

## PREFACE

We are emerging from a dark era of leadership. According to the Conference Board, between 1987 and 2009, the level of employee job satisfaction plummeted from 61 percent to 45 percent, and the number who find their work interesting sank from 70 percent to 51 percent. Equally disturbing, the greatest levels of dissatisfaction are among those under the age of twenty-five—our most precious source of tomorrow’s leaders. According to Rasmussen Reports, 45 percent of likely voters in the United States think a group of people selected at random from the phone book would do a better job of leading America than the current Congress. The leadership style that gave us the Great Recession is not the leadership style that can build a resilient and inspiring future.

People are hurting—financially, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. We are leaving what *Time* magazine called “The Decade from Hell,” and there is a yearning for a new beginning, an opportunity to create and enjoy a brighter future—a Decade of Attainment.

There is a growing movement that seeks to restore joy, significance, and personal worth in work and life. It is a movement formed by leaders who are leaving old ideas of leadership behind and adopting new philosophies that inspire others to get things done and to live meaningful and fulfilling lives.

Why do some people seem to have an aura about them, a presence, an ability to inspire others that gets things done and enables them to live meaningful and fulfilled lives? What makes them special, extraordinary, happy, and a delight to be around? Since we have all the information, tools, and skills necessary to

live an inspired life, why don't we all live and lead in this way?  
 This book seeks to answer those questions.

## The Spark Ignites the Flame, and the Flame Lights the Torch

In Part One, we will explore the concept of the “Spark”—the initial energy that kindles the embers of inspiration within each of us, that moves us to live large and to inspire others, to reach our highest potential, to make a meaningful difference in our own life, the lives of others, and the world. Without the spark, we are ordinary and dull, and we aim below our promise. This dullness is the absence of passion and energy, of dreams and magic in our lives, of relationships that inspire, and of bearings that lead to meaning and fulfillment, excitement, and zest. The spark initiates fusion, combustion, and reaction. The spark is awakened by a newly realized, deep inner awareness of **Why** we are here on Earth, how we will **Be** while we are here, and what we have been called upon to **Do**. Few people have discovered the answers to these questions, or have even cared to explore them. They are content to live the unexamined life—and as Socrates said, “The unexamined life is not worth living.” On the other hand, those who have reflected thoughtfully on these questions, and defined the right answers for themselves, have ignited the spark within them. This is the oft-silenced voice of the soul, and this we call the *Why-Be-Do*—**Why** we are here, how we will **Be**, and what we will **Do**. When you stand in the presence of someone who has a deep, inner knowing of who they are—an awareness of **Why** they are here on Earth, how they will **Be** while they are here, and what they have been called to **Do**—you are standing in the presence of an inspiring person. This is the “spark” that flashes and radiates from within them. Their certainty about their path, and the passion they have for it, makes them the kind of person that others want to be with and to follow, firing up their own hopes for living the same way.

This inner awareness creates a fusion with their higher purpose and causes a powerful release of energy. It causes them to be inspiring—they can't help themselves, because it radiates from within them and stirs the hearts of others.

*The spark ignites the flame.* In Part Two, we will explore the “Flame”—the fire within us that lights the way for others, that generates intensity and raises the temperature, that fires the spiritual and emotional rockets of our lives, that takes us to unexplored places of promise. The flame is bright and visible to all—it represents the values we practice and passionately believe in and model for others. The flame fuels a fervor that informs all our actions and illuminates the path for others. It is our standard against which we calibrate our conduct. It represents the behaviors we model for others and teach to them, and which, in turn, encourage them to ignite their own spark and add their own fire to their flame. The flame is a set of values we call the CASTLE Principles—“CASTLE” being an acronym for six inspiring ways of being:

- *Courage*: Reaching beyond the boundaries of our existing limitations, fears, and beliefs
- *Authenticity*: Being genuine, transparent, and aligned with our inner voice in all aspects of life
- *Service*: Willing, and actively supporting, the good of the other
- *Truthfulness*: Being honest and transparent in all thoughts, words, and actions
- *Love*: Relating to others by touching their hearts in ways that add to who we both are as persons
- *Effectiveness*: Achieving desired outcomes successfully

As we live by these principles, we are the flame by which others are warmed, guided, developed, comforted, and inspired. This is how we change the world.

*The flame lights the torch.* In the final section of the book, we will discuss the “Torch”—the legacy we create and the wisdom we pass on, the gift of mentoring, coaching, and contributing to the growth of others—how we convert the spark into a flame, using it to light the torch, which we share with others. The flame is used to light the torch, and the torch is used to carry fire to others. The torch is “paying it forward,” teaching others, helping them to grow, and being an inspiring mentor for them. It is with our torch that we light the way for others. As Carl Jung reminded us, “As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being.”

To live the inspired and inspiring life, we pass through these three progressions: We become inspired: *the Spark*; We live an inspiring life: *the Flame*; and, We share with others the opportunity to do the same: *the Torch*.

In Part One, you will be guided through interactive exercises that enable you to ignite your spark by discovering and crafting your own statements of why you are here in the world, how you want to be while you are here, and how you will use your gifts and talents to serve; in Part Two, you will gain insights into how you will light your flame by committing to how you will live your life; and, lastly, in Part Three, we will discuss ways to pass the torch by becoming an inspiring person who serves, leads, inspires, and contributes to the growth of others.