive a paycheck and begin their "real" lives only when work is over? By failing to be deeply and intensely alive, employees lose their passion and love of what they do. They become cautious and frightened of losing jobs they secretly loathe, or do not care about, or have given up on, or barely tolerate. They grumble and complain, yet feel trapped and unable either to improve their working conditions or leave and find better ones. They become miserable and depressed and engage in pointless conflicts, destructive gossip, and petty personal rivalries. They feel put upon, harassed, overworked, and underpaid.

As a result, they slowly die somewhere deep inside. Ultimately, they stop caring and simply wait for weekends, holidays, sick leave, retirement, and death.

Why do so many employees become inactive, inauthentic, apathetic, and unclear about who they are at work? Why is it so easy to get lost in passivity, anesthetized surrender, lethargy, cynicism, apathy, and doubt? What in our workplaces induces this hibernation of the soul? Why do so many people remain in this state for most of their working lives? What can be done to wake them up and cultivate their awareness and authenticity at work?

Ask yourself: What percentage of *my* working life and that of my coworkers is spent being “deeply and intensely active and alive”? What percentage is spent on autopilot, operating in a fog or haze? How often am I fully awake and using all my potential and how often am I sleepwalking or doing only what is minimally required? What percentage of my working day is spent fully in the present and how much is spent recalling the past or fantasizing about the future? On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being highest, how committed am I to making a difference? How much of *myself* do I bring to my work, and how much of me is playing a role or hiding behind a mask? Even if I bring 90 percent of myself to work, what would happen to me, my coworkers, and my work if I were able to bring that extra 10 percent?

If we never face these questions, we may fail to realize that what we produce at work are not simply products and services but the processes, relationships, and social and organizational environments in and by which they are created. Most important, we create *ourselves* by the things we do, the ways we do them, the people with whom we do them, the environments in which we do them, and the attitudes we bring to doing them. The best way to become

an aware, authentic person is to practice being awake and alive eight hours a day every day at work.

It is therefore a matter of personal and not merely organizational importance that we decide to wake up, choose who we want to be, and practice being that person every moment of every working day. Our characters and personal lives depend on our capacity to be active and alive, aware and authentic, congruent and committed at work. Yet we cannot achieve these personal goals without actively transforming the organizational structures, systems, cultures, processes, and techniques that put people to sleep and turn them into automatons or objects to satisfy corporate or bureaucratic ends.

Waking up is not effortless or risk-free. As we do so, we are compelled to honestly examine our choices, styles, and patterns; elicit tough, painful feedback from others; critically assess our commitments and the results we produce; and actively participate in critiquing and transforming the dysfunctional conditions under which we work. We are invited to grow up, take responsibility for everything and everyone we encounter, increase our skills, and deepen the honesty and empathy of our communications and relationships with others. We are asked to be fully present in every moment, including the painful, disappointing ones we would prefer not to experience.

If waking up is risky, arduous, and time consuming, why bother? Waking up allows us to reconnect our passion and values with our work. We are able to contribute more to others and create something larger than ourselves. We can learn, stretch, grow, and transform failures into successes. We can develop strategies for improving or transforming our work environments and making our organizations more collaborative and democratic. Most important, waking up

allows us to define and create ourselves as active and alive human beings.

Why We Wrote This Book

This book is a wake-up call to transform our working lives. It is an invitation to become conscious of who we are and what we are doing so we can all be more aware, authentic, congruent, and committed in our work. It is a compilation of ideas and experiences, processes and techniques, stories and examples, theoretical analyses and practical advice. It is a challenge to you the readers to overcome the *internal* barriers to waking up and transform the *external* hierarchical, bureaucratic, and autocratic organizational practices that put you to sleep.

Over the last thirty-six years, we have designed and conducted thousands of trainings, facilitations, consultancies, coaching conferences, mediations, interventions, feedback sessions, retreats, change projects, organizational redesign efforts, strategic planning sessions, team building workshops, group meetings, and similar practices. In the process, we have worked with multinational corporate giants, family businesses, entrepreneurial start-ups, government departments, neighborhood schools, social service agencies, nonprofits, political advocacy groups, charitable foundations, and community organizations.

Yet we rarely find organizations, even among the most innovative and enlightened, that actively support *all* their employees in waking up and transforming the conditions under which they work. We rarely find organizations that *routinely* provide turnaround feedback; that offer collaborative coaching, strategic mentoring, and participatory performance assessment; that *actively* encourage courageous listening, paradoxical problem

solving, supportive confrontation, and risky conflict resolution; and that *consciously* design their cultures, structures, and systems to deepen personal and organizational learning.

Waking people up, encouraging their self-actualization, and expanding opportunities for participation in decision making are not only important social values, they are ways of increasing motivation, improving productivity, raising quality, and solidifying customer partnerships. To achieve these goals, organizations are ultimately required to jettison their soporific hierarchical, bureaucratic, and autocratic practices, and create collaborative, team-based, democratic practices in their stead.

While hierarchical organizations require a degree of passivity among lower-ranking employees, democratic organizations demand an active, awake citizenry. To generate this level of participation, we need to redesign organizational processes, techniques, structures, systems, and cultures to encourage awareness and authenticity. It is our belief that organizational democracy is not simply an option for enlightened organizations, it is *essential* to waking up, to the self-actualization of individual employees and to the continued evolution of our political and social democracy.

We wrote this book as a companion volume to our earlier work, *The End of Management and the Rise of Organizational Democracy*, in which we call for organizational structures, systems, cultures, and processes that are participatory, collaborative, self-managing, and democratic. Our purpose in this book is to assist organizations, employees, teams, managers, and leaders in their efforts to break out of the trance created by working for others rather than for themselves; to develop their capacity for awareness and authenticity; and to renew their

active sense of responsibility for jobs they perform but do not own.

We wrote this book to challenge everyone to become more conscious, aware, authentic, and responsible for their work environments. We wrote it to help employees design, build, reinforce, and defend the processes, techniques, cultures, structures, and systems that reward vitality, authenticity, and lifelong learning. We wrote it to advocate and promote the idea of organizational democracy as a substitute for hierarchical, bureaucratic, autocratic management-driven organizations. We wrote it to wake ourselves up, and cultivate awareness and authenticity in our own work lives.

It is difficult for anyone to clearly identify, openly discuss, or actively break the hypnotic grip of hierarchically induced apathy, passivity, cynicism, and despair once they have fallen into it. While observing the way we work is the first step in waking people up, it is also necessary to dismantle the aspects of organizations that put people to sleep, and to redesign their cultures, structures, and systems in ways that stimulate personal awareness, collaborative choice, and social responsibility.

We have all sat and watched as the truth was revealed to us—and refused to listen or understand. We have all denied what we implicitly knew was true because it was too painful or difficult to accept. We have all learned the hard way. It is therefore important to recognize at the beginning that no one can wake anyone up unless they are willing to be awakened, and that no one should be judged or censured for being unable to do so. Therefore, while we can assist people in bringing greater awareness and authenticity into their lives, it is important to do so with kindness and empathy rather than harshness and humiliation, and to act as we would like others to act toward us. Beyond this, we can concentrate on waking

ourselves up and not merely speaking but *being* the truth.
By being present and awake ourselves, we make it possible
for others to do the same.

How the Book Is Structured

In the chapters that follow, we offer observations, advice, and examples to encourage you, the reader, to learn to recognize and act on what you already know to be true. We offer you assistance in giving and receiving feedback, in coaching and being coached, mentoring and being mentored, assessing performance and having your performance assessed. We offer a variety of techniques to guide you in developing the skills you need to make your work relationships more honest, open, respectful, and effective.

We also analyze the structures, systems, processes, and cultural practices that limit personal and organizational growth. We identify the behaviors that suppress awareness, creativity, and initiative and that fail to pass on the information everyone needs to develop their creativity, flexibility, leadership, and responsiveness. We recommend dozens of practical remedial activities, including strategies for encouraging the development of democratic organizations and waking even the most resistant people up.

Each section in the book stands alone and can be read in whatever order meets your needs. To aid you in your exploration, here is a brief description and outline of each section.

Context: Cultivating Awareness and Authenticity

The section considers the context in which we understand our work experiences, process our encounters, and interact with our colleagues. Our initial stimulus for personal and organizational learning is often simply a recognition that there is something we can still learn that will help us lead

more satisfying work lives. Yet our desire to learn requires us to acknowledge our shortcomings and modify our attitudes and behaviors based on the feedback we receive. For this reason, the chapters in this section describe the context in which waking up at work occurs, and the difficulties encountered in shifting people's attitudes and behaviors. We provide tools to investigate the origins of these difficulties and the dysfunctional patterns we learned in families, schools, and peer groups. We reveal methods for discovering who we really are, and expose the relationship between what appear to be personal issues and organizational design.

Processes: Championing Congruity and Commitment

This section explores ways of transforming traditional organizational processes and using them to encourage people to wake up and cultivate their awareness and authenticity. These processes allow us to bridge the gap between the intention or willingness to change and the organizational efforts needed to support people in doing so. Waking people up through turnaround feedback, coaching, mentoring, and assessment requires the use of skills not usually taught to managers plus a willingness to make waking people up a priority in the allocation of scarce organizational resources and already overcommitted work time.

The processes we recommend for supporting people in waking up include turnaround feedback, transformational coaching, strategic mentoring, and participatory assessment. We also discuss ways computer technology can be used to support these processes, including video feedback, virtual coaching, and e-mentoring.

Techniques: Encouraging Turnaround Experiences

Here, we focus on expanding and improving techniques that are commonly used to support personal change. We describe ways of adapting these methods to waking people up, encouraging them to learn from mistakes and become more responsible at work. We start with preventive measures and progress to increasingly difficult interventions as resistance to change becomes more intractable.

We focus on courageous listening, paradoxical problem solving, supportive confrontation, and risky conflict resolution. Each of these methods is redesigned and expanded to supplement turnaround feedback, transformational coaching, strategic mentoring, and participatory assessment. Each is also a useful skill in building organizational democracy.

Relationships: Sustaining Organizational Awareness and Authenticity

Finally, we consider the cultures, structures, and systems required to build and sustain organizational democracy. Hierarchical, bureaucratic, autocratic organizations put employees to sleep. To wake them up, organizations require collaborative, learning-oriented, inquiry-based cultures; synergistic, team-based structures; and integrative, value-driven systems—all of which must then be strategically integrated into a single democratic whole.

Acknowledgments

In preparing this book, our thinking has been guided by the many clients, students, and colleagues we have known as we have learned how people wake up, turn their lives

around, and transform their organizations. We are grateful to each of them not only for helping us discover techniques and the reasons for embracing them, but for the courage they exhibited in being willing to change themselves and the way they work.

We would like to acknowledge all the people who, even in brief encounters, contributed in countless ways to waking us up. We want to thank those who cared enough to give us turnaround feedback, transformational coaching, strategic mentoring, and participatory assessment. Special thanks go to our mentor Warren Bennis and to Sidney Rittenberg, who helped us sharpen our ideas; to Marvin Treiger, our meditation coach; and to Monte Factor, our personal source of turnaround feedback. Our editor Susan Williams helped us conceptualize the book; our indexer Carolyn Thibault made the text more accessible; and our assistants, Solange Raro and Grace Silva, supported us throughout with loyalty and commitment. This book is dedicated to our agent Michael Cohn, who recently died, and believed in us from the beginning.

We invite you to join us now in a process of mutual self-discovery. We encourage you to open yourself to new ideas and take risks you may have avoided. In the end, waking up, receiving honest feedback, and improving our skills, attitudes, and behaviors are essential parts of life and not to be feared. We hope you will take a chance on discovering who you are, be willing to express yourself authentically with colleagues, and change whatever in your organization stands in your way.

We hope you will accept the responsibilities of organizational citizenship by becoming the best person you possibly can be at work and helping others do the same. Only in this way can you make fulfillment, service to others, growth, learning, happiness, and love a part of every

working day. These achievements are the best reward we can give ourselves. They are the most valuable form of wealth and the true aim of every kind of work.

Santa Monica, California

KENNETH CLOKE

November 2002

JOAN GOLDSMITH