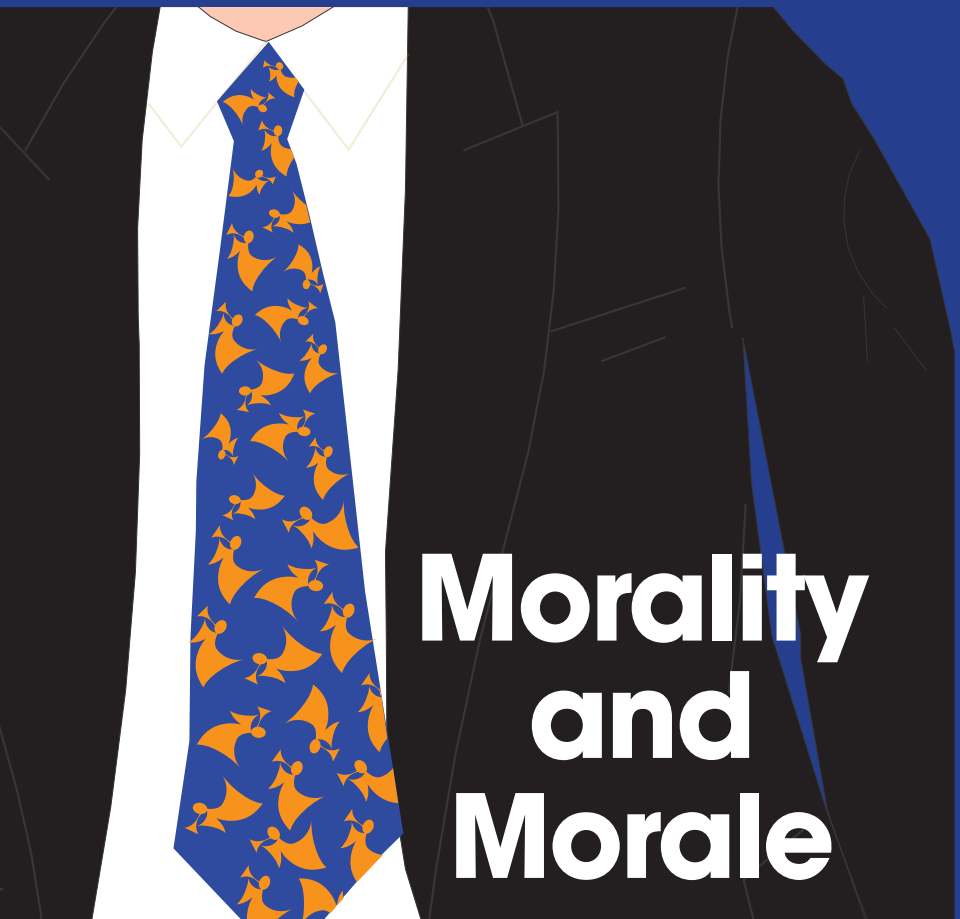


**THE PARADOXICAL COMMANDMENTS**



# **Morality and Morale**

**a business tale**

**KENT M. KEITH**

## THE PARADOXICAL COMMANDMENTS

**M***orality and Morale* is a simple story about a young business manager faced with a moral dilemma at work. As he calls on others for advice, he learns that business is a way to serve others; that there is a universal moral code that each of us can follow in our businesses and our private lives; that morality and morale are related, so that when morality goes up, so does morale; that treating others right can be a source of personal energy and can result in business success; and that living morally makes life more meaningful. The book includes *Notes for the Reader* that provide background for the ideas introduced in the story.

"I wrote the first draft of this book after the scandals at Enron and other companies in 2001 and 2002. I worked on it again after the financial collapse of 2008. I continue to be shocked by the way that greed and ethical failures on the part of comparatively few people can cause so much harm to so many people. I am also concerned that living a moral life is often portrayed as dull and stoic. I think that living a moral life is energizing and meaningful, as well as a key to long-term business success."

Dr. Kent M. Keith, *Notes for the Reader*



MORALITY AND MORALE:  
A Business Tale

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MORALITY AND MORALE:  
A Business Tale

KENT M. KEITH

*Morality and Morale: A Business Tale*

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## Chapter One: John's Dilemma

**J**ohn had a decision to make, and he didn't know how to make it.

For five years, he had enjoyed working at his company. He started as a management trainee, and moved up rapidly in the manufacturing division. His boss was a good mentor, helping him to understand the company and coaching him as he took on new challenges.

Several months ago, due to the company's financial struggles, the board of directors brought in new management. The new management was changing things that John didn't think should be changed. As the months went by, John saw that the company was cutting corners on the quality of its products and services. The company's advertising had become misleading. He guessed that the new management hoped nobody would notice, or if they noticed, they wouldn't complain.

Two weeks ago, John's boss was terminated during a corporate reorganization. And now, John was being told to increase the discharge of pollutants into the river near the manufacturing plant. The increased discharges would violate environmental laws. The president of the company told him that even if the company got caught, the fines would cost less than buying new equipment to process the pollutants, so the company would still save money. "It just makes good business sense," the president told John.



John read the business news, and he was aware of economic conditions. He also knew that competition was fierce. As a result, many companies were downsizing and cutting corners to survive. But he felt demoralized to be working for a company that behaved the way his company had started to behave.

John needed to make a decision. Should he do what he was told? Should he fight the decision? Should he leave the company?

Before he made his decision, he wanted to get some advice.

John had an uncle who had been a successful businessman. John called, and Uncle Rick told him to come over and see him at his home that evening.

## Chapter Two: Business Is a Way to Serve

Uncle Rick was a big, broad-shouldered man with a warm smile. He loved business because he loved helping people.

“I’m glad you came, John,” he said. “It’s always great to see you.”

John explained to Uncle Rick what was happening at the company. Uncle Rick listened intently, and said nothing until John had finished.

“I’m glad you’re troubled by what’s happening, because you *should be*,” Uncle Rick said. “It troubles me, too.”

He looked over toward the mantle, where the family pictures were on display.

“You know, John, my grandparents and parents ran a store. Your mom and I grew up in that store. For us, business was basically about meeting people’s needs. It was an opportunity to make a difference in other people’s lives.”

John smiled. “I like that way of looking at it.”

“We needed to earn a living, but we felt like we were doing more than that. We were helping people, and participating in the life of the community. Business wasn’t a job, it was a calling. It was about

serving others. When we provided good products and delivered good service, we were making a contribution to the community.”

“Didn’t you find it difficult to care for people and run a successful business at the same time?”

Uncle Rick laughed. “You know, John, it always seemed to us that when we took care of people, they took care of our business. The more we focused on others and their needs, the better we did financially.”

“You were lucky.”

“Maybe.” Uncle Rick smiled. “Maybe. But I think it was more than luck. John, business is about listening to your colleagues and customers, and then trying to meet their needs. When we listened to our colleagues, we learned what they needed in order to do their work well. We were able to give them the training and equipment and freedom they needed to do their best. When we listened to our customers, we learned what product or service they wanted. Then we went out and got it for them. They appreciated that. They were happy customers, so they kept coming back. They also told their friends, so our business grew. John, taking care of people was—and still is—fundamental to business success.”

“But making a profit was important to you,” John said with a grin.

“Sure,” Uncle Rick grinned back. “But we didn’t exist to make money, we made money so we could continue to exist. We made money so we could reinvest in the business, and keep helping people, and contribute to the welfare of the community. We wanted to stand tall. We wanted to be proud of our work. So there were things that we would do that *didn't* help the bottom line, and there

were things we wouldn't do at all, even if they *did* help the bottom line.”

“For example?”

“Well, remember that back then, we lived in a small community, and we got to know people pretty well. So when we learned that a customer's family was having hard times, we would have food delivered. We never told them it was from us. We also gave to local charities, and tried to help out by serving on community boards. Once, when we learned that one of our most loyal customers was out of work, we tried to think up something that needed to be done, and we hired him to do it. It was real work, and he got paid for it, so he didn't feel like it was a handout.”

“That's pretty amazing,” John said.

“Not really,” Uncle Rick replied. “We just cared about everybody that our business touched—our colleagues, our customers, and our business partners. We wanted to be good to each other, without making much noise about it. You see, life for us was bigger than the business. Life was the community. We thought of ourselves as part of a network of friends and neighbors, each helping others to get what they needed in life.”

John sat quietly for a time. “That sounds ideal.”

“Don't get me wrong,” Uncle Rick said. “We weren't saints and angels. We had our disagreements. We didn't all like each other. But we were still able to serve each other.”

“Well, it sounds really different from our company. We are told that we only exist to maximize the wealth of our shareholders.”

Uncle Rick nodded. “It’s really a shame that people think that. A lot of harm has been done by business leaders who think that they have to keep wages low, or lay off people, or cut the quality of their products, or harm the environment, just to keep share prices as high as possible.”

“That’s certainly what our company leaders think.”

“Well, I don’t agree with them. It takes a lot of people to make a corporation successful—employees, customers, business partners, creditors, shareholders, and communities. The business wouldn’t exist without all of its stakeholders. Giving priority to one group at the expense of all the others isn’t fair. Fortunately, the law in most states allows boards of directors to take into account the interests of all stakeholders, not just the shareholders. But not everybody knows that.”

John sat quietly for a time. “You mentioned that there were things that you wouldn’t do at all.”

“Oh,” Uncle Rick said. “It was mostly just showing a little compassion here and there. For example, we didn’t hit people when they were down. I remember one day my father told me that during the depression back in the 1930s, when people ran up a bill at the store and then were unable to pay, grandpa and grandma could have initiated legal proceedings to collect on the debts. They could have seized all kinds of property from people all over town. But they didn’t do it.”

“How did they survive?”

“Not much better than anybody else, John. They barely made it through. But when the depression was over, their customers were still there. Grandpa and grandma built the business up again,

bigger than it had ever been before.”

“I didn’t know that story. But I know your parents had the same kind of values, because I learned them from my mom.”

“Absolutely. I know that our parents never raised prices when goods were in short supply. And we never cut corners, or sold shoddy goods, even when most people wouldn’t have known the difference. Again, we thought that business was about people helping people. We didn’t consider it unusual to be decent and compassionate.”

“Well, it doesn’t sound like the kind of competitive self-interest that Adam Smith thought would make the free enterprise system a success,” John said.

Uncle Rick laughed. “Well, Adam Smith thought economic self-interest wasn’t the only thing that motivated human beings. There was something else.”

John waited. “And that was...?”

“Sympathy,” Uncle Rick said. “He assumed that human beings could be sympathetic and compassionate toward each other. In fact, he thought it was in our best self-interest to be compassionate.”

John raised his eyebrows. “The founding father of modern economics and capitalism thought it was in our best self-interest to be compassionate toward others?”

“Right. And that’s the way our family always tried to run our business. We had to be competitive and make money, or we’d be out of business. But we were also motivated by compassion toward others.”

“I guess that all makes sense when you think of a small community. You grew up in a community where everybody knew everybody. You all went to the same schools, shopped at the same stores, worked at the same places, and went to the same churches. The community was stable and pretty close-knit, so if you did something wrong, everybody would know it, and you’d have to make amends or leave town.”

“Sure,” Uncle Rick said. “If you were caught cheating a customer, it affected your reputation with everybody, because it only took an hour for the word to get around town.”

“But life is different today,” said John. “People move often. And they drive to one place for school, another to shop, another to work, and another for church. Communities are loose-knit and transitional. Lots of people don’t really know their neighbors.”

“You’re right. In the old days, we did business face-to-face with people we knew. Today, you can do a lot of business without ever meeting a customer. You can get orders through your website or by phone, and take a credit card number, and ship out the goods, without ever meeting the person you are serving.”

“So you don’t have the same sense of community.”

“That’s true,” said Uncle Rick. “But there are still lots of small communities all over America whose businesses know their customers as neighbors. And even in big cities, there are neighborhoods in which people get to know each other and become real communities. What I think has changed is that there are more communities that are based on a common interest rather than a common neighborhood. People come together to share hobbies, or help with their kid’s soccer team, or volunteer at the Y, or lead a Boy Scout troop. Their communities may be organizations or asso-

ciations rather than geographic neighborhoods. And today, their communities may be virtual communities, on the internet or through the social media.”

“Which means that people can belong to lots of different communities, not just one,” John said.

“Right. They’ll drive, or telephone, or get on the internet to find the activities and services they want as members of each of the different communities they belong to.”

“Well,” John said, “I guess a business that serves one of those communities is still part of a community.”

“Sure. Your business is part of the community it serves. In fact, you can play a key role in building that community.”

“A market niche and a customer base,” John said.

Uncle Rick laughed. “To me, a market niche is a potential community, and a customer base is a group of people you can help by providing products and services that they truly need.”

Uncle Rick stretched out his legs and leaned back in his chair.

"John, I think it's good to remember that all the people in your company should be a community. You should share common values and goals. You should help each other grow. You should help each other to be productive. You should help each other to work for the greater good."

“Well, on our best days,” John said with a chuckle.

“A good company is a community of people who care about



the business but also about each other. Remember that the people who work in your company spend at least half their waking hours at work. That means that the quality of the community that exists within your business is very important to the quality of life of all the people who work there.”

“Okay,” said John. “But when you talk about caring about each other, I don’t think it is healthy for people to expect the kinds of intimate relationships at the office that they can have with friends or family outside of the business. There should be some limits.”

“Sure,” Uncle Rick said. “The caring should be about basic things like education and training, a healthy work environment, medical and health benefits, and opportunities for advancement. It should recognize personal challenges, such as those faced by single parents. When an employee needs to leave work to care for an ill child, others should be willing to step in and help out. And everything possible should be done to make the work meaningful to the people who are doing it. The community within the company can be thoughtful and supportive without being intimate or invading anyone’s privacy.”

“Okay. But why is that so important?”

“If there is a morally strong community inside the company, then the company will probably be sensitive to moral issues that relate to the people they interact with *outside* the company. Members of the company will care about how they are treating their customers, business partners, and the communities in which they are located.

“Or to put it negatively,” John said, “if the company is not used to treating its own members in a moral fashion, then it is less likely to treat people outside the company in a moral fashion.”

“Yes,” Uncle Rick said. “The danger is that when the moral life inside a company is poor, members of the company will think they are justified in living a bifurcated moral code.”

John smiled. “You’re going to explain what that means.”

“No, but I know someone who is really good at discussing it. You should go talk with Lindsay Chang. She’s an executive at a great financial services company. I am one of her clients.”

Uncle Rick wrote down her name and phone number and handed it to John.

“Thanks, I’ll definitely go see her.”

John looked at his watch.

“They’re playing tonight, aren’t they?”

Uncle Rick roared with laughter.

“Yes, the Cubs are playing. The game starts in 15 minutes. Channel 2.”

“I brought popcorn and your favorite honey-glazed peanuts,” John said.

“Ah, you remembered! Well, drinks are in the fridge,” Uncle Rick said, still chuckling.

“I think I was six years old, the first time I saw the Cubs play,” said John. “You and Dad took me to my first game.”

“Did the Cubs win or lose?”

“I don’t remember. I just remember how great it felt to be at a real ball game with my Dad and my uncle. And the popcorn was good.”



When he got home later that night, John took time to write down some things he wanted to remember from his talk with Uncle Rick:

1. Business is about serving others, identifying and meeting the needs of colleagues and customers. It’s important to make money, but it’s also important to make a difference in the lives of others.
2. Business is more than a job—it’s a calling. Providing good products and services is a way to make a contribution to society.
3. A good company is a community of people who care about the business and also about each other.

He thought about what he had learned, and then wrote:

*My personal goal*

- I want to work for a business that meets people’s needs and makes a difference in their lives and their communities. I want my job to*
- be a calling.*

## Chapter Three:

# Group Morality and the Bifurcated Moral Code

**W**hen John called Lindsay Chang's office he learned that she was on a trip. But when she got back, she gave John a call. They met in her office at the financial services company where she was an executive. She was petite, with long black hair, a conservative business suit, and a bright red handkerchief in her suit pocket. She welcomed him with a big smile.

"Thanks for meeting with me," John said.

"Oh, I'm happy to do it. Rick and I have been friends for a long time. I've learned a lot from him."

"Me, too."

Lindsay nodded, then paused. "He said you were dealing with some serious issues that affect your future."

John explained what had been happening at his company, and his discussion with Uncle Rick.

"Uncle Rick said you were good at discussing group morality and the bifurcated moral code."

"I'm glad he thinks so," she said with a laugh.

John leaned forward and waited while Lindsay collected her thoughts.

“Many people in organizations have bifurcated the moral code. ‘Bifurcated’ means dividing something into two branches. The moral code is bifurcated when people act as though there is one moral code for their private lives and a different one for their business lives. That seems to be what is happening in your company, John.”

“Yes. The president of our company would say that it is wrong for an individual to poison his neighbor’s drinking water, but he thinks it is okay for our company to pollute a river that everyone’s drinking water comes from.”

“Exactly,” Lindsay said. “If an individual said, ‘I tricked somebody into giving me money because I needed the money to balance my family budget,’ everybody would agree that it was wrong. But if a corporation says it defrauded customers to make more money to reach its profit goals for the quarter, some will say, ‘well, that’s business.’”

John nodded. “For some reason, there are people who think that it is wrong for an individual to lie, cheat, steal, and harm others, but it is okay for a company to lie, cheat, steal, and harm others.”

“Yes,” said Lindsay. “And I strongly disagree with those people. What is wrong for an individual is not right for a corporation, just because the corporation wants to make a profit.”

“In other words, we can’t leave our personal morality at the door when we go to work each day,” said John.

“No, we can’t,” said Lindsay. “In fact, we should *raise* our stan-

dard of morality when we go to work each day. Companies do things on a bigger scale that affect more people. They ought to have *higher* standards of morality, because when they do something wrong, it usually hurts more people than most of us would hurt by our individual transgressions.”

“Why do people live a bifurcated moral code?”

“Good question. I think that sometimes they give up their individual morality at work because they want to belong. At other times, they may give up it up because they want to succeed financially at any cost.”

John nodded. “Of course, the fact that people want to belong can be a good thing.”

“Sure,” Lindsay said. “People often adjust their moral standards to match the group they belong to. When most members of a group are behaving in very moral, thoughtful ways, then other members of the group often raise their own standards of behavior to match the group. But when most members of a group are behaving in immoral, thoughtless ways, then other members of the group often lower their own standards of behavior and go along. It's hard to take a stand against the group.”

“Have you worked in groups that raise people’s standards of behavior?” John asked.

“I’ve not only worked in groups like that, I’ve *created* groups like that. I work hard to make sure my own company is like that. That is one of my key roles as a leader and a manager—to articulate our values and emphasize the importance of moral behavior. Even the best organizations are not perfect. You have to keep striving to achieve high moral standards.”

“Well, I don’t see a lot of that kind of striving at my company nowadays,” John said.

“No, it doesn’t sound like it,” Lindsay agreed. “And that’s too bad. It is disturbing to see how easily moral individuals can accept immorality when it occurs in their company.”

“I guess they think that since everyone else in the company is doing it, that makes it okay,” said John. “If the whole gang is doing it, why not go along?”

“But a wrong does not become right just because a group of individuals decide to do it,” said Lindsay.

John nodded. “And people know that. I have noticed that even when a group of people do something that’s wrong, most of them are nervous about it. They know they would be embarrassed if they got caught and the whole thing became public.”

“Yes,” said Lindsay. “They ask other people not to tell. They want to keep it hush-hush because they know that what they are doing is wrong.”

John recalled a recent incident at his own company. “When a group of people decide to do something they know is wrong, they will try to involve the people that they think might tell on them, so they will be guilty too. Everybody will have a stake in keeping quiet.”

“Right. They get everybody to sign off on the decision, or they get everybody to participate, so everybody is implicated if the wrong is ever discovered.”

“So, people want to belong, and they go with the flow. They

don't want to stand up to their peers or their boss, if their peers or boss decide to do what's wrong."

"Yes," said Lindsay. "It takes courage to stand up for what is right, especially when it is likely to make you unpopular. And if you stand up to the boss, your job might be at risk."

"I've thought about that," John said.

"Another problem is that the journey to immorality often occurs in small steps. A group starts down an unethical road, and just goes a little farther each time. There's no single decision point that clarifies all the issues that are at stake. It's more of a slip and slide."

John was quiet. "Yes," he said. "It starts with a knowing wink or a chuckle among members of the group as they cross the line, knowing that they shouldn't cross it. It is implied that sophisticated, worldly-wise professionals are above moral concerns. Everybody else is a wimp for thinking that they should follow the rules."

Lindsay looked at John thoughtfully.

"So," she said, "you've been there. You've seen how group immorality starts. People are invited into the group—maybe even the inner sanctum—and the price of admission is that they have to lower their moral standards."

"And they want to be in the group so badly that they think it's worth the price," John said.

"And at first, the price seems small—just overlooking a few things that aren't that big, aren't that immoral. But once they're



in, once they're hooked, the cost gets higher and higher. If they really get addicted, they don't even notice the cost anymore. They cease to concern themselves with moral issues. If they are caught and criticized for their wrongdoing, they are outraged because they no longer consider it wrong. They've come to accept it. ”

“Have you ever had to take a stand on a moral issue within a company?” John asked.

Lindsay paused. “Yes. In a company I worked for early in my career. We were selling investment packages to individual clients.”

“What happened?”

“The company developed a new product that was a high-risk package, filled with high-flying stocks and junk bonds. The company urged us to give it top priority in our pitches to clients, because it made the company more money than the other products. I didn't think it was right for my clients. They were counting on their money for college tuitions for their kids and their own retirement some day. They didn't want that much risk, and I didn't think it was right to try to persuade them to take that much risk. They trusted me. I didn't want to violate that trust.”

“Did you speak up about it?”

“Yes, I did, at the next management meeting. The president made the pitch for the new product, and said we would be evaluated on how successful we were in selling it. I raised my hand and pointed out that for most of our clients, the new product was just too risky. Selling the product would be an abuse of their trust in us.”

“And?”

“Well, the room suddenly got very quiet. The president was stunned. He didn’t know what to say. When he spoke again, he simply confirmed that we would be evaluated on how successful we were in selling the new product. But I could see that he was seething. I was fired three days later. The president told me that I was out of alignment with the company’s goals. He was right.”

“Did anybody else speak up against it?”

“No. A few told me they felt badly about selling the product to clients they knew couldn’t afford the risk. But the president was pushing, and they went along. They had families to support and they needed their jobs. It was hard for them to take a stand.”

“What happened after you were fired?” John asked.

“It was hard. Fortunately, I had saved some money, but I had to watch every penny while I searched for another job. The economy was bad, and there weren’t many jobs available. I kept applying and interviewing. After a few months, I had to sell my car, because I was getting low on cash. Then I had to find a cheaper apartment. I was downsizing, trying to hang on. I didn’t know how long it would take to get another job, and I was worried. *Very* worried.”

“Do you have any regrets about speaking up?”

“Not for a minute. Actually, I was lucky to get out when I did. The company was investigated a year after I was fired, and there was a public scandal. They were falsifying their financial statements, among other things.”

“Eventually you came here?”

“Yes. I saw an ad, and I came for an interview. The president interviewed me. After the pleasantries, he asked me: Why did you leave your last job? I said that I was fired. He asked why. I said that I had been told I had to sell a high-risk package to clients who couldn’t afford the risk, and I had refused. He had only one more question: When can you start work? I’ve been here for ten years, now. It’s been great. I worked my way up the ranks and now I manage our largest office.”

John sat back in his chair.

“People don’t usually like to do what’s wrong,” he said. “They usually feel a need to justify it somehow.”

Lindsay laughed. “Yes, they do. They justify it in terms of the bottom line. People who are moral as individuals often justify immoral behavior by their businesses by saying that they had to do it to make a profit. They had to protect the bottom line.”

“The old argument that the end justifies the means,” John said.

“Right. That’s what some business people say. But I don’t agree. A profit is a good thing, but it doesn’t justify lying or cheating or hurting others.”

Lindsay stood up and started pacing her office.

“We work hard here to be profitable. A profit is not just a scorecard that tells you how well you are doing financially. A profit gives you money that you can reinvest in the business, do more research, hire more people, and pay more taxes that can be used for the public good. A profit is a very useful end, but it doesn't justify using immoral means.”

“It really puzzles me,” said John. “I can’t figure out why some people think that companies can operate with a different set of moral standards than individuals. When they bifurcate the moral code, they are saying that organizations have a license to do whatever they want in order to make a profit. They think there’s another set of rules, justified by the bottom line.”

“I’m afraid so,” said Lindsay. “But there isn’t another set of rules. There is only one moral code, the same at home and at the office.”

John sat, thinking. “If they adopted high standards of morality, some companies would probably go out of business.”

“And that would be good, from my point of view,” said Lindsay. “No business is *entitled* to stay in business. No business is guaranteed success. If a company can’t do business morally, then *it shouldn’t do business at all*. The resources should go to companies that can be both moral and successful.”

“You’ve said that there is one moral code, the same at home and at the office—the same for individuals and companies. What is in that moral code? How do you define it?”

Lindsay smiled. “I know two people who would love to talk with you about that. Their names are Art and Ethel Duggins. They’ve been clients and friends for years. I’ll give you their address and phone number. Give them a call and tell them I recommended that you drop by and chat with them.”



John sat in his car and wrote down some highlights of his meeting with Lindsay Chang:

1. People bifurcate the moral code when they think there is one set of moral standards for individuals and another for companies. However, there is only one moral code, the same at home and at work.
2. Companies ought to have *higher* standards of morality than individuals, because a company's actions often affect more people than the actions of individuals.
3. A wrong does not become a right just because a group of individuals decides to do it.
4. A profit is a good thing, but it doesn't justify lying or cheating or hurting others. If a company can't do business morally, it shouldn't do business at all. The resources should go to companies that can be both moral and profitable.

He thought about what he had learned, and then he wrote:

*My personal goal*

*I don't want to live a bifurcated moral code.*

*And I want to work for a company that raises my moral standards.*

## Chapter Four: The Universal Moral Code

**A**rt and Ethel Duggins met John for lunch at the boathouse in the marina where their boat was moored. It was a sunny Saturday. Art and Ethel wore shorts, polo shirts, and sandals. John noticed their tans.

“What’s it like living on a boat?” John asked, looking out on the marina.

“It’s pretty snug,” Art said. “You have to boil life down to the essentials, because there’s not much room for stuff.”

“You become very aware of the natural elements—sun, wind, rain, waves,” said Ethel. “You notice the clouds. When you’re moored, you notice the rise and fall of the tides. It seems easier to be part of the rhythm of the natural world. I like it.”

“Sounds great,” John said.

Ethel nodded. “But you need to know one thing. See that building over there?”

“The condo?”

“Yes. We have an apartment there.”

“A safe place to retreat when it gets too hot, or too cold, or too stormy,” Art said. “We like nature, but not *too much* nature.”

John chuckled. “That sure makes sense to me.”

Art asked John about his work, and John told him of his dilemma. “Uncle Rick and I discussed how business should be about people helping people. It can be a calling. Lindsay Chang talked with me about how some business people have bifurcated the moral code, when in fact there is only one moral code, the same for individuals and for businesses. I asked her what was in the moral code, and she said I should talk to you.”

“Well, the way I look at it,” Art said, “the moral code has been well established for thousands of years, and it can be found everywhere.”

“How did you learn about the universality of the moral code?”

“We got interested in different cultures as we sailed around the world,” said Ethel. “We read history and anthropology and religion. We began to see the ways in which people are the same, not just the ways in which people are different.”

“Somewhere along the way, we decided to compile a list of ideas that we think make up the universal moral code,” Art said. “It became a sort of hobby.”

“It doesn’t include every possible rule or situation,” said Ethel. “We were just looking for the fundamental ideas that affect human relationships.”

“And that’s what morality is really about,” said Art. “It’s about how we treat each other as human beings. It’s about treating each

other thoughtfully and fairly.”

“Some people think that since each of us is different, and since cultures are different, each of us is likely to have a different morality,” said Ethel. “It is true that each of us is different, and cultures are different. Customs and rituals can vary dramatically, but there are basic concepts of morality that we share. These basic concepts cut across cultures and countries, and are fundamental to all of them.”

Ethel pulled out a three-ring binder. “It’s a simple list,” she said. “We boiled it down into two categories—not harming others, and doing good to others. Here is what we have so far.”

### **DO NOT HARM OTHERS.**

**Do not do to others what you would not like them to do to you.**

**Do not lie.**

**Do not steal.**

**Do not cheat.**

**Do not falsely accuse others.**

**Do not commit adultery.**

**Do not commit incest.**

**Do not physically or verbally abuse others.**

**Do not murder.**

**Do not destroy the natural environment upon which all life depends.**

### **DO GOOD TO OTHERS.**

**Do to others what you would like them to do to you.**

**Be honest and fair.**



**Be generous.**  
**Be faithful to your family and friends.**  
**Take care of your children when they are young.**  
**Take care of your parents when they are old.**  
**Take care of those who cannot take care of themselves.**  
**Be kind to strangers.**  
**Respect all life.**  
**Protect the natural environment upon which all life depends.**

John asked to look at the binder. He studied the list for a few minutes. “Do you have specific sources for these statements?”

“Sure,” said Ethel. “Our sources include five of the Bible’s Ten Commandments, the Code of Hammurabi, the Analects of Confucius, and Roman, Norse, Egyptian, Hindu, Taoist, Greek, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Islamic, and American Indian texts.”

“I am fascinated that you think that everyone understands the same basic moral principles,” John asked.

“Yes, most people understand them,” said Art. “Obviously, not everyone *interprets* them the same way, and not everybody lives up to them.”

“That’s right,” Ethel admitted. “Most people try, but not everybody succeeds. These basic moral principles can be hard to live by. Our moral sense can be overcome by our passion for power, or wealth, or fame, or sex. What is interesting is that even people who fail to live the moral code usually agree that they *should*.”

“I don’t know,” John said. “When you read the newspapers and watch the news on TV, it seems to be one long, unrelenting litany of murders and assaults and thefts and all kinds of wrongdoing.”

“But the point is that murder and assault and theft are in the news because they are unusual and shocking,” Ethel said. “Most people don’t act that way. They know those things are wrong.”

“But if there is so much agreement, why are there such fierce battles over moral issues?” John asked.

Art nodded. “Good question. I think that most of the battles are over how to *apply* the universal moral code. For example, ‘do not murder.’ Most people agree. But they don’t agree on whether war, or capital punishment, or abortion is murder. One reason that people fight so fiercely about these issues is that they accept the underlying moral principle, and want to prove that it is consistent with their own position.”

“So we agree at the most fundamental level, but we often disagree on how to apply the moral code in specific cases.”

“Yes. When it comes to applying the moral code, people often express different values and views. And we often argue about individual rights versus the rights of the community.”

Ethel pointed to the binder. “I think it is also interesting that there are negative statements and positive statements in the universal moral code. Some people think it is enough to not harm others. Many people think we should go further, and do positive good.”

“I think Ethel is referring to me,” Art said with a chuckle. “I have noticed I’m better at not harming others than at doing good to others. But I’m working on it.”

John closed the binder. “What kind of business are you in?” he asked.

“Well, we’re mostly retired now, managing our investments, and puttering around,” said Art. “But we started by selling boating equipment, including engines, and then we got into building and repairing boats, and then we got into building and operating marinas.”

“Did you do a lot of business overseas?” John asked.

“We set up operations in a number of different countries, but some we closed down later.”

“Not profitable?”

“Not comfortable,” Art said. “In some places, people have gotten used to business customs that we think are in conflict with the moral code. For example, places in which local officials and businesses expected us to pay them under the table for their cooperation.”

“They said that the payments were ‘gifts’ that they were entitled to in the daily course of business,” said Ethel. “They said it’s the way things were done. And yet, the fact that it was under the table, hush-hush, suggested to us that even in their own cultures, it wasn’t entirely acceptable. It wasn’t something they were proud of.”

“In any event, to us, they were asking for bribes and kickbacks,” Art said. “We didn’t feel good about it, so we stopped doing business there. Even if it was considered normal for them, it wasn’t moral for us. So we got out.”

“Did it hurt your business?”

“Yes, it did. We took some pretty heavy short-term losses, but it

didn't stop us from growing. We just focused on the markets in which we could do business in a manner that we thought was ethical."

"And you did okay."

"We did great!"

"We own this marina, for example," Ethel said. "And that condo, and several more marinas around the country. And we have a decent portfolio of stocks and bonds and other investments."

"I agree—you did great!"

John looked out at the boats.

"So as you traveled and worked around the world, you saw a universal moral code, based on two fundamental ideas— not harming others, and doing good to others."

"Right."

"And if that moral code is obvious, and has been well established, and is found all over the world, then it doesn't make sense to say there is a universal moral code that applies to individuals, but if they get together and form a company, they don't have to follow the moral code any more."

"No, it doesn't make sense. There's just one code," Ethel said, "and that moral code applies to businesses as well as individuals, because businesses are made up of individuals."

"It's odd how often we refer to a business or company as though it wasn't a group of people," said Art. "We say 'the company made

a decision.' But we all know that companies don't make decisions. *People* do. And those people can't hide behind a faceless corporate shield. They are still morally responsible as individuals for the decisions they make within the company."

"Right," Ethel said. "And the individuals who make company decisions should base their decisions on the universal moral code."

"And that code is the same in one's personal life and one's professional life," John said.

"Yes," Art agreed. "Living the same moral code at home and at work is what integrity is all about. You *integrate* your private life and work life so that you live the same values in both places. One life, one moral code. That's integrity."

John leaned back in his seat and thought for a moment. "But I still wonder whether a company that lives the moral code can be competitive. There are people at my company that imply that having high moral standards is a disadvantage in the marketplace."

Art laughed. "Quite the opposite. It's a huge advantage. And we know somebody who would enjoy talking to you about that. His name is Bob Hernandez. We know him because he keeps a boat here in the marina. He runs an advertising agency."

John took Bob's address and phone number, and promised he would call.

"And now— would you like to go for a sail?" Art asked.

"I'd love to!" John replied.

"Great. Let's go."



After an afternoon of sailing, John went home and wrote down some of the points he remembered from his discussion with Art and Ethel:

1. Each of us is different, and cultures are different, but there are some basic moral principles that we share, even though not everyone applies them in the same way.
2. There are two major categories in the universal moral code—do not harm others, and do good to others. Not everybody lives up to the moral code, but even people who fail to live up to it know that they should.
3. The same moral code applies to businesses as well as individuals, because businesses are made up of individuals. Companies don't make decisions—people do.
4. Living the same moral code at home and at work is what integrity is all about—a consistent, integrated moral life.

John thought about what he had learned, and then he wrote:

*My personal goal*

- I want to live a life of integrity. I want to live the universal moral code at home and at work.*
-

## Chapter Five: Moral Energy

**B**ob Hernandez met John for breakfast at a small restaurant near his office. Bob was in his thirties, and wore a beige suit with a splashy tie. He looked like he enjoyed weightlifting.

“I’ve never been here before,” John said as they were ushered to their seats. “But I really like the ads for this restaurant.”

“Thanks,” Bob said. “We enjoyed doing them.”

“The ads must have boosted their business.”

“They have. The ads are working so well, in fact, that it’s getting harder to get a reservation for lunch or dinner. I’m glad you could come for breakfast.”

John explained his situation at work, and the dilemma he was sorting out.

“Here’s where I am so far. Uncle Rick reminded me that business can be a calling. It’s about people helping people. And businesses can serve and even help build communities. Lindsay Chang pointed out that some business people bifurcate the moral code, and pretend that there is one moral code for individuals, and another one for businesses, when in fact there is only one moral code. Art and Ethel Duggins shared what they have learned about the moral code—how it is both fundamental and universal,

and applies to both individuals and companies. Integrity is about living the same moral code at home and at work.”

“Sounds like you’ve covered a lot of ground,” Bob said.

“Everyone has been a big help,” John said. “The one question that is bothering me now is whether a business that is really moral can be really successful. I have my doubts.”

Bob nodded. “Good. Here’s what I think. In the long run, only businesses that are really moral can be really successful. The other ones don’t do well, and most of them don’t last.”

“But the firms that cut corners, and are deceptive, can have an advantage in the marketplace,” John said.

“If they do, it doesn’t last long,” said Bob. “Here’s why. Morality is about how we treat each other. So a moral business treats people well—its employees, its customers, its business partners, its shareholders, and its community. Those are the people who make the business a success. If you treat them well, they will treat the business well.”

John nodded. “Tell me a little more about how that gives a business a competitive edge.”

“It’s a competitive edge in four ways,” Bob said. “When employees are treated well, they work harder and better, and are more loyal. When customers are treated well, they buy more products, and they tell their friends about them. When lenders and shareholders are treated well, the company will be able to attract more capital. When the community is treated well, it supports the needs and goals of the business.”



“So when you treat your employees, customers, shareholders, lenders, and community well, your business does well,” said John.

“That’s it in a nutshell,” said Bob. “I don’t see how you can be dishonest with your employees and expect them to perform well. I don’t see how you can defraud your customers, and expect them to keep coming back. I don’t see how you can mislead your shareholders or lenders, or have negative impacts on your community, and expect them to support your business.”

“Well, in the short term,” John said, “I guess some employees will stay, even if you treat them badly, because it is hard to find another job.”

“That’s a factor,” said Bob. “But if they stay, and are unhappy, they aren’t going to be as productive. You may keep their bodies on the job, but their hearts and minds won’t be there. And they will leave as soon as opportunities open up elsewhere.”

“When it comes to customers, I guess some businesses thrive on the idea that there’s a sucker born every minute.”

“Even if that were true, it wouldn’t mean that it’s right to take advantage of them,” Bob said. “And I don’t think suckers are a big market niche, anyway.”

“What about big companies?” John asked. “They can probably get away with *anything* in their communities, because they have such a big impact in terms of jobs and local purchasing power. And they usually have a lot of political clout.”

“Again, it’s not right to take advantage of a community, just because you can get away with it,” said Bob. “But if a company does take advantage, sooner or later there will be a backlash. It also

doesn't make sense to harm the surrounding community, because that is where most of your employees are going to live. To get and keep good employees, the surrounding community needs to be healthy and attractive. A big company has a stake in that."

Breakfast arrived, and they both dug in.

"What surprised me about my own situation is that, when the new management started doing things I thought were wrong, I felt like somebody had pulled the plug, and my spirit just drained away."

Bob nodded vigorously. "Exactly! Morality and morale are directly related. When morality goes up, morale goes up. When morality goes down, morale goes down."

John put down his knife and fork. "I guess that explains it."

"Sure. We know that when we are not moral, and are ashamed of what we are doing, our morale is low. We are not enthusiastic and we worry about the future. But when we are moral, when we live the universal moral code, then our morale is high. We are proud of what we are doing. We have enthusiasm for our work. We have confidence in our future."

"I told Uncle Rick that I was demoralized by what was going on in my company. So that's really the right way to explain how I feel: de-moralized. The moral basis of the company's life has eroded. And so has my enthusiasm for the job."

"You lost your moral energy?"

"Moral energy?"

“When you’re doing what you know is right, you just have more energy. You work better. Your relationships are better. You stand taller. You even sleep better. It really makes a difference.”

“I agree. But why is that the case?”

“Well, we know that people find more meaning in life when they are living their values and doing what they think is right. And finding meaning is important, because meaning is an intrinsic motivator. People who are intrinsically motivated are more productive, more innovative, more committed, and feel less stress than people who are not.”

“It makes sense. When you think about it, it’s pretty obvious.”

“Yes, it is,” Bob said. “Of course, there are a lot of reasons to do what is right. It can make your family and friends happy. It can make your school, and the justice system, and your church happy. But the point I want to make is that doing what’s right will also make *you* happy. It gives you a special kind of energy. Since the energy comes from doing what’s right, I call it *moral* energy.”

“And moral energy has very practical impacts.”

“Definitely. John, this is not about being preachy or acting like you are morally superior to others. This is about a simple fact of daily life, which is that people who have moral energy feel better and work better. They are also more likely to treat others well. That means better relationships with customers. People with moral energy are also less likely to burn out and leave the company. That’s better for them and for the business. After all, turnover is expensive for a business—you have to find and train replacements.”

“So when people have moral energy, it’s better for them, for

their customers, and for their company.”

“Yes, that’s what’s so great about it. It’s a triple win.”

“You sound like you’ve learned this first hand,” John said.

“Most people do,” Bob laughed. “We had a pretty dramatic situation two years ago. Our largest single client was a hardware chain. We had lots of fun doing ads for them. Then we found out that they were selling some shoddy stuff. The worst thing was the chain saw that they were selling. It was poorly designed, without standard safety features. A couple of customers got hurt—badly—when the saw malfunctioned.”

“What did the hardware chain do about it?”

“Well, we were shocked to learn that the management of the chain didn’t seem to care. The dangerous chain saw had a higher profit margin. They wanted us to design a public relations campaign that would counteract the bad publicity they were getting.”

“Did you?”

“Well, we had a big meeting, all fourteen of us in our firm, and discussed our options. We knew that the customers could sue and probably win in court, so they could get some justice. But the hardware chain wasn’t willing to address the moral issue. They weren’t willing to do what was right. So we decided that we didn’t want to have them as a client any more. We gave up the account, because we didn’t want to be associated with them.”

“That must have been tough on your business. How many people did you have to lay off?”

“Nobody,” Bob said. “We agreed that all of us would take pay cuts.”

“Wow!” John said. “Morale must have dropped dramatically.”

“That’s what I thought would happen, but the effect was exactly the opposite. Morale soared.”

“Even with pay cuts?”

“It’s true that none of us wanted a pay cut. It was hard. But people had been feeling demoralized by having to put a happy face on a client that we weren’t proud to serve. When we took a clear moral position, and acted on it, morale went way up. We were proud of our work again. And making the decision together was a kind of bonding experience. We all pulled together.”

“It must have been tough on the bottom line.”

“Yes, it was. It took us months to find new clients. But we had a lot of moral energy, and we did some really creative work when we made proposals on new accounts. Actually, some of our new clients came to us because they respected our decision to drop the hardware chain. This restaurant was one of our new customers.”

“That’s terrific! Bob, you’ve been really helpful. And breakfast was delicious!”

“My pleasure,” said Bob. “You have an important decision to make. Whatever you decide, I wish you the best.”



During his morning break, John wrote down some of the things he had learned from talking with Bob Hernandez:

1. Morality and morale are directly related. When morality goes up, morale goes up. When morality goes down, morale goes down.
2. In the long run, only businesses that are really moral can be really successful. A moral business treats people well—its employees, its customers, its shareholders and lenders, and its community. When employees are treated well, they work harder and better, and are more loyal. When customers are treated well, they buy more products and tell their friends about them. When shareholders and lenders are treated well, they are more likely to provide more capital for growth. When the community is treated well, it supports the needs and goals of the business.
3. People who live their values and do what is right find more meaning in their lives and work. They have moral energy, and are intrinsically motivated. People who are intrinsically motivated are more productive, more committed, more innovative, and feel less stress.
4. Moral energy has positive impacts on employees, the customers they serve, and the companies for which they work. It's a triple win.

John thought about what he had learned, and then wrote:

*My personal goal*

- I want to work for a business that is really successful because it is really moral. I want to enjoy a lot of moral energy in my life every day.*
- 
-

## Chapter Six:

# Finding Personal Meaning and Deep Happiness

**J**ohn felt good about what he had learned about morality and business. But before he made his decision, he wanted to think more about his future, and put the issues in the broadest perspective.

He called a woman whom he had known all his life. Aunt Marie wasn't really his aunt. She had been his next door neighbor when he was growing up. They called her "Aunt Marie" because she had been like a member of the family. He had kept in touch with her over the years. She was a kind, wise person. When he called, she invited him over to her house that evening.

"You know," John said after he was seated, "it really meant a lot to me to be able to come over and talk to you when I was a kid. Of course, I talked to my parents, too. But it was easier talking to you, because I knew you wouldn't scold me."

Marie laughed. "John, I knew that if you ever needed scolding, your parents would scold you, so I didn't have to. I could just enjoy having you around."

"Well," John said, "your advice meant a lot to me when I was young. And it still means a lot to me."



Aunt Marie smiled. “Well, John, I enjoyed watching you grow up. You have fine parents, and you turned out to be a fine person yourself.”

“Thanks.”

“But my guess is that you are here for a reason. Maybe a problem or dilemma of some kind.”

He laughed. “I guess you know me pretty well.”

“You have that anxious look in your eye. I remember the first time I saw that look. You were about eight years old, and you had just put a baseball through my kitchen window.”

John cringed. “I remember feeling really awful about that.”

“Yes, you looked really awful when you came to my door to face the music.”

“I remember you were very matter-of-fact about it. I apologized, you accepted my apology, we figured out the cost of fixing the window, and then I paid you in installments.”

“Yes, you were very faithful in your payments.” She got up and went to a cabinet, opened the drawer, and pulled out a large index card. “Here it is, the record of your payments.”

She gave John a big smile as she sat down again. “But I checked my windows before you came over tonight, and they all seem to be okay. So that anxious look on your face must come from something else.”

“Yes, something a little more complicated this time.”

Aunt Marie waited.

“It's about the company I work for,” John began. “We have new senior management. The president wants me to do something that I know is wrong. Something I consider immoral as well as illegal.”

Aunt Marie nodded her head. She listened carefully as John explained his dilemma, and what he had learned from the people he had talked to about it.

“John, I have lived a long time, and I know that not all moral dilemmas are equally important. Some are worth risking your career, and some are not. Sometimes the facts and consequences are hard to determine, so it's hard to make an informed decision. And other times, the choice is not between right and wrong, but between two wrongs, or even between two things that are both right. You already know the universal moral code. So the question is how to apply it in this particular situation.”

“Well,” John said, “This looks simple to me. What they are asking me to do is immoral and illegal.”

“Then you shouldn't do it,” Aunt Marie said. “The way I see it, you have to change the president's mind, or find an alternative solution, or resign.”

“Or get fired.”

“Maybe. But I would start by looking for alternatives. Is there a way to save money by introducing new technology that reduces the amount of waste, or finding a use for the pollutant so you can sell it rather than dump it? Can you tell the president that you need time to explore some possibilities that might be economically advantageous?”

“That’s possible. I could buy some time, and I might find an alternative. That would be great! But if I don’t, I still might get fired.”

“Then so be it. Why would you want to work for a company that wants you to do something that’s illegal and immoral? Life’s too short. Find a company that wants you to live high moral standards, not low ones.”

“Well, if they fire me, they probably won’t give me a good recommendation, so it will be harder to get another job. It could ruin my entire career.”

“Are you sure?”

“No, but it seems likely.”

“Then just resign. John, this is a bigger question than having a job. This is about who you are. And I don’t mean whether you are an engineer or a marketing specialist or a banker or a general contractor. This is about who you are inside, where it counts. This is about your character. This is about what you stand for. This is about finding a calling and being truly happy.”

“I was afraid of that,” John laughed.

Aunt Marie walked over to the living room window and looked out. “I don’t think I ever mentioned what happened to my husband,” she said. “He was bright, and full of enthusiasm, and willing to work hard. When he started his career, he wanted to make a lot of money. So he took the highest-paying job he could find. He did it well, so he moved up in the business. But he knew some of the things he was doing were not right, and his work literally made him sick. He had headaches, and nausea, and panic attacks. The

money was coming in, but he was miserable. And frankly, so was I. It was the worst period in our marriage.”

Aunt Marie continued staring out the window.

John waited, remembering how happy Aunt Marie and her husband had been together, during his last years.

“What happened?” he asked quietly.

“Well, I told him we needed to get away and talk. So we went away for a weekend, and talked about what we wanted most in life. I told him that the money just wasn’t that important to me. I told him he needed to find a business that he believed in, a business that was moral, and would bring out his best. I told him that his job was killing him, and that meant it was also killing me. I urged him to find a job that would make him truly happy, even if it paid less.”

Aunt Marie turned away from the window and looked at John. “That’s what he did. A few weeks later, he quit his job. It took him a while to find the new job he wanted, but he did, and the next thirty years were wonderful.”

Aunt Marie walked back to her chair and sat down.

“John, I’m not saying you have to quit your job. What I am saying is you can’t stay there at your company and let the moral issues eat at you and make you sick. You have to decide what to do. You and I both think that this moral dilemma is big enough to risk your job or consider resignation.”

“I wish it weren’t.”

“Me, too. But it fails all three of the tests I use to help me make moral decisions.”

“You use three tests?”

“Yes. I do my best to live the universal moral code, and moral issues are usually very clear to me. But if I ever find it difficult to make a decision, I try three tests that help me to do the right thing. The first one is the ‘could I tell the ones I love’ test. In your case, would you be proud to tell your family and friends that you agreed to pollute the river? These are people you love, who love you, and who expect the best from you. If you wouldn’t be proud to tell them what you have done, then don’t do it.”

“Sounds harder than looking at yourself in the mirror.”

Aunt Marie laughed. “I think you’re right. Your family and friends will give you feedback that a mirror just won’t give you.”

“And the second test?” John asked.

“That’s the newspaper test. It’s about your relationships with others outside your family—your colleagues and neighbors and the larger community. Would you be proud if your involvement in polluting the river were reported on the front page of the newspaper? Along with your photo, so people on the street would recognize you?

“Ouch.”

“And then there’s a third test, what I call the ‘looking back at the end of your life’ test. You have to imagine how you will feel at the end of your life about how you lived.”

“I’ve never thought about that before.”

“Well, I can tell you, from my own life and the lives of my friends, that when you reach your last years, what you will cherish is not how much money you made, or how much power you had, or how famous you were. What you will cherish is the time you spent with your family and friends. What you will cherish is how you loved and helped others. What you will feel good about is how you lived your values, and stood for the right things.”

John nodded. “Yes, that makes sense. But it’s not easy. The world is so complex. We get pushed and pulled from different directions. And we never know what is going to happen next. There are so many external variables we can’t control. It’s hard to evaluate our options and understand what the consequences of our choices will be.”

“I agree,” said Aunt Marie.

“It makes me feel a little helpless,” John said.

“That’s natural. But it’s not just about what the world does to you, it’s also about how you *respond* to what the world does to you. And you can always respond by doing the right thing.”

John nodded. “You can do the right thing *anyway*,” he said, pulling out his wallet and retrieving a small laminated card. Aunt Marie beamed.

“You still have it!”

“Of course,” he said. “The Paradoxical Commandments. You must have given me this little card ten years ago. I’m thinking about the tenth commandment right now: ‘Give the world the

best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth. Give the world the best you have anyway."

Aunt Marie chuckled. "The idea isn't that you'll always get kicked in the teeth. But if you do, you can respond in a way that is meaningful to you. Don't forget that each of us gets to decide who we are going to be and how we are going to live. We get to define ourselves. You are facing one of those defining decisions. Your decision will show us who you are."

"Hmmm," John said.

Marie leaned forward in her chair and looked intently at John.

"You know that when you live the universal moral code, you find a lot of meaning. You know that meaning is an intrinsic motivator. That's good. That gives you moral energy. But there's more. Finding meaning is also a key to being deeply happy. I want you to be deeply happy, John. I want you to have the kind of happiness that is so deep that it is unshakeable. I want you to have the kind of happiness that touches your spirit and connects with your soul. You deserve that kind of happiness."

"Thank you."

John thought about the decision that he had to make. "I think that whatever I do, there will be a cost."

"Yes. This may be one of those times that there is a cost. But I think the highest cost would be to look back at the end of your life and feel ashamed of what you did. If you do what's right, then when you look back at the end of your life, you won't have a lot of regrets. You may not have any."

“When you look back, do you have regrets, Aunt Marie?”

“Very few,” she said. “One of my only regrets is that I haven’t spent more time with my favorite unofficial nephew.”

They both stood, and John gave Aunt Marie a hug.

“I love you,” he said. “Take care of yourself.”

“I love you, too. And I’m not worried about you. I know you’ll make a good decision.”

“Thanks, Aunt Marie.”



John drove home, went to his desk, and wrote down some key points that Aunt Marie had shared:

1. We get to decide who we are going to be, and how we are going to live. Some moral decisions define who we are.
2. If you are struggling with a moral decision, there are three tests you can apply. The first is whether you would be proud to tell your family or friends. The second is whether you would be proud to see your decision reported on the front page of a newspaper. The third is imagining how you would feel about your decision when you look back on it at the end of your life.
3. At the end of your life, what you will cherish is not power, wealth, or fame, but the time you spent with your family and friends, and how you loved and helped others, lived your values, and stood for the right things.



4. When we live our values, and do what is right and good and true, we get a lot of personal meaning. Personal meaning is a key to being deeply happy.

John thought about what Aunt Marie had said, and he wrote:

*My personal goal*

- When I look back at the end of my life, I want to be proud of who I was and how I lived. I want to look back on a life filled with meaning, and have few if any regrets.*
- I want to experience deep happiness.*
-

## Chapter Seven: John's Decision

**J**ohn called Uncle Rick. He said he was available the next night, and he invited John to come over.

“So, how has it been going?” Uncle Rick asked when John had settled into the sofa in the living room.

“Great!” John replied. “I’ve had some really useful conversations.”

“And?”

“Let’s see. I’ve learned that business is about people helping people. I’ve learned that there is no justification for bifurcating morality into one set of rules for individuals and another for companies. I’ve learned that there is one fundamental moral code, and it is found around the world. Living by the universal moral code is actually good for business. Morality and morale are closely related. When you do the right thing, it gives you moral energy. Living a moral life can also give you personal meaning and deep happiness.”

Uncle Rick beamed. “I agree.”

“I’ve also been reminded that while I don’t control all the external variables in life, I control my inner life. I get to decide who I am going to be and how I am going to live. The decision I have to make

will be a defining decision.”

They sat quietly.

“Are you ready to make that defining decision?”

John inhaled deeply. “I guess I have been putting it off. Yes, I do have a decision to make.”

“What are the key factors in your decision?”

“Well, I want to apply some guidelines. From talking with you, I know I want to feel that my job is a calling. I want to work in a company that is focused on helping people, and being part of a larger community. From talking with Lindsay Chang, I know I want to work in a business environment that has high moral standards—one that may even *raise* my standards. I don’t want to live a bifurcated moral life. I want to live the universal moral code that Art and Ethel shared with me, and I want to feel that moral energy that Bob talked about. Aunt Marie reminded me of how important it is to find meaning in my work, because meaning is a key to being deeply happy. When I look back on at the end of my life, I want to be proud of who I was and how I lived. I don’t want many regrets.”

“Those are great guidelines,” Uncle Rick said. “Sounds like you learned a lot from all your meetings.”

“I really did.”

John was quiet for a moment as he remembered the people he had met.

“So what are your options?” Uncle Rick asked.

“Well, I can think of three options. First, I can stay at my company and try to make things better. I can look for moral alternatives. I can raise moral issues, and try to steer the company in a moral direction.”

“Which has its risks?”

“Yes, it does. I could be sidelined, or even fired. But I wouldn’t be abandoning ship. I could be creative, and I could speak up in a way that many of my colleagues want to speak up. I could make a difference.”

“And your second option?”

“Second, I can leave, and join a company that is moral. That would improve my morale!”

“It certainly would. Is there a down side?”

“It will depend on the market for my kinds of skills. I need to spend some time investigating what positions are available.”

“And your third option?”

“Well, my third option is that I could start my own company. If I had my own company, I could make sure the company is moral in all its dealings with employees, customers, and the community.”

“And the disadvantage?”

“Lots of business risk. More than half of all new companies fail within five years. I’d have to pick the right line of business, and work extremely hard—probably harder than I am working now.”

“Those sound like three good options,” Rick said. “I like them because there is a moral element in each one. They’re about making a business more moral, or joining a business that is already moral, or creating a moral business of your own. Whichever option you pick, your life will have a moral purpose. That will give you moral energy and a lot of personal meaning.”

“And as Aunt Marie told me, that personal meaning will give me the opportunity to be deeply happy.”

“Exactly,” Uncle Rick said.

John was silent for a long time.

Uncle Rick smiled at him.

“Which way are you leaning? Have you decided?”

John stood up, with a grin on his face.

“Yes, I’ve decided,” he said.

He told Uncle Rick what he was going to do.

+ + +

What would you do?

# Notes for the Reader

I wrote the first draft of this book after the scandals at Enron and other companies in 2001 and 2002. I worked on it again after the financial collapse of 2008. I continue to be shocked by the way that greed and ethical failures on the part of comparatively few people can cause so much harm to so many people. I am also concerned that living a moral life is often portrayed as dull and stoic. I think that living a moral life is energizing and meaningful, as well as a key to long-term business success.

The story told in *Morality and Morale: A Business Tale* is simple. However, it draws upon the experience, wisdom, and research of many individuals. These "Notes for the Reader" are offered to introduce the reader to some of the ideas behind the story.

There are many good books on morality and ethics in organizational life. Among others, I have enjoyed the following: Joseph L. Badaracco, Jr., *Defining Moments: When Managers Must Choose between Right and Right* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1997); Joseph L. Badaracco, Jr., *Leading Quietly: An Unorthodox Guide to Doing the Right Thing* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002); and Rushworth M. Kidder, *Moral Courage* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005). I have also enjoyed James Q. Wilson, *The Moral Sense* (New York: The Free Press, 1993).

For those interested in learning more, here are some notes, presented chapter by chapter, that may help you move forward.

## **Chapter One: John's Dilemma**

The example of a corporation polluting to save money is a real one for me. I came across it during my study of environmental law in law school, and in several environmental law cases as an attorney. As stated in the story, it was economically advantageous for companies to violate environmental regulations, because the fines cost less than the equipment they would have to buy to process the waste and reduce the pollution.

In my experience, John's dilemma is all too common, and not new. Years ago I was intrigued to come across a passage in *The Analects of Confucius* in which a government official was trying to decide if he should stay in a corrupt government and attempt to reform it, or leave the regime, and hope that it would fall, so that he could then rejoin the government and build it up in a virtuous fashion.

## **Chapter Two: Business Is a Way to Serve**

Uncle Rick is named for a long-time personal friend, Richard R. Clifton, who is a diehard fan of the Chicago Cubs. Rick and I practiced law in the same firm in the late 1970s. He is now a federal judge serving on the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.

The store referred to by Uncle Rick is based on Keith's General Merchandise, the store that my own grandparents ran in Curtis, Nebraska. My father grew up working in the store, helping customers and delivering goods to their homes. We visited my grandparents many summers when I was growing up, and my sisters and I enjoyed playing in the store, which had a little of everything—groceries, shoes, dry goods. My grandparents saw themselves as part of the community, and supported others during the depression. Grandma told me about a man who had lost his job, so they came up with some work for him to do, because he needed help

but wouldn't take charity. Curtis was—and still is—a small town. Grandma made it clear that some people didn't like each other, but they were still able to take care of each other.

On the higher purpose of business, I recommend Michael Novak, *Business as a Calling: Work and the Examined Life* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), and Charles Handy, *The Hungry Spirit: Beyond Capitalism: A Quest for Purpose in the Modern World* (New York: Broadway Books, 1998).

Uncle Rick is articulating the philosophy of servant leadership, which is based on service, and consists of key practices like listening to customers and developing your colleagues. Servant-leaders identify and meet the needs of others, inside and outside the organization. The modern servant leadership movement was launched by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1970 with the publication of his classic essay, *The Servant as Leader*. Greenleaf worked for AT&T from 1926 to 1964. Toward the end of his career he was Director of Management Research. It was his job to train and educate the leaders and managers of AT&T to be as effective as possible. He concluded that the most effective leaders were servant-leaders, focused on serving others. For an introduction to servant leadership, see Kent M. Keith, *The Case for Servant Leadership* (Westfield, IN: Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2008).

I believe that all organizations exist to serve others. They may obtain their revenues in different ways—sales, fees, donations, or taxes—but they exist to serve. Businesses that serve others are just as noble any other organization, and may in fact serve others *better* than government agencies or non-profits if the business stays close to the needs of their employees and customers. One of the challenges for government agencies and non-profits is to adapt to changing conditions.



While all organizations exist to serve, some businesses have defined their service very narrowly. Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer argue:

In recent years business increasingly has been viewed as a major cause of social, environmental, and economic problems. Companies are widely perceived to be prospering at the expense of the broader community... Companies must take the lead in bringing business and society back together... The solution lies in the principle of shared value, which involves creating economic value in a way that also creates value for society by addressing its needs and challenges. Businesses must reconnect company success with social progress. Shared value is not social responsibility, philanthropy, or even sustainability, but a new way to achieve economic success. It is not on the margin of what companies do but at the center.”

Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer, “Creating Shared Value: How to reinvent capitalism—and unleash a wave of innovation and growth,” *Harvard Business Review*, January-February 2011, 1-17.

Economists began promoting the idea of shareholder primacy in the 1970s, and many business schools teach their students in their first classes that the purpose of a for-profit corporation is to maximize shareholder wealth. However, shareholders do not own the corporation, they own shares. Those shares entitle them to vote for the board of directors. The law gives boards of directors the discretion to consider *all* the stakeholders—employees, customers, business partners, shareholders, creditors, communities, and the environment.

Unfortunately, some people mistakenly think that the law requires corporations to maximize shareholder wealth. Directors

who think that they must maximize shareholder wealth may be willing to violate their own personal ethics to do so. Research conducted by Jacob Rose on corporate directors and social responsibility concluded that “directors favor shareholder value over personal ethical beliefs and social good because they believe that current corporate law requires them to pursue legal courses of action that maximize shareholder value.” (Jacob M. Rose, “Corporate Directors and Social Responsibility: Ethics versus Shareholder Value,” in *Journal of Business Ethics*, (2007) 73: 319-331.) The consequences of this mistaken view can be devastating. For a full discussion, see the appendix on “The Shareholder Primacy Issue” in Kent M. Keith, *Servant Leadership in the Boardroom: Fulfilling the Public Trust* (Westfield, IN: Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2011).

A balanced view toward all stakeholders can be found in the Caux Round Table’s “Principles for Business,” which are a worldwide vision for ethical and responsible corporate behavior. The three ethical foundations are responsible stewardship, living and working for mutual advantage, and the respect and protection of human dignity. The first of the seven principles is to “respect stakeholders beyond shareholders.” This principle is elaborated as follows:

- A responsible business acknowledges its duty to contribute value to society through the wealth and employment it creates and the products and services it provides to consumers.
- A responsible business maintains its economic health and viability not just for shareholders, but also for other stakeholders.
- A responsible business respects the interests of, and acts with honesty and fairness towards, its customers, employees, suppliers, competitors, and the broader community.

The Caux Round Table has also established stakeholder management guidelines. In the introduction to the guidelines, the Caux Round Table stated:

The key stakeholder constituencies are those who contribute to the success and sustainability of business enterprise. Customers provide cash flow by purchasing goods and services; employees produce the goods and services sold; owners and other investors provide funds for the business; suppliers provide vital resources; competitors provide efficient markets; communities provide social capital and operational security for the business; and the environment provides natural resources and other essential conditions.

In turn, key stakeholders are dependent on business for their well-being and prosperity. They are the beneficiaries of ethical business practices.

More information about the Caux Round Table is available at [www.cauxroundtable.org](http://www.cauxroundtable.org).

Many people use Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* and the "invisible hand" to justify selfishness and greed. However, for Smith, free enterprise was not about greed, it was about efficiency and choices. When people have choices about where to work, and what to buy, at what price, the market will allocate resources more efficiently.

Smith was a moral philosopher, and thought that his best book was his *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, published in 1759, many years before *The Wealth of Nations*. Smith thought that human morality depends on sympathy between individuals and other members of society. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* begins with the following assertion:

How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortunes of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it, except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion we feel for the misery of others, when we either see it, or are made to conceive it in a very lively manner. That we often derive sorrow from the sorrows of others, is a matter of fact too obvious to require any instances to prove it; for this sentiment, like all the other original passions of human nature, is by no means confined to the virtuous and humane, though they perhaps may feel it with the most exquisite sensibility. The greatest ruffian, the most hardened violator of the laws of society, is not altogether without it.

Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 2000), 3.

I first came across the idea of a company as a community in Peter Drucker's book, *Concept of the Corporation*. He argued that the big business corporation is America's representative social institution, stating that "its social function as a community is as important as its economic function as an efficient producer." Peter F. Drucker, *Concept of the Corporation* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1946/2011), 140.

More recently, Henry Mintzberg has argued that "beneath the economic crisis lies another crisis of far greater proportions: the depreciation in companies of community--people's sense of belonging to and caring for something larger than themselves." Mintzberg says that community is "the social glue that binds us together for the greater good ... Community means caring about our work, our colleagues, and our place in the world, geographic and otherwise, and in turn being inspired by this caring." Henry

Mintzberg, "Rebuilding Companies as Communities," *Harvard Business Review*, July–August 2009.

### **Chapter Three: Group Morality and the Bifurcated Moral Code**

I have always been impressed by stories of people who stood against the crowd to do what is right. At an early age, I read *Profiles in Courage* by John F. Kennedy, and then *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau. I believe that most of us want to do what's right, but the desire to belong, to "get along by going along," can be intense and hard to resist. Rushworth Kidder, in *Moral Courage*, describes "the three-stranded braid that defines morally courageous action: a commitment to moral principles, an awareness of the danger involved in supporting those principles, and a willing endurance of that danger." Rushworth Kidder, *Moral Courage* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005), 7.

Research has shown that people are less likely to intervene to help others if they are part of a group of bystanders. Lone bystanders are more likely to help. James Q. Wilson observed: "When in a group we experience social inhibition against helping, that probably derives from a diffused sense of personal responsibility. It is as if each person in a group says to himself or herself, 'Maybe somebody else will do it.'" James Q. Wilson, *The Moral Sense* (New York: The Free Press, 1993), 37. It takes courage for individuals to act in spite of these social inhibitions.

### **Chapter Four: The Universal Moral Code**

I believe that there is remarkable agreement around the world regarding basic moral principles. The moral principles listed in the Universal Moral Code are not the only moral principles that we call upon to guide us in life. However, I believe that they are the most fundamental and universal.

There are a number of lists and compilations of moral principles and teachings from the world's great religions and spiritual teachers. For example, see *World Scripture: A Comparative Anthology of Sacred Texts* (A Project of the International Religious Foundation, Paragon House, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1995).

C. S. Lewis published a list of universal moral principles he called "Illustrations of the Tao or Natural Law" in the appendix of his book *The Abolition of Man* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1944/47). He quoted from Christian, Jewish, Egyptian, Babylonian, Roman, Old Norse, Greek, Hindu, Australian Aborigine, Chinese, and American Indian sources.

The Universal Moral Code includes five of the Ten Commandments of Moses, found in the Jewish Torah and the Christian Bible (Exodus 20). Those five are about how we should treat each other:

Honor your father and your mother.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

Perhaps the best-known universal moral principle is "the golden rule" or ethic of reciprocity. Its negative form is "do not do unto others as you would not have them do unto you." Its positive form is "do unto others as you would have them do to you." The golden rule can be found in Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, and Confucian texts, among others.

The Code of Hammurabi is one of the oldest moral/legal codes known to historians. Hammurabi was King of Babylon about 2250 B.C. The Code of Hammurabi has been translated into 282 sec-

tions that set forth business, family, social, and political rules. The sections include penalties for false accusations, adultery, incest, assault, medical malpractice, shoddy workmanship, and negligence. While some of the punishments are severe by today's standards, the moral positions established by the Code are understandable, and correlate well with many of our laws today. (See Robert Francis Harper, *The Code of Hammurabi, King of Babylon about 2250 B.C.* (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2002.)

More information about the Universal Moral Code can be found at [www.universalmoralcode.com](http://www.universalmoralcode.com).

## **Chapter Five: Moral Energy**

For many years, I have surveyed people about sources of meaning in their lives and in their work. Two sources of meaning that always get high ratings are “living my values” and “doing what’s right.”

Our own life experience and research suggest that these sources of meaning help us to be intrinsically motivated. We are intrinsically motivated when we do things because we want to do them, not because we have to do them. We do them because they are fun, or interesting, or fulfilling, or meaningful.

Dr. Kenneth W. Thomas identified a sense of meaningfulness as one of four intrinsic rewards in the workplace. He wrote:

A sense of meaningfulness is the opportunity you feel to pursue a worthy task purpose. The feeling of meaningfulness is the feeling that you are on a path that is worth your time and energy—that you are on a valuable mission, that your purpose matters in the larger scheme of things...

...Studies show that the intrinsic rewards are consistently

related to job satisfaction and to performance. These findings hold across types of organizations and for managers as well as workers. Studies have also shown that the intrinsic rewards are related to innovativeness, commitment to the organization, and reduced stress...

Managing for intrinsic rewards, then, has become the crucial next step in keeping good workers...We are now at the point where the biggest gains will come from systematically improving intrinsic rewards—making the work itself more fulfilling and energizing so that workers don't want to leave it.

See Kenneth W. Thomas, *Intrinsic Motivation at Work: Building Energy & Commitment* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2002).

Acknowledging and fulfilling a worthy task purpose, like making the world a better place, has very practical impacts on organizational performance. An article in the *Harvard Business Review* pointed out that high-commitment, high-performance CEOs "understand that being part of an enterprise that is helping to create a better world unleashes the commitment and energy of their people." Russell A. Eisenstat, Michael Beer, Nathaniel Foote, Tobias Fredberg, and Flemming Norrgren, "The Uncompromising Leader," in *Harvard Business Review*, July-August 2008, 2-9.

## **Chapter Six: Finding Personal Meaning and Deep Happiness**

The "Aunt Marie" in this chapter is fictional, but she was inspired by a real person, Marie Thomas, whose family lived next door to ours in Vista, California in the late 1950s and early 1960s when I was in the fifth through seventh grades. Although my family moved many years ago, Marie has stayed in touch, and she and my mother remain friends to this day.



I believe that each of us can be and should be deeply happy. By that I mean the kind of happiness that touches your spirit and connects with your soul. It is hard to describe. Some people call it self-fulfillment, or self-actualization, or being centered. Others call it living their passion, or following their bliss. For people of faith, it is about finding the divine will for their lives, and then living that will.

I believe that seeking deep happiness is not selfish. We should not seek to be deeply happy *instead* of others or *at the expense* of others. We should be deeply happy so that we will be at our best, and will be able to help others to be deeply happy and at their best, as well. When we experience deep happiness, we become more loving, more giving, more patient, more enthusiastic. We become a gift to others. So we should be deeply happy for their sake as well as ours.

It is clear that personal meaning is a key to being deeply happy. Richard Layard stated that “people who achieve a sense of meaning in their lives are happier than those who live from one pleasure to another.” Layard quoted a study that showed that other factors that correlate with happiness and life satisfaction are autonomy, positive relationships, personal growth, and self-acceptance. Richard Layard, *Happiness: Lessons from a New Science* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005).

Dennis Prager said that “happiness can be attained under virtually any circumstances providing you believe that your life has meaning and purpose.” Dennis Prager, *Happiness Is a Serious Problem* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1998).

Dan Baker and Cameron Stauth said that “happy people know why they’re here on earth. They’re doing the things they were meant to do. If they died today, they would be satisfied with their lives.” Dan Baker and Cameron Stauth, *What Happy People Know*:

*How the New Science of Happiness Can Change Your Life for the Better* (Emmaus, Pennsylvania: Rodale, 2003).

Tal Ben-Shahar teaches a popular course at Harvard on positive psychology. In his book *Happier*, he wrote that happiness is “the overall experience of pleasure and meaning.” Meaning comes from having a sense of purpose. He said:

A happy person enjoys positive emotions while perceiving her life as purposeful. The definition does not pertain to a single moment but to a generalized aggregate of one’s experiences: a person can endure emotional pain at times and still be happy overall.

...To live a meaningful life, we must have a self-generated purpose that possesses personal significance rather than one that is dictated by society’s standards and expectations. When we do experience this sense of purpose, we often feel as though we have found our calling. As George Bernard Shaw said, ‘This is the true joy of life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one.’

Tal Ben-Shahar, *Happier: Learn the Secrets to Daily Joy and Lasting Fulfillment* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007).

Over the past ten years, I have surveyed thousands of people on the sources of meaning in their lives. The sources of meaning that almost always get the highest ratings are family, giving and receiving love, intimate relationships, living my values, doing my personal best, and a sense of accomplishment. The lowest-rated sources of meaning are always the symbols of success that our secular, commercial society promotes so heavily: power, wealth, fame, and winning. People are not necessarily against these symbols of success, but they know they aren’t important sources of meaning. It is not enough to get ahead. We also need to get meaning.

As a teenager, I first read a poem that dramatically makes that point. The poem is “Richard Cory,” and it was written by Edwin Arlington Robinson:

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,  
    We people on the pavement looked at him:  
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,  
    Clean favored, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,  
    And he was always human when he talked;  
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,  
    “Good morning,” and he glittered when he walked.

And he was rich—yes, richer than a king,  
    And admirably schooled in every grace:  
In fine, we thought that he was everything  
    To make us wish that we were in his place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,  
    And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;  
And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,  
    Went home and put a bullet through his head.

The good thing about focusing on meaning is that we can always find it, no matter what is happening in the world around us. That is the message of the Paradoxical Commandments that I wrote in 1968, when I was a college sophomore. Here they are:

1. People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered. Love them anyway.
2. If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives. Do good anyway.

3. If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway.
4. The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.
5. Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway.
6. The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds. Think big anyway.
7. People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs. Fight for a few underdogs anyway.
8. What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. Build anyway.
9. People really need help but may attack you if you do help them. Help people anyway.
10. Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth. Give the world the best you have anyway.

Over the years, I have published four books related to the commandments. The two secular books are *Anyway: The Paradoxical Commandments* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2002) and *Do It Anyway: Finding Personal Meaning and Deep Happiness by Living the Paradoxical Commandments* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2008). The two religious books are *Jesus Did It Anyway: The Paradoxical Commandments for Christians* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2005) and *Have Faith Anyway: The Vision of Habakkuk for Our Times* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008).

More information about the Paradoxical Commandments is available at [www.paradoxicalcommandments.com](http://www.paradoxicalcommandments.com).

## **Chapter Seven: John's Decision**

I intentionally left open the ending of the story, and turned the question to the reader. My own opinion is that there is no single answer for everyone, because our situations vary. We don't all have the same background, skills, values, motivations, and opportunities. Some of us are better at dealing with adversity; some of us are more entrepreneurial; some of us have a stronger desire for security; and so forth. The decision we make may also depend on where we are in our own life cycle, which may affect our willingness to take risks, our ability to start over, and our desire to leave a legacy. It is my hope that because the question is open, readers will think about their own answers and engage others in a discussion that will yield some rich and mutually beneficial insights.

# Acknowledgments

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## About the Author

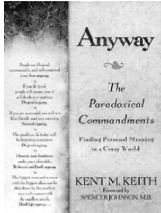


Dr. Kent M. Keith is the CEO of the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership. He has been an attorney, a state government official, a high tech park developer, a university president, a YMCA executive, and a full-time speaker and author. He earned a B.A. in Government from Harvard University, an M.A. in Philosophy and Politics from Oxford University, a Certificate in Japanese from Waseda University, a J.D. from the University of Hawaii, and an Ed. D. from the University of Southern California. He is a Rhodes Scholar.

Dr. Keith is known internationally as the author of the *Paradoxical Commandments*, which he first published in 1968 in a booklet for student leaders. He is the author of four books about the commandments, including *Anyway: The Paradoxical Commandments*, which became a national bestseller and was translated into 17 languages. He is also the author of two Greenleaf Center books, *The Case for Servant Leadership* and *Servant Leadership in the Boardroom: Fulfilling the Public Trust*. Over the years, Dr. Keith has given more than 1,000 conference papers, keynote addresses, and seminars. He has been featured on the front page of *The New York Times* and in *People* magazine, *The Washington Post*, and *The San Francisco Chronicle*. He has been quoted in *The Wall Street Journal* and *Inc.com*. More information about Dr. Keith is available at [www.kentmkeith.com](http://www.kentmkeith.com). He can be contacted at [drkentkeith@hotmail.com](mailto:drkentkeith@hotmail.com).

# Other books by Dr. Kent M. Keith

## Paradoxical Commandments

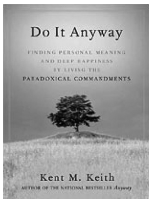


### **Anyway: The Paradoxical Commandments**

by Kent M. Keith  
(G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2002).

The Paradoxical Commandments were first written by Kent Keith in 1968, when he was 19, as part of a booklet for student leaders. The commandments subsequently spread around the world, and have been used by millions of people. This book is an introduction to the Paradoxical Commandments and

what they mean. It was a national bestseller in the United States, and has been translated into 17 languages.

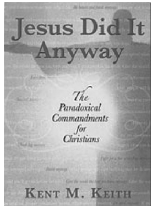


### **Do It Anyway: Finding Personal Meaning and Deep Happiness by Living the Paradoxical Commandments**

by Kent M. Keith  
(Inner Ocean Publishing, 2003; New World Library, 2008).

This book is a companion to *Anyway: The Paradoxical Commandments*. It describes how people have used the Paradoxical Commandments to break away from their daily excuses, or a

painful past, or a complicated present, to find meaning anyway. This is a practical "how to" book for those who want to put the Paradoxical Commandments into practice in their own lives. The book includes forty stories about people who are living the commandments; questions for personal reflection and group discussion; and an interview with the author in which he answers the questions he is asked most often about the commandments.



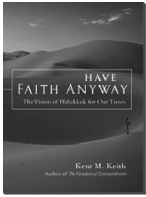
### **Jesus Did It Anyway: The Paradoxical Commandments for Christians**

by Kent M. Keith  
(G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2005).

For more than forty years, the Paradoxical Commandments have been used by Christians all over the globe. Mother Teresa thought they were important enough to put on the wall of

her children's home in Calcutta. *Jesus Did It Anyway* illustrates the Paradoxical Commandments through stories and verses from both the Old Testament and the New Testament, the teachings of Jesus and the apostles, and personal anecdotes. The 14-chapter book includes a study guide with questions for each chapter.



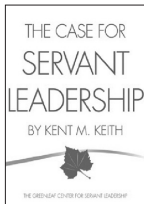


## **Have Faith Anyway: The Vision of Habakkuk for Our Times**

by Kent M. Keith  
(Jossey-Bass, 2008).

*Have Faith Anyway* explores the author's new eleventh Paradoxical Commandment: *The world is full of violence, injustice, starvation, disease, and environmental destruction. Have faith anyway.* To help the reader better understand what it is like to have faith in the face of seemingly insurmountable problems, the author tells the story of the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk, whose vision of a conversation with God led him to an inspiring affirmation of faith even in the face of devastation and death. The book concludes with the author's own vision of a conversation between a Christian and God today. The book includes a Readers Guide for Reflection and Study.

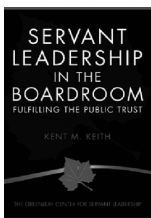
## **Servant Leadership**



### **The Case for Servant Leadership**

by Kent M. Keith  
(Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2008)

This book explains the ways in which servant leadership is ethical, practical, and meaningful. It discusses the universal importance of service, defines servant leadership, compares the power model of leadership with the service model, describes seven key practices of servant-leaders, and explores the meaningful lives of servant-leaders. It includes questions for reflection and discussion.



### **Servant Leadership in the Boardroom: Fulfilling the Public Trust**

by Kent M. Keith  
(Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2011)

This book presents and augments the views of Robert Greenleaf on the opportunity of board members of all types of corporations—for-profit and non-profit—to truly lead and make a difference for their organizations and those their organizations serve. The book provides historical background on the public purpose of all corporations, the responsibilities of board members as trustees for the public good, the unique value of board judgments, the relationship between the board and administration, and keys to board effectiveness, including the board as a “council of equals” that focuses on what matters most, asking fundamental questions and seeking information about how well the organization is serving its employees and society at large.

## High School Student Council Leadership



### **The Silent Revolution: Dynamic Leadership in the Student Council**

by Kent M. Keith  
(Harvard Student Agencies, 1968;  
Terrace Press, 2003)

This is the book for which Dr. Keith wrote the Paradoxical Commandments, 149 words that have spread all over the world and have been used by millions of people of all ages and backgrounds. The book was first published in 1968, when Dr. Keith was 19, a sophomore in college. In the book, Keith encourages student leaders to work together, through the system, to achieve positive, lasting change. He believes that students councils can, and should, make a difference. He explains the need to love people, and do what is meaningful and satisfying, whether you get credit or not. He uses hypothetical stories to describe practical leadership skills and dilemmas, argues that the “good guys” can win, and urges students to take action now. “Don’t veg-etate,” he says. “Initiate.”



### **The Silent Majority: The Problem of Apathy and the Student Council**

by Kent M. Keith  
(National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1971;  
Terrace Press, 2004)

Dr. Keith was 20, a junior in college, when he wrote this book as a companion to his first book, *The Silent Revolution: Dynamic Leadership in the Student Council*. Keith says: “*The Silent Majority* is written from high school student council leaders who want to give the student council its noblest meaning and purpose: people helping people.” Keith argues that no one is completely apathetic—everyone is interested in *something*. It’s up to student leaders to find out what their fellow students are interested in, and then link up with those interests. In the process, student leaders will learn more about themselves, and discover the richness of life that is available to those who become “people people.”