

*Five Questions
That
Change Everything*

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Life Lessons at Work

John Scherer



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Applause . . .

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to observe a tradition at Boston College. It was a free, elective weekend called Halftime. BC students traditionally attend during their sophomore or junior year for a chance to step away from campus to reflect on where they have been, where they are, and where they are going. It's all about journeys, callings, and decisions. The centerpiece focuses on three questions: What gives you joy? What are you good at? And, does anyone need you to do it?

I found myself yearning for my own Halftime... for questions of depth and significance that would provoke answers to both the mundane and the magnificent potential we all still have... for questions that would provoke, prod, and produce a powerful response. And just imagine— a retreat just to answer questions! Not easy to come by in our 24/7, crazy, busy life.

You hold in your hand the answer to my yearning: five powerful questions that expand from my observations of youth into the richness of an adult world. Best of all, the NOW of our everyday life becomes the college for mining the gems of our individual souls. As the Zen master said, “Wherever you go, there you are.” We carry within the key to improving relationships, living more authentically, and transforming our lives. The questions posed by this book will turn the key. What more could any self-explorer want?

—Eileen McDargh, CSP, CPAE, author, *Gifts from the Mountain: Simple Truths for Life's Complexities*; *Talk Ain't Cheap—It's Priceless*, and *Work for a Living and Still be Free to Live*

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Foreword

by Elisabet Saktouris, PhD

You are on the leading edge of evolution every day of your life, like it or not. Everything you experience, feel, think, and do is important to the whole community of Life. You are also meant to enjoy life deeply. That is your birthright, but it will not simply be handed to you; you must claim it. John Scherer has claimed it by learning from *whatever happens* in adversity as in good times. He has earned his stripes as a very good guide for others.

Whether John's newsletter comes to my mailbox from Kenya, where he has taken business managers to lay water pipe with the Merrueshi community of the Maasai while learning sound business principles from them, or from Poland, where he is bringing new practices of self-development and intrapreneurship to working people whose creativity was so long suppressed, his stories are lit up by the kind of genuinely transformative heart and spirit we so need in everyone's workplace, all over the world, and that we *can* have there.

I have loved all the good stories of transformation in this book, and my favorite is this one, for which the background is John's favorite phrase: *Remember, you don't need to change yourself; you need to become yourself—and that changes everything.*

As one manager/engineer said recently at a seminar, *"Becoming myself?! What a bunch of California hot tub bullshit. Let's just dance around a candle and sing Kum Baya..."* That was on Day 1. You should have seen him on Day 4, emotionally talking excitedly about his new self-awareness and commitment to go back to his home and work, bringing all he now knew he could be. *"I can't wait to unleash myself back there!"*

This little story alone is testimony that this book has something for even the biggest skeptic. That manager/engineer discovered how to mine the deep riches of himself. As John teaches:

There is a way to take even the worst experience of your life and find the upside, and vice versa. When you can generate an open spirit of inquiry regarding what happens to you, every experience becomes an opportunity for growth and development—and maximum contribution to others and to life.

The work of this book may not be easy, but it will be fascinating enough to keep you going as you learn to explore even your darkest shadows and mine them for gold. Think of the benefits to you if you can genuinely face the most challenging people in your life as valuable

teachers who can help you transform yourself into your finest authenticity and fullest self-expression.

You might ask, why would an evolution biologist such as myself get excited about a book on life lessons at work, whose author characterizes it, furthermore, as being about “learning to learn from experience”? Where is the connection to our evolution as a human species?

The answer is really quite simple: All of biological evolution, including human evolution, is, from my vantage point, precisely about “life lessons at work” and “learning to learn from experience.” To make this real for you, let’s look briefly at how this can be. It is an important context for everything this book has to offer you—literally, the evolution of a whole new life you never dreamed possible, not just for yourself, but, as an added benefit, for our whole human family.

Although I was taught science as mechanistic reductionism in which all life is seen as blindly evolving mechanism, I eventually came to see Nature as arising within cosmic consciousness as a vast co-creative enterprise. Cosmic intelligence, from this perspective, now shared by ever more scientists, interacts with itself by individuating into a myriad of players from subatomic particles to the greatest galaxies. The most fascinatingly complex life forms, subject to influences from above as from below, seem to generate themselves literally halfway between the macrocosm and the microcosm, exactly where we are as humans.

“Learning to learn from experience” is the way of Nature. Evolution is no more about bits and pieces

of chemistry coming together by accident and being selected by blind mechanical processes than are the computer assemblies without which today's world of work could not exist.

Our stunningly beautiful Earth has evolved the most amazing patterns of life for about four billion years now. Her natural economy has been a learning economy from which we, its latest players, have much to learn ourselves. From the time of our most ancient bacterial forebears, who had the planet to themselves for half its life, Earth's creatures have been learning to shift from the youthful species exuberance that begets creative invention and hostile competition to the mature discovery that cooperation has even greater advantages. That seems to be Nature's key learning process, the one by which countless surviving species have been transformed: the discovery that it is cheaper (more energy efficient) and far more secure to make friends of enemies than to outcompete or kill them. Species after species has learned this, transforming Type I ecosystems populated by immature species in hostile competition into Type III ecosystems characterized by their tightly woven inter-species collaborations.

Ancient Greeks, who invented the science that eventually evolved into ours, named it *Philos Sophias*, meaning 'love of wisdom', because the purpose of science, for them, was the study of Nature to find guidance in human affairs. This was precisely my purpose in becoming a scientist, though I soon discovered that natural science rooted in philosophy

had been transformed into a practical science largely serving competitive marketplace purposes in a consumer society. That brings me now to ‘life lessons at work.’

Just as Nature’s economy is about making a living by transforming resources into useful products and services that are exchanged, distributed, consumed and/or recycled, so are the human economies in which most of us are employed. Further, Nature’s economy is a complex living system; just so, all our businesses are made up of people and are therefore living systems. Yet the vast majority of human businesses do not function like healthy co-creative living systems, because they have been modeled on command-and-control machinery. Those few that have consciously reorganized themselves as living systems are now swimming upstream against the norm, often with great difficulty, and that just should not be, need not be, and must not continue to be.* It is high time to transform every workplace into a living system that is a great place to be—and it starts with the individual in relationship to others.

John Scherer asks us: *Do you find it hard to imagine your workplace as a really exciting and fun place to be?* Far too many people spend the week looking forward to weekend release from work, wondering whether life is only about showing up on time day after day, year after year, settling into your assigned place and doing your assigned work until liberated long enough to catch your breath before the cycle begins again.

* Sahtouris, E. “The Biology of Business: New Laws of Nature Reveal a Better Way for Business,” Parts I and II, Perspectives on Business and Global Change, World Business Academy journal, Vol. 19, Nos. 3, 4, Sept. 2005 .

Link at www.sahtouris.com under Articles.

The good news is that when John turns your workplace into your ‘school of life’ everything changes and the fun begins. Odd as that may sound, since many of us watched the clock to Friday afternoon in schools as well, reframing your workplace as a context different from the one you have seen it to be until now is the first step in freeing yourself of constraints, not in locking yourself up in another kind of prison. As he says, there are no exams, no grades, and you get to invent your own curriculum to foster your own preferred learning.

This new view of the workplace as an exciting, creative kind of school actually transforms it, the way I see it, into a fascinating improvisational stage play in which you are the lead actor because the whole drama centers on your own transformation. The surprise benefit is that others around you will transform in reaction to your own evolving dance with them. Thus the potential of this book is to transform the entire workplace into a vibrant living system of people learning from each other as they, in John’s words, “turn what happens at work into spiritual/personal development practice.... Where we are headed is nothing less than the unleashing of the human spirit at work—starting with your own.”

My view of evolution is that of cosmic consciousness manifesting as individual life forms. This means that human nature is fundamentally spirit having human experience, and so it makes complete sense to me when John says:

This homework is work that takes you home—home to who you truly are, to the deepest place within you, to that Self which already is a master at being you. It's hard work to peel back the layers that have covered over this vital center, this core essence of who you are.

Discover this book as a powerfully transformative adventure—an exciting exploration into the archeology of the complex being you have become, with a long-practiced guide at your side. As he leads you into the deepest shadows of yourself, he will also show you how to transform those shadows into light. The Five Questions are powerfully transformative. If you stay with the process guided by them, you *will* get clear and positive results not only for yourself, but for your family, friends, and your workplace itself. They will, in turn, radiate out to our whole human species, now on the brink of its maturity as a peacefully cooperative global family that can learn to live better, even on a hotter Earth. As you evolve from automatic living to authentic living, you will, in John's words, get to “the Sweet Spot, the Zone, ... you will experience a kind of ecstasy, a joy, a sense of excitement and being on your ‘edge.’” You will “go for *ToV!*” And as you do, you will become a beacon of light that others want to follow.

Elisabet Sahtouris, PhD, is an evolution biologist and futurist, author of *EarthDance: Living Systems in Evolution* and *A Walk Through Time: From Stardust to Us*.

Her website is www.sahtouris.com.

Introduction

Turning Moments at Work into Lessons for Life

Everyone gets the experience; some get the lesson.

~T.S. Eliot

Imagine two people going to work every day, side by side, having virtually the same things happening around them. One goes home, upset yet again, blaming colleagues or himself, not having learned a thing—about who he is, about his relationships with others, or about life. The other person goes home more clearly on the path to a significant insight, or even transformation, using what happened that day to learn and grow.

What makes the difference? It has to do with attitude, the way each of those people approached his or her experiences during the day. It's simple, really. It only requires that you *seek a lesson in the experience*. The more you want that lesson, the more likely it is to happen. You will find what you seek.

Stuff Happens

You've seen the bumper sticker. In fact, you could see life itself as just a lot of stuff happening. All the time. Every day. A constant stream of moments, some positive, some negative. For most of us most of the time, these moments simply blend into a steady stream of indistinguishable experiences. Life becomes a blur of thinking about things, doing things, interspersed with occasional rest. We operate in a kind of trance, walking around, having a life, blissfully unconscious of a lot of what is going on, inside us and around us.

Every now and then, though, one of those moments stands out as different. The emotional needle jumps on the dial, and we become aware that 'something happened.' We might even realize that 'something *is happening right now.*' The moment might be more exciting or positive than usual, or more difficult or painful, but the result is that the trance is broken. It is in these moments when we are aware and alive that life can take on new meaning, or even a new direction. The FIVE QUESTIONS will show you how to turn these *moments* into profound personal and professional development *lessons*.

Let's get started.

As a human being, are you a finished product or a work in progress? Over the past few years, I have asked this question of thousands of people around the world and, as you might guess, *everyone* says, "Oh, I'm not 'there' yet; I'm a work in progress."

The next question I ask is, “Well, where do you do your progressing or developing?”

People respond with a variety of answers:

- ◇ reading a good self-help or leadership book
- ◇ going to personal or professional development seminars and workshops
- ◇ at my church, synagogue, mosque or spiritual development group
- ◇ sitting quietly alone or with close friends

These can all be wonderful places to be a work in progress. I know from personal experience, but I want you to consider another arena, one where you spend the vast majority of time during your lifetime: *your workplace*. Every day at work, you spend eight, ten, twelve hours in a *perfect* classroom for profound personal/spiritual development. As you will see, those people you work with—yes, those same ones—are the *perfect* faculty for what you are here to learn.

As you begin to work with the FIVE QUESTIONS, everything that happens to you on the job can become ‘grist for the mill’ of your spiritual development—and serve to maximize your contribution to the larger world. This will lead to greater purpose, power and peace. What more could you ask for?

The Workplace School Of Life

Every day you are at work, you are having literally thousands of moments, each one chock full of life-transforming potential.

The Workplace School of Life has a lot going for it:

- ◇ This classroom is tuition-free. There are some costs associated with being in this school, but, as you will see, the cost is all internal, involving reflection and self-mastery.
- ◇ Your faculty is always there—the ones you like and the ones you can't stand. In fact, as you will see, the ones you don't particularly like will be the most important ones for your development.
- ◇ There are no grades, only your own inner critic. There is, however, continuous, real-time feedback happening all the time. The trick is to figure out what it means.
- ◇ School is always in session and the lessons are always the right ones for you in that moment.
- ◇ There are never any exams—only moment-by-moment tests. By the time we get to the final exam, it's too late!

Seva Is Sadhana

In Eastern traditions, there is a phrase that says it all. “Seva is sadhana.” *Seva* is the job you do, the work you have, what you actually DO, such as washing dishes, talking on the phone, sitting in meetings, selling something. *Sadhana* is spiritual practice, that which deepens your self-awareness and contributes to your development into the human being you are capable of becoming. That saying is the gist of this book: how to turn what happens at work into spiritual/personal development practice

By this I do *not* mean your religion or theology or what you believe. You may or may not have a religion

that means something to you. If you do, that religion is concerned with getting at what I am referring to here as ‘spirit.’ The founder of every religion knew *that* is where the real action is in human beings. What I mean by spirit is that which animates you. What has you get up in the morning? What is it that hums or beats at the center of who you are? That place from which you navigate your way through your moments. What I am talking about is beneath your mind, beneath anything that lives like a thought you can have. I mean that place from which those thoughts originate. That place to which you yearn to come home. That place.

What Does It Mean To Practice?

If you have ever learned to play a musical instrument, or a sport, or taken on any kind of new activity, you know what it means to practice. In this case, the mastery you are after comes with increased awareness of what is going on inside and outside. It means becoming more conscious and reflective, more curious, like a researcher: “Hmm, I wonder what that was all about? What’s the lesson here?”

There’s a catch, however. The thing you need to learn is very likely something you don’t even know you need to learn. If you did, you’d be working on it. Remember the old adage: What you *know* is already working for you; what you *don’t know* you are figuring out, but it’s the stuff you *don’t know you don’t know* that’s doing you in. How can you learn about things that you don’t even know exist? It is possible. As Larry Wilson pointed out, there are definite stages in the

process, however, based on an ancient Sufi saying:

If someone is asleep and doesn't want to awaken, leave him alone.

If someone is asleep but wants to wake, gently awaken him.

If someone is awake but doesn't know, teach him.

If someone is awake and knows, learn from him.

Are you awake or asleep in *your* workplace school? It doesn't matter, because—

Class Is Always In Session

If you start to see your entire life as a classroom for becoming who you are and what you are capable of being, then every meeting, phone call, interaction, decision, crisis, failure or success you have at work is an opportunity to learn and to develop yourself. Furthermore, those 'turkeys' you have to work with every day are your Faculty, carefully selected by the universe to be the perfect teachers for you, bringing up exactly what you need to be learning or developing next in your life.

Graduation

Unlike other classrooms you may have been in, however, this learning experience has no built-in grades, no evaluation by faculty, not even a graduation. There is only the learning itself. If that weren't strange and even troubling enough, the point of the learning you are doing here does not require that you change yourself in any way. Remember this crucial principle of the FIVE QUESTIONS: You don't need to *change* yourself; you need to *become* yourself. That changes everything.

The Assignment

Every learning experience from kindergarten to graduate school is designed around a set of objectives. If life is a classroom, then surely there must be objectives. I am convinced that, at birth, each of us was enrolled in The School of Life with a three-part assignment:

- ◇ to continuously discover and completely develop into who we truly are,
- ◇ to allow who we are to be fully expressed from moment to moment, and
- ◇ to have that self-expression make meaningful and lasting contribution to the larger world.

Self-mastery

*Those who understand much may be wise,
but those who understand themselves
are even wiser.*

*Those who are master over many may be powerful,
but those who have mastered themselves
are more powerful still.*

~Lao Tzu, 700 BCE

The kind of learning we humans are here to receive is not just about mastering a subject or a set of skills—the object of most classrooms. This classroom is more about the *self-mastery* to which Lao Tzu was referring: learning how to manage *internal* things like success, failure, fear, pride, confusion, and anger. There are skills to be learned here, but they are skills that assist you in processing what is happening to you, teasing out *lessons from your experiences*.

Homework That Takes You Home

If you decide to take on this program of self-mastery, *there will be homework*. Paradoxically, the work you will need to do has nothing to do with changing anything about yourself. It's exactly the opposite. *This homework is work that takes you home*—home to who you truly are, to the deepest place within you, to that Self which already *is* a master at being you. It's hard work to peel back the layers that have covered over this vital center, this core essence of who you are. The arena where your homework will take place is internal, and deep. Some would call it the soul.

Your homework will involve some of the most challenging self-development you have ever attempted. If you take it on, however, it will allow you to relax and enjoy your life, regardless of the circumstances, and know that you are doing and being *exactly* what you came here to do and be—and making the world a better place in the process. Whether or not you are aware of it, *this* is what you have been searching for, striving for, saving for, maybe even fighting for.

Why Five Questions? Why Not Five Answers?

Some might wonder how an approach based around *questions* could be of any value when what the world is seeking is *answers*.

First of all, questions are much more powerful than answers. As long as you are asking a question, you are open to input and discovery. The instant you find the answer, you stop looking; you shut down to new input. Answers eventually lead to rigidity. Rigidity leads to

certainty. Certainty leads to stagnation. Stagnation leads to the need for fresh thinking and that requires asking the right questions.

The mind is basically a fast, smart computer designed to generate solutions for whatever question you put before it. Ask yourself, “Is this the right job/life partner/body shape for me?” Your mind will scan its database and what it is seeing every day for possible answers to *that* question. The answers you receive will be in the form of some kind of assessment of your situation: “on the one hand ... but on the other hand ...” Ask another question, like, “What is present in this job/life partner/body shape that is fulfilling and full of potential?” and a completely different set of answers will show up. Garbage in, garbage out.

However, even having the right answers is apparently not enough. Aristotle was wrong. His belief was that “Those who *know* the good will *do* the good.” Not today. At least not so you’d notice. Virtually everyone on the planet knows that smoking can kill you and that eating certain foods increases your chances of heart disease, yet both behaviors flourish. Research indicates that only about eight percent of people leaving their doctor’s office actually go home and do what the doctor prescribed. It seems that even when we know what we should do, we often don’t do it. Why?

Reason 1:

Treating Symptoms

Sometimes even your maximum effort to fix something fails to create sustained solutions because the ‘answers’ you applied were addressing *symptoms* and not root

causes. You can change the way you dress, what you eat, how much exercise you get and so on, but as long as all of that is being done ‘over the top’ of the same core system of beliefs about yourself and the world, nothing of any lasting value will change. It’s like papering over the old wallpaper or, to use an example that my colleague, Mark Yeoll, likes to apply from the environmental movement, “Make sure you are not working at ‘the brown end of the pipe!’”

Root causes need to be addressed, not symptoms. What is ‘upstream’ or ‘under the old wallpaper’ of the issue for which you are seeking an answer? *That* is what needs to be discovered and fundamentally addressed. If you do not get at that deeper reality, whatever your issue is will continue to exist just beyond your reach, rising to the surface again and again as the same or another problem.

The answer you are seeking must be something that

- ◇ addresses your fundamental issue, and
- ◇ produces high-powered solutions, which
- ◇ you actually carry out.

What you seek is an approach that creates the potential for *transformation*, a reality very different from that of merely *making a change*. *Change* can be accomplished by applying answers; *transformation* requires applying the right questions. The FIVE QUESTIONS are a great place to start.

Reason 2: You Can’t Really Change Yourself

Not only are most personal change efforts aimed at symptoms, they are also based on the premise that there

is something wrong with who you are now, the weight you carry now, the shape of your body now, the success you are having—or not having—now. Consider this: You couldn't have any other kind of attitude, relationships, weight, shape, or success, *given who you have been up to now*. If you want to create any kind of fundamentally different relationships, attitude, success, body shape, fulfillment or impact in your life, the secret is not to become someone else (*change*), but to become more fully who you are (*transformation*).

One more time: You don't need to *change* yourself—you couldn't anyway. You need to *become* yourself—and that will change everything. There is a Zen saying, "To the one wearing sandals, the whole world is leather." Change your 'sandals' and you change your world. Here's a real example:

The Woman Living Half A Life

Charlotte, a PhD child psychologist, came to the seminar with a vague sense of malaise, unusual for her, since she had long prided herself on being the eternal optimist and only experiencing the positive aspects of life. In our interaction, it became clear that she had been trained by her mother to 'always look for the silver lining.' Whenever illness or loss occurred, she was exhorted not to discuss it with neighbors—or even anyone in the family—out of fear that talking about it would validate its existence and give it energy. So she had been going through her life avoiding things like sadness, failure, loss, poverty, and laziness (a real no-no in her family).

At one point I said to her, “Charlotte, my good friend Mark Kelso, a gifted musician and songwriter, may have something for you here. He puts it this way:

HALF OF EVERYTHING

I want the up, but not the down; I want the smile, but not the frown.
 I like the Yes, but not the No; don't want to stop; just want to go.
 Don't want the darkness, just want the light; I want the day,
 but not the night.
 I want the honey, but not the sting; I want half of everything.

I like the fire, but not the burn; I want to know—don't want to learn.
 I like Hello, but not Goodbye; I want to live, don't want to die.
 I love to scratch, but not the itch; I love the goddess, but hate the bitch.
 I want the honey, but not the sting; I want half of everything.

I like the half that makes me happy; I hate the part that makes me sad.
 I love the gorgeous, the sweet and good; I hate the ugly, the bitter, and bad.
 I like the pleasure and hate the pain; I worship the sun and shun the rain.
 I want the honey, but not the sting; I want half of everything.

Courtesy of Mark Kelso ©1995 Mark Kelso, Muddy Angel Music

“Can you see,” I challenged her, “how much energy you've been expending in a futile attempt to live half a life?! You are constantly having to sort, to eliminate large chunks of reality: ‘I'll let *this* in, but not *that*.’ What if you simply embraced all of life—and all of who you are, regardless of whether it seemed initially to be positive?”

After some minutes of intense interaction, Charlotte relaxed into acceptance of a particularly ‘negative’ aspect of her life: her rage. She saw what she

had been missing, saw how much energy she had been expending in a futile attempt to keep her anger at bay, saw how okay it was to be a person who occasionally got angry. Through tears of relief and exultation, she blurted, “No wonder I’ve been exhausted and unhappy, and felt so ineffective!”

Charlotte, like each one of us, is operating with a powerful picture of herself: how she (and the world) is supposed to be. As you will see, that picture, given to you in childhood, is incomplete and woefully out of date. There are important aspects of who you are right now that you need to look squarely in the eye and get to know and accept as important parts of your reality. If you live in Chicago and you are planning a trip from there to Los Angeles, *you have to start in Chicago*. Every transformation begins with you standing completely, even gratefully, in the current space you occupy, exactly as it is.

For reasons you will learn, as humans, we have a tendency to ‘throw the baby out with the bathwater,’ trying to be only the ‘good’ or ‘positive’ side of who we are, relegating other, bad or negative or less acceptable aspects to the trash heap, denying to ourselves and those around us that anything like *that* could possibly be in us. You will find that your transformation will not come from polishing your (positive) act, but from rescuing and resurrecting a handful of discarded qualities. In Chapter Eleven, I will show you how to take these rejected ‘shadow’ attributes and turn them into ‘stretches’ for transforming your life, and thereby, your world.

New Water From The Old Well

As you now see, the difference between ‘changing’ something and ‘transforming’ it is that changing implies *replacing*, or in some way *negating*, what is there now. Transformation, on the other hand, implies reaching deep within what is there now to find the seeds for a new shape, a new reality. It is more like the true meaning of *education*: from its Latin root *e-ducare*, to draw out, as in drawing water out of a well. *You can think of the kind of transformation described here as drawing new water out of your old well—by going deeper than you ever dipped before.* The way to get your bucket deeper into your well is by taking on powerful questions, instead of jumping at attractive-looking answers. When you wrestle with these five life-changing questions, everything will shift inside and around you, starting with your understanding of who you are.

Ready To Go?

If you are ready, let’s explore another way to live—and work. Perhaps you have a recurring thought that your life could—and should—be more than it is, that it just isn’t adding up to what you always thought it would be. When you look beneath all the busyness of your day, is your soul joyful, expanded, and alive? Or is the drone of life numbing your heart and its yearnings? Do you find yourself hoping that God—or the universe, or someone or something, or a new job or a new boss—will show up and things will change?

If any of these are so for you, then you are going to love where we are headed.

The simple act of stepping on this new/old path—even though you may not know where it is going—will feel like you have come upon some fascinating new thing that just might bring you what you are searching for. In the process, it will also unleash you into greater impact beyond yourself, out there in the larger world, which is waiting eagerly for you to show up fully as you are.

The approach is actually very simple. Not easy, but simple. Here it is.

Come Home To Yourself

Come home to your Self. Not the little self, the one that worries all the time, and tries hard to impress people and keep up the illusion of safety and control. I'm talking about coming home to the *huge* Self, the one that truly *lives* and loves and knows why it's here, and can't wait for the next sunrise. The one that yearns to encounter the next challenging person or situation, because of what will be learned in that fire. Your true Self, your higher or deeper Self, the one that understands where your interpretation of this life comes from, that knows how to shift shapes and shift states. The one that has not given in to the default trances of this world's concepts about life.

Let's take a walk together and discover—or re-discover—*that* path of turning work—and life itself—into spiritual development. When you were born, you

were a master of that way of learning. In fact, it was all you knew how to do at first. You were a *learning being*, designed to grow and develop and discover yourself and the world in every moment of every day.

The more you learn about this approach, the more you will see that some of the people you bump into occasionally wander on this path, too, even if how they go about it looks very different. All spiritual paths and religions are about this ‘way’ that seems so hard for us humans to travel. Perhaps you have tried one or more of these approaches yourself. It’s sad, but, in their efforts to help people get there, these paths often become victims of the very trances they want to break. Rather than staying open to the life-changing *questions* their founders—who were all master learners—wrestled with, the followers of those enlightened ones have settled into a set of *answers*, growing rigidly certain, losing touch with the developmental process of life. Born to be *learners*, most of us have turned into *knowers*. The work-in-progress we believe ourselves to be has stopped progressing, and every day feels like more of the same only different.

As you will see, taking on the FIVE QUESTIONS will keep you fresh, vital, engaged, and alive. Living inside a world of answers—even good ones—will eventually lead to feelings of stagnation, helplessness, and anxiety—the opposites of purpose, power, and peace.

So, let’s walk a while, and let me show you how to turn anything and everything that happens to you into a *spiritual development moment*, a flash of awareness that deepens and expands you more fully into your

huge Self, and maximizes your contribution to others, and to life itself.

I'll say it again: You don't need to *change* yourself. You need to *come home* to your Self. That will change everything.

Where we are headed is nothing less than the unleashing of the human spirit at work—starting with your own.



Question 1: What confronts me?

Facing the Tiger

This first of the FIVE QUESTIONS asks you to look at your life at work and pick out a recent moment that still has some strong emotional or mental energy associated with it. It could be a positive or a negative experience, but I want you to start working with one that you would like to have avoided if you could have. Think of a situation that is confronting you and has you thinking, “I sure wish *that* hadn’t happened!” Transforming one of *those* moments has truly transformative potential. As you will see, paradoxically it is actually a little easier to work with what you would see as a negative experience. There seems to be more juice there, and the lessons you are seeking are closer to the surface. Not to worry, you will soon see the positive potential in the moment you choose.

How would you *name* that moment? As Toronto-based

colleague Sandy Wise says, it all starts with naming what is happening. Give what is confronting you a handle. Call it something. The name you give it will almost certainly change as you go through the FIVE QUESTIONS, but you must start by saying in words what it is that confronts you.

On Running From A Tiger

Think of what you are doing as facing the tiger. If you lived and worked in the part of the world where tigers live, and a tiger were to come upon you suddenly, what would be your first (human) instinct? Run! Yes, run! However, if you do turn away and run, six million years of evolutionary training kicks in. The tiger's eyes see a small, slow figure running away, as my colleague, Mark Yeowell, says, "The yummy one with the crunchy center." The tiger's brain registers, "Lunch!" with great delight. Then the tiger runs you down and kills you, either eating you immediately or saving you for later.

Tigers are hard-wired to chase a small, slow, pudgy figure running away. Are you kidding? They can't stop themselves. If you have a kitten, and you drag a string in front of it ten times, how many times will the kitten jump on the string? Ten times out of ten. Chasing a figure running away is hard-wired into the tiger's—and all felines'—operating system.

The bottom line: if you run away from a tiger, your chances of survival are essentially zero. However, the people who live amongst tigers say that if you turn and *face* the tiger, maybe not. Now, let's be clear, it may still eat you! This is not some magic story here, but the tiger

will stop for a moment and think about what it wants to do. So, if you face the tiger, your chances of survival are somewhat greater than zero. In the simple act of turning and *confronting* the tiger, you have created not a guarantee but a *possibility*, a possibility that wasn't there before. That's all, just a chance, but it's a chance for a different outcome, which is significantly better than the alternative.

A 'tiger' is often a conversation you know you need to have, or a situation you know you need to turn and face, people with whom you need to speak about something bothering you or affecting your work team, organization, family, or friendship. The alternative is to continue to walk—or run—away from them, and hope they don't chase you. But consider this: *If you are not facing one of your tigers, it's already eating you.* Running away from an issue actually makes it loom more powerful than it often is.

Where do you sense the presence of a tiger in your life?

- ◇ work
- ◇ family/loved ones
- ◇ relationships/friends
- ◇ health and well being
- ◇ personal/spiritual development
- ◇ finances
- ◇ community and larger world

Crisis:

A Choice Point

You may never face an actual tiger, but the physiological and psychological response in your body, mind, and

spirit when you have been confronted by any truly frightening situations in your life is exactly the same. Just think *conflict* or *crisis*. By the way, the original Greek word for crisis is the verb ‘to choose or decide.’ A crisis is simply a choice point. What do you do in those situations? There are five basic human responses to conflict. What is your pattern or sequence? Most people employ several that come in a familiar order. Which comes first for you? Then which one? What would be your Last Resort?

- ◇ FIGHT—taking on the threat with the intention of beating or neutralizing it
- ◇ FLIGHT—turning away, disengaging, and either walking or running in the other direction
- ◇ FREEZE—standing very still, ‘like a deer in the headlights,’ in hopes that the threat will pass you by
- ◇ FIGURE OUT—going into the mind to try to analyze what is happening, what the problem is, and what to do
- ◇ FIX—attempting to solve or resolve the situation, eliminating the cause of the conflict or threat

A Personal Example

Typically, before developing the FIVE QUESTIONS approach, my first response to a conflict with someone I cared about, personally or professionally, was to FREEZE. “Oh, my God! How did I get here?!” Then my childhood training would kick in and I would think, “It’s my fault. I must have done something wrong.” Then, very quickly I would move into trying to FIGURE OUT what was happening and, as soon as possible FIX things. The

startling insight I had when I saw my pattern, however, was that what I was trying to *figure out* and *fix* was not the problem or the cause, but the upset itself! All my energy went into trying to mollify *the other person's feelings toward me*. “What can I do to have them not be so mad at me?”

This pattern ended suddenly for me one afternoon in Hartford, Connecticut, when Carol, a client, good friend, and Senior VP at Aetna (my largest account at the time), was driving me to the airport after a one-day consultation with her leadership team. In our second year of working together, she had become a real champion of our work inside the company, having hired us to do several large projects in her division, and sending fifteen or twenty of her key managers through our Executive Development Intensive. After our session, as we were getting into the car, I noticed she was quieter than usual, but didn't think anything of it.

We made small talk as we turned onto I-84, with Carol driving and me in the passenger seat. Suddenly she turned toward me and began to shout, “*John Scherer! What the @#% were you doing in there?! You embarrassed me in front of my people! You undercut everything I have been trying to do with them! I can't believe you did that to me! I'm inclined to not ever bring you in again!*”

My life passed before me. I froze. I could hardly breathe. My heart was pounding in my chest. I remember turning toward her in my seat, absolutely terrified. It all kicked in: first my childhood training (“Be the good boy”), then my terror (“Oh, my God,

she's about to *fire me!*"). Here was my favorite client—and by then good friend and colleague—telling me we were finished. Practically, that also meant that fifty percent of our company's revenue was about to go out the window, and I had just hired three new people and signed a five-year lease on a new office suite, based in large part on continuing contracts with her and Aetna. Life, as I had known it, was over.

All this ran through my mind in a flash, and contributed to my complete inner collapse.

Then an amazing thing happened. *I let go.* I let go of our friendship, the contract with Aetna, my new office space, the people I had just hired, even the future of my fledgling business. Then I let go of my pride, as I confronted what felt like the real possibility of a shameful bankruptcy—or at least the drastic reduction of what we were doing in the world and how we were doing it. I recall sitting there, calmly, quietly, letting her hurt and anger come toward me. It was as if I were in the eye of a hurricane, with all kinds of turmoil swirling around me. I felt and gently discarded the urge to try to figure out what had happened and to explain and defend my actions. I just sat there, facing her, and 'holding the burn' as we say in yoga.

Eventually, her intensity faded, and by the time the half-hour ride to Bradley Airport was over, we were able to have a conversation about what had happened and where to go from there. As we drew into the parking lot, she turned to me, smiled warmly, and said, "*Thank you, John, for the way you handled this exchange. I wish my staff could do what you just did.*"

On reflection, we both learned a lot from that experience, but what I discovered about facing the tiger has been part of my life ever since. *Facing is not fighting*. It is something else, and that's what taking on Question 1 is all about. *Running away* gives the issue or the other person energy *indirectly*; it makes it bigger in your mind. *Fighting* an issue or the other person gives them energy *directly*.

Facing it ... now that's another story.

*The Scout Master And The Gunslinger**

Terry had been appointed to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) position of his insurance company by the outgoing CEO. The new guy didn't particularly like or respect Terry but was willing to honor the promise made by his predecessor. That made them professionally appropriate but wary colleagues. After two years of this, their organization was polarized from top to bottom around their unresolved conflicts of leadership style and values.

Terry was a 'gunslinger,' ready to jump into any opportunity that felt good to him and that showed signs of potential. Dale, his CEO boss, was just the opposite, a 'boy scout,' careful to not make a mistake, cautious about moving too fast, and nice to a fault—except when his irritation leaked out during staff meetings in sarcastic, put-down humor, which subordinates laughed away nervously. Both were actually Eagle Scouts, an award achieved by less than ten percent of all Scouts in the world. In fact, Dale had served as a national Boy Scout Leader, and his careful, detail-oriented style was

* This real-world example is a chapter in *Chicken Soup for the Soul at Work*, by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Maida Rogerson, Martin Rudde, and Tim Clauss (1996).

a positive role model for many young people. Terry, beloved by those who worked for him, was a people person with a warm, engaging, inspiring, motivating style, who saw the big picture and sought ways to involve people in that vision.

At the Leadership Development Intensive he attended, Terry had a chance to rehearse the Face-the-Tiger conversation he was thinking about having when he got back, speaking to an empty chair as if Dale were sitting there. After several minutes of increasingly direct discourse—Terry, moving back and forth between the two chairs, speaking first for himself, then for Dale (imagining what he might say), then himself, and so on—suddenly he stopped in mid-sentence with a look of complete surprise on his face. He told us what he was now seeing: The person who *should* be sitting in that empty chair, the person who *should* be receiving Terry's anger about his not being seen or respected or appreciated was not Dale, but *Terry's own father*. Terry had the life-altering insight that he was working out his stuff with his dad in his interactions with Dale. He recalled my quote: "*When you're hooked, you're history.*" Emotionally hooked in virtually every conversation with Dale, Terry realized that he was viewing Dale through his own glasses, those lenses ground by his early training and his family history.

This insight enabled Terry to look at Dale *around* his glasses for a change, rather than *through* them. When he did, he saw that all he wanted from Dale was his approval, something Terry never got enough of from his own father. He saw how he was expecting

Dale to make up for something that was actually Terry's issue to resolve. Terry made a commitment to have a Face-the-Tiger conversation with Dale as soon as he could to share this insight and work out a new way of interacting—one that might ease the conflict and stress they were causing their entire organization.

As it so happened, on his way back home from his Intensive, Terry found himself "Just going by the office to check my e-mails," not expecting to meet anyone at 6:00 p.m. on a Friday evening. As he walked to his office, he noticed that the door to Dale's office was standing open, and Dale was there, at his desk! "*Oh, my gosh!*" Terry thought, as he told us later. "*He's here! Well, okay, buddy, you'd better go for it. There's no time like the present to face the tiger!*"

He went in, shared his insight, and asked for Dale to forgive him for expecting him to compensate for what he missed getting from his father. Terry initiated a conversation intending to dramatically shift the way they related to each other, especially in front of their people. Seeing how destructive his sarcasm and put-down humor was, Dale agreed not to use it on Terry anymore, admitting it was an indirect way of dealing with his extremely popular, but unpredictable COO. He also promised to let Terry in on financial discussions that had been off-limits up to then. For his part, Terry agreed to stop bad-mouthing Dale to his people, and to check certain decisions with Dale, ones that he knew Dale was nervous about.

Their open wound had started healing, and even people several levels below the rarified air of the

executive floor could tell almost immediately that there was a new game in town, one without the rancor and sarcasm of the recent past. While Terry and Dale never became best friends, their relationship deepened enough to allow them to genuinely appreciate the amazing gifts each was contributing to the company's success. Their new respect for each other also allowed their people to agree or disagree with them on crucial decisions without being seen by the other party as disloyal. The result: better decisions, made with the focus on the problem to be solved, rather than on minimizing exposure to a counter-punch from the other side.

Q



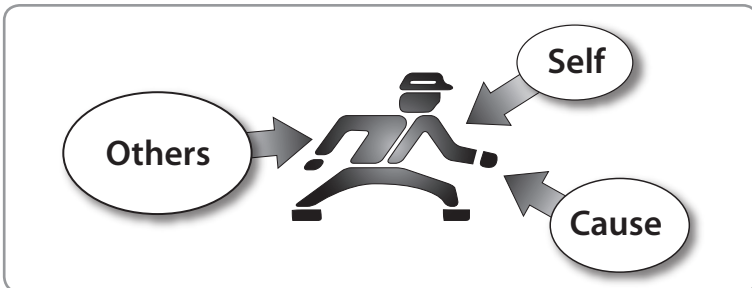
Question 4: What calls me?

The Sweet Spot

Resolving The Three 'Pulls'

What *calls* you is different from what *pulls* you. Drawing on the work of our old friend, Sigmund Freud, I say there are three 'pulls' on you virtually all day every day, three aspects that make demands on you—and rightfully so.

- ◇ Self—what *you* need in a given situation
- ◇ Others—what those around you need
- ◇ Cause—what the larger context is calling for



At any given time, one of these three pulls ‘wins’, and we ‘lean’ that way, paying attention to that one and disregarding the other two. This is not a bad thing, it’s a human thing, but if we make a *habit* of attending to the same one at the expense of the other two, bad things start to happen. They are like traps, because they ensnare us, and make it hard or impossible for us to move, to be and do what is called for.

For instance, in a relationship, there is what *you* need or want, what your *partner* needs or wants, and then there is what your *relationship* needs or wants. In a work setting, there is what *you* need (say in a meeting or decision-making process), what your *colleagues* who are involved need, and what the *team* or the *organization* needs or wants. How you balance these pulls has a lot to do with your effectiveness and with your degree of purpose, power, and peace.

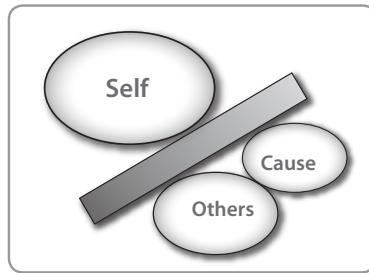
Most people tend to pay too much attention way too often to one pull to the exclusion of the others. Over time, this results in frustration—in you and in others—working much harder than necessary, creating conflicts as you go along and, in general, being blocked from being effective and/or at peace. Think of these tendencies as *habits*.

The Narcissistic Habit (Me, Me, And Only Me)

If you attend only and always to what you need, and neglect completely what the *others* around you need and what *life* is calling for, you end up becoming disconnected. You lose touch with other people and with the wider or larger context, both of

which have legitimate things to say to you, both of which have guidance for you. “Someone all wrapped up in himself,” as my Grandmother Scherer used to say, “makes a mighty small package.” If we are caught in the Narcissistic Habit, we can get a lot done, achieve a lot and become quite successful, but there is a slight downside.

Remember the old Greek story of Narcissus? He was a really good looking warrior who was so self-absorbed that he sat for hours by the water, looking at his reflection and marveling at how attractive he was. One day



as he leaned over to get an even closer look, he fell in, and, weighed down by his heavy armor, drowned.

When you are in the grip of this habit, nothing matters but your own needs. What the other people in the situation need is not important to you, nor is the context or the larger mission. As with each of the three habits, there is an upside (otherwise no one would do them!) and, unfortunately, a downside as well.

The Upside of the Narcissistic Habit

- ◇ You tend to look good—unless people get too close.
- ◇ Your own needs are more likely to get met.
- ◇ It gives you the illusion of control and freedom.

However, as in all aspects of life (remember the Polarity Map on Page 178) there is also a potential

downside. No matter how hard you work at taking care of yourself to the exclusion of other people and the mission or context, these things are also highly predictable:

The Downside of the Narcissistic Habit

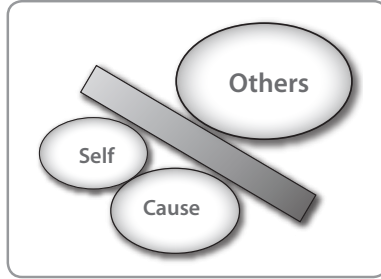
- ◇ Eventually people will no longer trust you—or want to work with you.
- ◇ Your decisions, since they all come from the mind of the same person (you), will not always be as wise as ones made with input from others.
- ◇ At some point you will encounter a situation where life is calling on you to give up something you are desperate to hold on to (like credit for success, turf, staff, etc). If you can't put yourself second, you will fall down the ladder of success.

If we can't put ourselves second or third—even for a moment—we will fail, often dramatically.

The Martyr Habit (*You, You, And Only You*)

If, on the other hand, you always attend only to what other people need to the exclusion of what you need and what life is calling for, you become mired in the Martyr Habit. Maybe you know this one. I do. My Somebody Training and Autopilot—now hardened into my Con—tells me not to be selfish or self-centered, to always put other people first. “Forget your own needs, John. You’ll survive. Make do with what is there. And don’t worry about what life is calling for. *The most important thing for you to do is meet that other person’s needs.*”

If you are in a relationship with a Martyr and you ask, “Where would you like to go to dinner tonight, dear?” what will the Martyr partner say back? Right! “Wherever *you* want to go, sweetheart; that’s where *I* want to go.” The message is “I don’t matter” or “I don’t even have any needs or wants” or “My job is to meet *your* needs.” The Martyr is so tuned into the other person’s life that they often have no awareness of their own.



Martyrs come in for a lot of jokes, but there could well be one down there inside you if your Somebody Training taught you to put other people first. I can still recall my Grandmother telling me, “Johnny, you come *third*. God comes first, other people come second, and then, way down the line, you come third.”

In the workplace, certain departments tend to form themselves around this stance, units who have the assignment to support other groups. HR, IT, and sometimes Finance can fall into this habit. “We’re here to take care of *you*.” There is a lot to be said for that approach. The upside of the Martyr Habit is that it is very socially acceptable, even rewarded.

The Upside of the Martyr Habit

- ◇ Taking care of others is socially acceptable and often rewarded.
- ◇ You look like you care.

- ◇ There can be great satisfaction in seeing other people benefit from your focused effort to contribute and problem-solve.

There is also a downside:

The Downside of the Martyr Habit

- ◇ If you fail to care for yourself to some extent in the process, you are likely to collapse, and then not be able to care for anyone.
- ◇ If you fail to consider the Mission or Context or Cause, you may do things that are not appropriate.

After a while, the people around you want to throw up. They want you to get real, to want something for yourself. Nobody can live every moment for everyone else. Even Jesus and Buddha, each of whom has been seen as ‘a man for others’, took time to recharge and renew themselves.

Put Your Own Oxygen Mask On First

If you get on an airplane, just before you take off, the flight attendant will say something like this: “In the unlikely event of a loss of cabin pressure, an oxygen mask will drop from the compartment above you. Pull the mask down and place it firmly over your mouth and nose, securing the strap behind your head. Even though the bag is not inflating, oxygen IS flowing. If you are traveling with a small child or someone who needs assistance (here’s the clincher) *secure your own mask first before rendering assistance.*” Duh. If you are gasping for air, how can you help anyone else?

Mother Teresa Took Breaks

A fascinating story about Mother Teresa comes to mind here. As I heard it, a magazine reporter was visiting with her at the Missionaries of Charity center in Calcutta, India. It was around 7:00pm and the two of them were talking quietly when one of the Sisters came in and said, with some urgency in her voice, “Mother Teresa, come quickly! We are having trouble at the gate!” The two of them—Mother Teresa and the magazine reporter—got up and went to the gate where they saw hundreds of people on the street outside, straining to get in. Joining the several Sisters who were doing their best to shut and lock the huge door, with Mother Teresa herself leaning into it, they managed to push against the sea of humanity pressing to get in and to lock the gate. As they walked back across the courtyard to the room to continue their conversation, the reporter, incredulous, said, “Mother Teresa! I can’t believe I saw what I just saw! I thought you were here to *help* those people, not toss them out on the street!” “My good sir,” she replied, “if my Sisters and I don’t close that gate every evening to get our own rest and spiritual sustenance, this place would close in three days.”

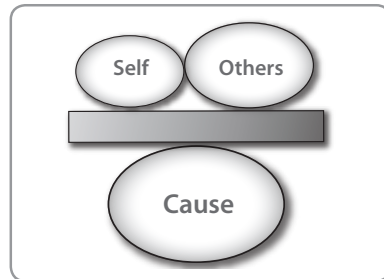
If you are out of balance on this one, you will end up not only unable to help anyone, but potentially angry at the ones you are intending to help. Well-meaning, self-sacrificing clergy, nurses, therapists, and social workers can easily find themselves resenting their members, patients, and clients. In the workplace, it is not unusual for the ‘service’ departments to feel unappreciated

and ticked off at the other departments they are supposed to be supporting.

There has to be a workable creative tension between meeting your own needs and helping meet the needs of others.

The True Believer/Fanatic Habit
(*The Cause, The Cause, Only The Cause*)

There is another habit that can trip you up: putting the Mission, 'the Cause' ahead of everything else all the time, disregarding your own needs and the needs of others. As someone who served in the military, I understand this principle, and there were times when everything—including the safety of myself and my people—came second to completing the mission. We have all had experiences where we worked hard to complete a project, putting all else aside. "It's a good thing," as Martha Stewart would say. Those moments are actually exhilarating, but to do that *all the time*, sacrificing your own well-being and that of others—now that's another matter altogether.



True Believers (we also call them Fanatics) come in all kinds and flavors. They are people who put the mission or the cause or the larger purpose ahead of themselves and other people. Every successful entrepreneur has had to be a fanatic about her or his idea. It's all about the Mission. When we approve of

their idea, we applaud their dedication to the Mission, and call them great leaders and social innovators. Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Sojourner Truth, and Lech Walesa are a few who come to mind. When we *don't* approve of their position, we call them fanatics, and Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, and Joseph Stalin come to mind.

The Upside of the True Believer/Fanatic Habit

- ◇ Every important cause or movement needs a 'first wave' willing to sacrifice themselves 'on the beaches' for the principle they believe in so strongly. People like Moses, Jesus, Buddha, Joan of Arc, Mother Teresa, as well as those who have given their lives in movements throughout history, all sacrificed themselves for the Cause.
- ◇ True Believers and Fanatics tend to get a lot done, attract followers, and have great impact.
- ◇ There can be great satisfaction—and even great lasting value—in making a large difference in the world.

The Downside of the True Believer/Fanatic Habit

- ◇ Fanatics have no true friends, only potential converts to the cause.
- ◇ 'Workaholic' is a word that comes to mind.
- ◇ At some point, other people need to make their own connection to the cause to move forward and expand the base for impact. They can't always follow you.

- ◇ It is very difficult for the True Believer to avoid over identifying the success of the movement with their own success. Many causes are done in by the ego and/or the human foibles of the True Believer who started it off.

By focusing entirely on The Cause to the exclusion of yourself and other people, you isolate yourself. It becomes virtually impossible to have any kind of relationships *except in terms of your cause*. You must know people who just have a ‘thing.’ No matter what the conversation is about, sooner or later you know it will come around to be about their ‘thing.’

Angie’s Thing

Several years ago a good friend called and said she wanted to come over to talk about something. This in itself was a little strange because Angie (we’ll call her) was the kind of friend who would just come in the back door and say, “I’m here! I’m making myself a cup of tea!”

I said okay, and she came over and said, “I’d like to speak with you in the living room, if I may.” Again, a little strange.

“Okay,” I said, and went to sit down.

She pulled out a briefcase (another strange thing) and, looking at me deeply, said, “John, what could you do if you had more money in your life?”

I recall being a little surprised and saying something like, “Angie, you know money isn’t a big deal to me. I like having it because it allows me to do some things I might not otherwise, but it doesn’t motivate me at all.”

“Yes, but think about what you could do if you had more money!”

“Angie, you’re not hearing me. It’s not the way I think. You know that.”

“Yes, but think about what you could do if you had more money, John!”

Then ‘the shoe dropped’ and it dawned on me what this was about. “Oh, I get it, Angie! We’re in a multi-level marketing conversation, aren’t we? Just tell us what the product is—I’m sure it’s a good one—and I’ll buy some, but I don’t want to be a distributor.”

“Yes, but think about what you could do if you had more money, John!” Geez, it was like a broken record. (Which I understand is one of the techniques taught for such situations.)

“Angie!” I said, starting to get ticked off, “I want to be your friend. I do *not* want to be in your ‘downline!’”

“Yes, but John, think about what you could do if you had more money!”

“Angie, you are not hearing me. Stop The Pitch you are here to make. I am not interested! Just stop!”

“Okay, John, but let me leave these cassettes with you.”

“Angie,” I interrupted, “do not leave those cassettes with me. Give them to somebody who is going to listen to them.”

Closing her briefcase and starting for the door, she lobbed one last shot over her shoulder on the way out: “Okay, but think about what you could do if you had more money!”

What do you think has happened to our friendship? Right. It’s gone, replaced by her cause, her ‘thing’, her

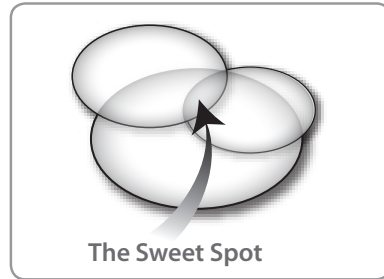
Mission. If she walked up to you right now, she would not be seeing *you*; she would be seeing *a potential distributor* in her ‘game.’ Remember the concept in Question 2: WHAT AM I BRINGING? *Where you are coming from*—what your deepest agenda is—trumps everything else and determines *where you end up*.

Where They All Matter:

The Sweet Spot

What you need to have access to is a way to respond to all three ‘pulls’ at the same time, and do it in a way that not only doesn’t cost you energy, but actually increases it. I call it the Sweet Spot.

If you have ever played a sport with a bat, racquet, or club, you know what I am talking about. Hit a tennis ball in the exact center of your racquet



and you will have tremendous accuracy and pace, with very little effort. Even as a soccer player, I recall that feeling of really thumping the ball with just the right spot on my foot.

What if there were a way to live and work all day, every day, in such a place? It is possible, even simple. You are in the Sweet Spot when you are fully engaged in that School of Life ‘assignment’ I described on Page 5. You are in The Sweet Spot, when you are putting your charisma to work in:

- ◇ an act of complete and joyful self-expression—regardless of the outcome or response from the world (this nurtures YOU),

- ◇ which contributes to the highest and best of any OTHERS involved, and
- ◇ is in alignment with what LIFE itself is calling for.

The Zone

The Sweet Spot can be recognized by a sense of maximum effectiveness and deep fulfillment. Have you ever been on the job and worked really hard all day, yet gone home energized? Sure you have. Ever done next to nothing all day long and gone home exhausted? Sure you have. I think what is happening in both those instances has to do with how much you were working within the Sweet Spot. Once again, it is stepping into this moment, this conversation, this phone call, this meeting, looking for how to attend to all three: Yourself, Others, and The Cause. It means doing what I have called ‘going for *toṽ*.’

Being in the Sweet Spot or having *toṽ* is not about having a certain kind of job; it’s about bringing who you ARE *to* that job. I’ll bet you have known engineers, hairdressers, nurses, teachers, parents, executives, bus drivers, car salesmen, maybe even trash collectors who seem to know this Sweet Spot/*toṽ* space. When all three ‘pulls’ are being addressed, even to some extent, you are in the Sweet Spot or *toṽ* space. Athletes, singers, dancers, runners, and artists call it The Zone.

What Life Is Calling For

Put all three of these ‘pulls’ together, and you are asking yourself, “In this moment, what is LIFE calling for from me?” Life: that larger context. The one that surrounds

everything else in the equation: your Con, your ‘stuff’, the other person’s ‘stuff’, the circumstances, your considerations, all the reasons it probably won’t work or will be difficult or will make you look bad, the relationship, even the Mission or Cause itself. LIFE encompasses *all of that*. Everything that is important in that moment gets enfolded, embraced, in what LIFE itself needs from you in this moment.

Tov. The Sweet Spot. The Zone. Responding to what LIFE is calling for. These are just different words for the same phenomenon. They all describe that place your soul yearns for all day, every day.

Finding Your Tov

If you are ready to discover—or re discover—your *tov*, here are a few questions that will begin to take you closer to that inner territory where your charisma is waiting for a chance to show itself:

- ◇ What are you really good at that you never learned—you just always seemed to have it in you?
- ◇ What would you be willing to do, even if you didn't get paid for it?
- ◇ What do you get lost in when you do it, losing track of time?
- ◇ What would the people who know you best say you are good at?
- ◇ What's so easy for you that you can't figure out why other people think it's a big deal?

- ◇ What daydreams about what to do with your life keep floating through your mind—and haven't gone away?
- ◇ What do you do that gives you energy when you do it? What saps or drains your energy when you do it?
- ◇ What were some of the things you wanted to be when you grew up?

The bigger question is, now that you have become reacquainted with all this great stuff inside you, what are you going to DO with it? Where are you going to 'aim' your Self?

Q



Question 5: What will unleash me?

Enlarging the Sweet Spot

Remember that Sweet Spot described in Chapter Seventeen—the one where everything is in balance and flow, leaving you feeling effective and fulfilled? Would you be interested in knowing how to increase the size of that Sweet Spot for yourself at home and at work? That’s what comes next. I call them The Four Biggies.

The Four Biggies

You can’t just grit your teeth and grunt and exert your way into the Sweet Spot. It comes as a by-product of other actions. While the Sweet Spot is *not* within your direct control, the good news is that the actions leading to it *are*. Each of the following Biggies is something well within your control. Put them together and you are in the Sweet Spot of maximum effectiveness and fulfillment—a transformation of major proportions.

*Biggie 1: The Power Of Presence
Showing Up for What Happens*

Everything begins with your being where you are. How can you be anywhere else? If you are in Miami and want to go to San Francisco, you can't start in Phoenix, just because it happens to be a lot closer to your goal. Your journey in life starts and ends with this moment. It's all you have to work with. Fear is focusing on the future. Anger is focusing on the past. In the present moment there is only whatever IS, without interpretation. The first Biggie, the *sine qua non* (the essential element) of transformation, is to '*show up*' for what is happening.

I use a wonderful exercise to demonstrate the power of presence. One person in a pair begins to tell his partner about some important person or event in his life—while the listener is only twenty-five percent present. This means that seventy-five percent of his attention is somewhere else—anywhere else. Most listeners pick up their cell phone or pretend to be making notes about something, glancing occasionally at their partners and nodding absent-mindedly. After a few moments of such conversation, I stop the process and ask what is happening to the ones trying to tell their story. In every seminar, they report things like, "I lost track of what I was saying;" and, "I couldn't even remember what I was wanting to talk about!" At that, I underline what has happened: The *listener* had the power to disconnect the speaker from himself and his message. "Look how powerful the listener is!" I say.

The former listener in the exercise now gets to be the one speaking, and sets out to tell her partner about her special person or situation—with the partner starting out at 25%. I tell them, “It’s Pay-Back!” Then, after a minute or so, I shout the instructions, “Go to a hundred percent! Go to a hundred percent!” Stopping things a few minutes later, I ask the listeners to tell me what they did to bring themselves to one hundred percent. They usually report things like:

- ◇ make good eye contact.
- ◇ lean forward, toward the person.
- ◇ ask questions, interact, don’t just sit passively.
- ◇ turn toward the other person.
- ◇ put stuff down and focus on the other person.

Then I ask the group, “Have you ever been in an interaction with someone who was doing all these things exactly right—and yet you had the distinct feeling they were actually just running some techniques on you? Like maybe a salesperson or a server in a restaurant who has been to a sales training course?” Then I ask, “What would you say has to be present underneath all those techniques to keep them from just being manipulation?” Eventually, someone will say, “You have to care.” It’s that simple. I usually underline it: “If you can find some authentic reason to care about the conversation—or about the other person, or about the cause or mission—enough to truly ‘show up,’ then the techniques will take care of themselves.”

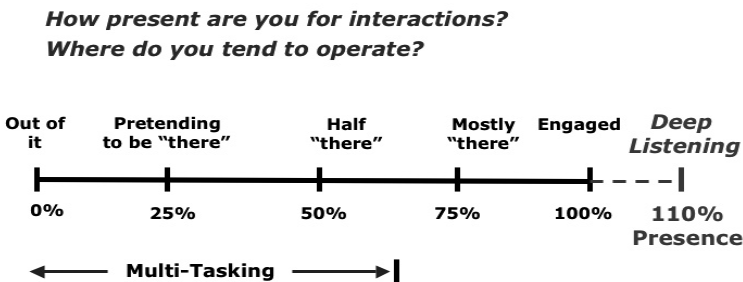
Then I challenge the group to reach for what I call 110% presence. That’s the internal place you go when you are with a special person, say at a restaurant. You

know what I am talking about. It's being so present, so focused, so gently 'there' that a waiter could drop dishes right beside you and you would hardly notice. When the first speaker gets a chance to try again, this time with the listener at 110% presence, the difference is striking—even amazing. People find themselves remembering, thinking and saying things they haven't said or thought in years—or even never. People find themselves getting a little emotional, too. There is usually a profound stillness in the room when I stop the conversation after the 110% presence segment. Something really 'happened' during that exchange. People were moved by the interaction.

Your presence is alchemy: It can turn lead into gold. The reverse is also true: The absence of your presence can turn gold into lead.

If being present is so wonderful and powerful, then why are we reluctant to go there? Because, if we are a hundred and ten percent present, who knows what might happen! It's a lot safer to hang out in the mid-range, half there or mostly there, but keeping one foot on the brake to ensure things don't go too deep.

The following chart shows what I mean:



Here's an experiment: Consciously bring yourself 110% present today in every interaction and see what happens—in you, with other people, and to the situation. See whether it doesn't transform your day into a new experience—even with people you have been living or working with for years. Even with people you don't especially like. *Especially* with people you don't especially like.

Try another experiment: Stop multi-tasking! I know you do it all day. The logic runs like this: *If I do three things at the same time, in an 8-hour day, I can get 24 hours worth of work done!* Wrong. Think about it. If you're doing two or three things at the same time, you are missing 50% or 66% of each of the things you are attending to.

Multi-tasking And The Mind

Here's a sobering factoid about your brain from my colleague, Karen Wright: four hundred billion bits of data come into your senses every second, but your brain can only 'notice' or attend to 2,000 bits of that data. The result? You are missing 99.99999995% of everything coming at you—and that's without multi-tasking! Add in multi-tasking and the amount of what you are missing gets downright scary. Something in what you are missing is going to come back to haunt you, I promise. Experiment with focusing on one thing at a time today and watch what happens to your effectiveness and sense of fulfillment. When the people you have inadvertently trained to interrupt you (by responding when they do) try again today, just gently

ask them to come back at _____ (give them a specific time) and say something like, “You deserve 110% of my attention and right now I can’t give it to you, but I will when you are here at _____.”

*Biggie 2: Authenticity
Bringing All of Who You Are to Everything You Do*

Take a moment to look at the following questions. How would the people who know you best ‘grade’ you on each of these? How would you grade yourself on each of these?

- ◇ How real are you?
- ◇ Do you ring true to other people?
- ◇ How much of a chameleon are you? (How often do you modify your own reality to appear more pleasing to others?)
- ◇ Can people read you easily—or is it hard for people to know what is happening inside you?
- ◇ Do you walk your talk?

These all get at the question of authenticity. The word comes from the same root (*auto* or self in the Greek) from which we get words like automobile and author. The authenticity question could be summed up this way: What is moving you? Who or what is ‘authoring’ your moments? Is it you, or someone or something else?

The first ingredient in unleashing yourself is to show up 110%; but that begs the question: Who is it that is showing up? Is it you, or someone else? Remember ‘Peeling the Onion’ and what was revealed as your ‘Con’ or ‘Autopilot?’ When you are being run by that ancient internal navigation system—which

is most of the time—you are not being authentic, because you are attempting to be someone you think will get you what you are angling for and avoid what you are terrified of.

Take a look at this mandala. It is actually a graphic used in our Intensives.



On the outer ring is all the stuff you put out there for the world to see and relate to. It's your Persona with all its gifts and concerns about looking good and staying safe. It's your automatic self, the one you hope will work.

Just inside that ring of the mandala is your Shadow, that darker aspect of who you are—or are afraid you might be. It's where your Terror (being rejected, abandoned, hated, etc.) lives, which makes it impossible to access the life transforming gifts of your Stretches that also reside there.

Then, way down in the center of the mandala is an interesting image. Can you see the three intersecting

circles? That's where The Sweet Spot lives. Where *toṽ* lives. Where your spirit lives with your unique charism. Think of that space down in the very center as your authentic self, the real you, your essence, your soul. That is the You who is not addicted or afraid, who is beyond the many games of life, and who is capable of simply being who and what you are. When you are thinking, this is who is listening. It is the You who is not at the effect of all the drama your mind makes up about what is happening. When you 'notice what you notice' this is who or what is doing the noticing.

See the thumb print there? That's you in all your uniqueness. There is not another one like you on the earth—never has been and never will be.

For anyone reading this and starting to get antsy about all this talk about the Self, and YOU and how unique you are, let me remind you of a great saying I heard many years ago as a summary of the creation story in Genesis, the first book of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Bible. The other creation story in there, not the one about The Fall that has humans being lost and evil. The one that says humans are "a little lower than the angels" and that we are the Creator's partners in co-creating this world. That one. You may have heard the saying: God don't make no junk.

The denial of the Self that has permeated the conservative Christian tradition has become a kind of inverted egotism. Jesus, Buddha, Moses, Mohammed, all had strong senses of Self. They knew who they were and had the courage to just be that. They didn't deny their gifts; they used them.

As Question 4: WHAT CALLS ME? suggests—Whom or what do I put my Self in the service of? Where do I aim all these gifts I have been given? Am I protecting my self-concept, that illusionary self I am seeking to maintain, or am I willing to let that little self die in order to unleash that greater Self for fuller and freer service to self, others, and life itself?

Practicing greater authenticity does not mean just blurting whatever comes into your mind or heart. However, it does mean having the freedom and the courage to do that if you choose to. It means knowing who you are, and having the courage to be exactly that, no more, and—also importantly—no less. Like the soil, humus, it just is what it is. Ready for whatever comes along.

*Biggie 3: A Spirit Of Inquiry
Learning from Whatever Happens*

Here's another Pop Quiz. How would the people who know you best see you on these:

- ◇ Do you see interactions as debates to be won or points to be made?
- ◇ Do you argue about the rightness of your position before understanding what the other people are saying?
- ◇ How willing are you to learn—especially about things you already know?
- ◇ How open are you to having your perspective changed?
- ◇ How hard or costly is it for people to give you feedback?

- ◇ Can you hold negative situations and experiences as *exactly* what is needed and, on reflection, see them as contributions to your development?

Biggie 3 is actually what the whole book is about: learning to learn from experience. This way of living requires an emotional investment in something—something you are so eager to learn you can't wait to get into it. Remember a time when you felt like that? Maybe it was in a classroom setting (maybe not), maybe a strong desire to learn to play a sport or a musical instrument. I can still picture the scene on the Collegiate School playground in Richmond, Virginia, when I was eleven or twelve years old, and trying to learn to shoot a jump shot. I stood there, sometimes with a buddy or two, and shot and shot and shot at that basket, missing, stumbling, awkward, frustrated, but eventually successful. That feeling of 'Yes!' is still within me. It represents a moment of learning a new skill that began with an almost overpowering spirit of inquiry. I simply wasn't going to quit trying until I mastered that shot.

What is something you don't know how to do and have an almost overpowering urge to master? Start there.

Biggie 4:
Fully Expressing Who You Are

Go For Tov

Tov is discussed at length in Chapter Sixteen, as part of *WHAT CALLS ME?*, but arises again here because *tov* is what happens when you *unleash* your charism into the world, the best of who you are, out there where the world can see it.

How To Recognize The Tov State

I know I am in the *tov* state when I am:

- ◇ physically balanced and stable.
- ◇ breathing deeply from my belly.
- ◇ relaxed, calm, and focused.
- ◇ aware of what is happening, internally and externally.
- ◇ appreciative of myself and others.
- ◇ feeling my emotions—and learning from them.
- ◇ compassionate and connected to others and to my environment.
- ◇ able to receive and give sincere acknowledgement.
- ◇ energized by a higher purpose.
- ◇ unattached to the outcome of a situation.
- ◇ experiencing joy and laughing often.
- ◇ bigger than my challenges.

I am in tov when I bring a sense of peace, security, and accomplishment to my actions, so that what I DO is an expression or manifestation of who I AM. The world will give me feedback, and it will be interesting, even meaningful, but not addictive—not the main reason for what I am doing.

The GPS Practice

We'll come back to it, but the practice for making your GPS (Greater Purpose Statement) useful is simple. It involves catching yourself when you are 'hooked' (emotionally reactive to something that has happened) and then stopping, taking at least one complete breath,

and centering into a word or phrase from your GPS (discussed on Page 260). For me, it's often my bullion cube: *I am a spiritual warrior*. That is usually enough to help me get unhooked, and reclaim my center of courageous authenticity and compassionate insight, looking for what will unleash the human spirit.



Letter to the Reader

When the idea of writing this book came to me two years ago, it virtually burst out of my heart and mind in a rush, the material coming so rapidly that I couldn't write fast enough. (My mother, a magazine editor, typed 120 words a minute—on a manual typewriter! My father, a newspaperman, typed with two fingers and maybe got to 25-30 words a minute. Unfortunately, I took after Pop in this regard.)

The material came to me in bursts of energy, not well-formed words and phrases, as if it were in a hurry to get here and didn't want to take the time to get formal. It was as if I were standing under a fire hydrant, attempting to capture some of the flow as it washed over me. Think of having a dream, a dream that comes with force and insistence. Fragile, yet powerful. Ephemeral, yet solid. Clear one moment, then gone in a flash.

As the wisps of energy got clumsily converted into words, I did my best to retain the power and clarity they had in their less concrete form. They worked their way through my fingers, tickling the keyboard as fast as I could go, and became available to you, the reader. I hope you have caught some of the truth and value that I did as it passed through on its way to you. If you did not, it is my responsibility, and means I must have not done an adequate job of moving it through to you. If you did find it powerful, then you must have been able to enter into a similar state of receptivity.

Now the responsibility passes on to you. There's a story about an old preacher who told his flock, "If you tell me at the door after the service 'That was a great sermon, Pastor!' I am going to say, 'We'll see. We'll see.'" So, if you are sitting there thinking this has been a pretty good book, I say to you, "We'll see. We'll see."

Do something with this material. Think about it. Practice living into *The Five Questions*. Talk about it with friends and

colleagues at work. Read it again and again. Start a book club and discuss it. Send me feedback. I will do my best to respond to each one. Send your comments and questions to me at John.Scherer@SchererCenter.com.

It has been a delight to bring this to you! May our paths cross again.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Scherer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

The Author



John J. Scherer is widely acknowledged by both peers and clients as a pioneer in recognizing the role, and nurturing the growth, of the human spirit in the workplace environment, though the reach of his teachings extends into all areas of life. His mission is *transforming the world at work™* by *unleashing the human*

spirit—starting with his own. Stephen Covey’s organization, FranklinCovey, recently named John one of America’s Top 100 Thought Leaders in Personal and Leadership Development, along with other notables such as Wayne Dyer, Mark Victor Hansen, and Oprah Winfrey. In addition to his 1993 book *Work and the Human Spirit*, John has written hundreds of articles on leadership and change and has contributed to many books including two chapters in *Chicken Soup for the Soul at Work* and two in *Practicing Organization Development*, considered the ‘bible’ in this field.

Born and raised in Virginia, John excelled in both sports and academics. He took honors degrees in History and Philosophy from Roanoke College where he won awards recognizing his leadership as well. He went on to US Navy Officer Candidate School and served as Combat Officer on the Destroyer USS EATON, in the 2nd and 6th Fleets, receiving a variety of commendations. Following his tour of duty, he trained in ministry at the Lutheran Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina, again graduating with honors. His first ministry was on the streets with ‘people of the night’ in Norfolk, Virginia, and then as Lutheran Chaplain at Cornell University

in Ithaca, New York. While there, he began his counseling practice as a Gestalt Therapist and Family Counselor. He soon developed a reputation as a facilitator of conflict and change, and business and government leaders began to call on him to resolve difficult issues.

In 1973, John relocated to the Pacific Northwest, where he co-created the nation's first graduate degree in Applied Behavioral Science at Whitworth College, equipping men and women from around the world to become 'change artists.' It was here that he began extending his work internationally as a consultant, speaker, seminar leader, and author.

In 1984, he began a private consultancy which has grown through several stages to become the Scherer Leadership Center (SLC), serving a vast array of clients from both the public and private sectors. Many have sent their 'fast-trackers' through his training programs and high-performance coaching. Since 1987, business and government leaders, both men and women, from more than twenty-two nations have graduated from John's Executive Development Intensive and its companion course, the Leadership Development Intensive, helping them to achieve greater purpose, power and peace. SLC has grown into an international consortium of experienced consultants, coaches, change facilitators and leadership development specialists committed to unleashing the human spirit at work, helping clients design and deliver people-oriented strategies that achieve organizational objectives. SLC has Senior Associates across the USA as well as in Canada, Europe, and the Pacific Rim. All are equipped to deliver world-class developmental experiences, coaching and consulting to large and small organizations and their leaders in Spanish, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Sicilian,

Farsi, Arabic, and Japanese as well as English.

In 2004, while in Spain facilitating small groups of spiritual leaders at the Parliament of World Religions, John and two colleagues founded Acacia Tree, a non-profit organization whose purpose is to take small groups of organizational leaders to developing countries to work side-by-side with local people on some life-saving project (e.g. digging a well) and reflect in the evenings on what is being learned about leadership and life. The inaugural trip of Acacia Tree was to Kenya in June 2005.

John is a Member of the World Business Academy, the Organization Development Network, The International Organization Development Network, and is an Advisory Board Member of The Mark Victor Hansen Foundation. He lives in Seattle, Washington, plays the guitar, runs or swims and does yoga daily, performs the occasional magic show, and loves to read a good spy novel.

More Applause . . .

“After working alongside John and benefiting from his work for the last ten years, I can honestly say that his book, like his life, packs a real life-changing punch with a velvet glove!”

– Lynnea Brinkerhoff, Center for Human Resource Development and Leadership Studies, University of New Haven

“In this powerful book, John Scherer takes us beyond the everyday race to fix, change, and improve ourselves to a focus and methodology that will actually enable us to live the life our hearts and souls are craving.”

– Dwight R. Frindt, Co-Founder, 2130 Partners

“Your materials are an invaluable and rich resource which I draw on all the time to design practices and mini-lessons for my coaching clients. They love the clarity and depth of insight that comes out of your thought exercises, observations and insights.”

–Jean Ogilvie, Coach and Organization Development Consultant

“My handwriting is all over the book’s pages . . . asking myself, is there something I can do now, anonymously... that three generations from now people will benefit from? Oh, my! You opened up a window full of light and possibility. For the first time I am wondering what seeds I have planted during my passage here.”

–Monique Renaud-Gagne

“I learn something worthwhile in every conversation with John. His book is the real deal.”

–Lisa Noji, Salon Divas, Seattle, WA

“John Scherer’s writing reflects the kind of wisdom won, or perhaps gifted, by a life lived in courage, openness, and service. Come to his table. Share in the feast. Bring your warrior heart.”

–Elizabeth Kanada Gorla, Leadership & Personal Development Coach, BC, Canada

“John Scherer’s *Five Questions* sets a new standard of excellence for the impact of spirituality in our lives. This magnificent book is a fitting tribute to his life and work. He’s a wonderful friend and role model.”

–Michael Stephen, Chairman, Aetna International, Inc. (Retired)

“I prescribe it! Drop in and join this gifted and committed teacher. John’s book provides you with an opportunity to engage in one of the more interesting and important journeys you will ever have the pleasure to undertake.”

–Bruce Cutter, M.D., Cancer Care Northwest

“John’s metaphors are inspired. His words are simple enough to be easily understood, yet deep enough to be profound. This wonderful work fits all levels of people. Like an art, some see colors, some see shapes, and some appreciate age. You will find what you are looking for in this book.”

–Dr. Lee Lu, Adjunct Professor, Benedictine University

“Seriously taking on John’s *Five Questions* will perform magic in your life—making it a gift to yourself and making you more of a gift to those you care about.”

–Mike Murray, President, Creative Interchange Consultants International

“Those of us who know John Scherer are not surprised that the *Five Questions That Change Everything* are not intended to be answered. Rather they describe a way of being that leads readers to the mystery, depth, and greatness of their own lives. This is not a book of good advice, but an announcement of good news to everyone who accepts the challenge to ask these questions.”

–William Leshner, Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago

“John has played an instrumental role in the management training for my company. His book gets to the root of any problem, helping you find your own answers. Part trainer, part pastor, and part guru, John is a shining light for all to see.”

–Rick Hosmer, Klundt & Hosmer Design Associates

“This book gives you that ‘Ah-Hah!’ – the sudden startling, BIG insight that makes you shiver; the kind John’s clients get in person.”

–Dave Myer, former EVP, ACE Hardware

”In my view John is a genius when it comes to personal, professional, and organizational development.

–Robyn Wynne-Lewis, Core Consulting, Leadership Development Specialists, New Zealand

“John cares for the individual. His passion for what he does is remarkable. He shows you your world like you have never seen it before and helps unleash the human spirit, making you a better leader.”

–Anupam Narayan - CEO, Red Lion Hotels Corporation

“The real assignment in what John calls ‘The Workplace School of Life’ is to discover, become and express who you truly are. There is ‘homework’ offered in *Five Questions*, but it is work that takes you home to who you truly are, making this challenge stunningly easy.”

–Domien van Gool, Founder, Leader Academy of Europe,
Brasschaat, Belgium

“John Scherer is a gifted consultant and teacher. His deep questions empowered our team to focus, think, plan and act out of our deep purpose. He has the unique ability to help us develop and use our ‘compass’ to navigate the demands and challenges before and within us.”

–Red Burchfield – Evangelical Outreach Mission Director

“Organizations are essentially a group of people in relationships. *Five Questions* helps you make conscious choices about the key principles that guide your life, and thus guide you to a higher level of leadership, performance and self-fulfillment. This is a remarkable book of insights and wisdom.

–Cam Strong – Healthcare Executive, Consultant & Executive
Coach - Seattle Washington

“I’ve been the recipient of John’s guidance for over a decade. It has helped me merge companies, work through my true self, and take my personal life to new heights. This book is as transformative as it sounds.”

–Ingvar Petursson - Technology Executive

“John’s work evokes the self awareness and discovery that each of us has waited for all of our lives. His book is about revelations. It’s a must read.”

–Dominic Cirincione- President, Organizational Fitness Associates,
Los Angeles

“John reminds us that what happens at work can serve as vital ‘lessons’ for our personal development. His *Five Questions* empower and inspire. They are valuable principles that will transform your life.”

–Carol Orsborn, Ph.D., author, *The Art of Resilience and How
Would Confucius Ask for a Raise?*

“In this book John Scherer guides us on a path, interweaving the world of business and the realm of spirit, asking us to name what is common: courage, consciousness, and creativity.”

–Mark Kelso, Muddy Angel Music

“What I got out of John’s message was, ‘Wake up! God isn’t through with you yet.’ Answering his *Five Questions* can change everything. This book gets my high five!”

–Art McNeil, author, *Leadership: The “I” of the Hurricane - Creating
Corporate Energy*

“John Scherer belongs to that great tradition of elders who teach through powerful questions. There are few, if any, who can equal him in our times.”

–Bob Kamm, author, *Lyric Heart*