

Carl
Lindeborg

The Authentic Shift

Inner Development
for a Changing World

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**Inner Development for
a Changing World**

Books for a Change

Books by Carl Lindeborg

Ditt briljanta jag – Skapa livet inifrån och ut
[Your Brilliant Self – Creating Life From the Inside Out] (2007)

Modig – Konsten att övervinna sina vardagsrädslor
[Brave – The Art of Overcoming Everyday Fears] (2009)

The Authentic Shift – Inner Development for a Changing World (2023)

To Cornelia, Leopold and Julia

To growing

To all who dare to tread new paths



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Advance Praise for The Authentic Shift

If you want to invite your soul into a conversation and travel deep into the labyrinths of personal development, this book is a great tour guide.

CHRISTER ACKERMAN, AUTHOR OF *THE MANAGER* AND *THE EMPLOYEE*

Another must-have book from Carl Lindeborg. Carl has an enormous ability to connect different worldviews, personal experiences and theories into a journey that inspires and helps the reader to find their own core.

JONUS BARTHOLDSON, CEO PULSEN GROUP

Have you ever read a book, taken a course or met someone in whose company you feel a door opening a crack? A door to something that seems both familiar and completely new at the same time. Have you experienced that tingling feeling of standing there with your hand on the door handle and feeling a little twinge of curiosity? That certainty that here is an opportunity to grow, to see yourself and the world in a new light! That's exactly the feeling I get when I read *The Authentic Shift*.

I have long been interested in adult development, and combining theory with method in this way makes Carl's book one of the most important I have read.

LISELOTTE J BATE, CULTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER, GRANITOR

The Authentic Shift is a book that aims to make the reader look deep inside. In an increasingly complex and stressful world, Carl Lindeborg wants us to stop and get in touch with ourselves on a deeper level. With interesting anecdotes, reflection exercises, theories, research and personal examples, the book takes us on an inner journey that is almost like a mental workout. At the end, the reader will find new strategies to achieve a higher degree of meaningfulness. I recommend this book to anyone who wants to be a better leader, partner, person and – above all – a better friend to themselves.

MADELEINE BREHMER, CEO AND OWNER OF SABIS

The world is on the brink of a paradigm shift driven by climate change, geopolitical tensions, and an AI technological revolution. And today's business leaders still need to make decisions in this reality of exponentially increasing complexity, unpredictability, and volatility.

To lead in this environment requires new set of skills, it requires an upgrade of our mental and self-leading capabilities. In *The Authentic Shift* I could easily relate to the author's life reflections, get deep insights into the neural mechanisms driving our behaviours and reactions and most importantly start using the excellent practical tools immediately. For the first time, I feel fully equipped to start my own internal journey: to upgrade myself to thrive as a sustainable leader in this new reality.

ANNICA BRESKY, BOARD EXECUTIVE AND FORMER PRESIDENT AND CEO OF STORA ENSO

Carl gives us the unique tools to dig into ourselves and discover an authentic leadership, the type of leadership we need to navigate the multifaceted future we face. The needs of people and planet are colliding with today's structures, and we need to challenge and change them.

The Authentic Shift helps us find the confidence to do so.

VANESSA BUTANI, VP GROUP SUSTAINABILITY, ELECTROLUX

Following Carl's previous books on self-discovery (*Your Brilliant Self*) and daring to be great (*Brave*), this book gives you an insight into the author's own developmental journey. It's also a fantastic collection of tools and methods for making that shift. So what are you waiting for?

MATS EKLUND, FOUNDER OF ENCOURAGE

Our mental state determines how we deal with unpredictability, turbulence, challenges and opportunities. *The Authentic Shift* invites the reader to embark on an exciting exploration of how we can develop our inner selves and our personal abilities, and also take advantage of the opportunities for growth that all our life journeys offer. Carl Lindeborg generously shares his extensive experience, which gives the book personality and credibility. With its clear, pedagogical structure, it gives readers practical guidance with helpful keys and exercises that facilitate moving from theory to action.

GÖRAN GENNVI, EXECUTIVE COACH AND TRANSFORMATION ENABLER

The book offers a clear, simple and practical guide to personal development at a profound level. The premise, to acquire the ability to make decisions that are sustainable in the long term beyond myself in a complex and accelerating world, is attractive and interesting. I am encouraged by the author's wisdom, seasoned with his own experiences and stories. If you take yourself and *The Authentic Shift* seriously, it offers an endless source of breakthroughs and transformations – on many levels.

JENNY HAGMAN, HEAD OF LEADERSHIP AND COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT, SSAB

An incredibly instructive and inspiring book that has given me many new tools that I will benefit greatly from in the future. Not only as a leader but also as a friend, colleague and mother. The book has given me new perspectives, guidance and an opportunity to take a further step in my development as a human being. Thank you so much, Carl!

HELENA HESSLE, CO-FOUNDER OF ZOZIUM

The Authentic Shift is an important reminder that we never stop developing and that we constantly need to reflect on how we can refine ourselves and our impact on the world around us. It is clear that Carl Lindeborg has spent a long time reflecting on this and has also undertaken development as an adult that has left important impressions well worth reading about and reflecting on.

JOHAN LASSING, CEO, QAMCOM

Within the first few paragraphs, Carl Lindeborg grabs my hand and then leads me through a jungle of thoughts where everything falls into place. A unique depiction of rational thoughts, emotional insights and reality. If more people can embrace these thoughts, from humankind's connection to nature and our inherited instincts, to the strengths of both halves of our brain, the future will be a brighter place. Let go, dare to be guided and find a new perspective.

MICHAEL LEMMEL, PATHFINDER AND FOUNDER OF THE SPORT SWIMRUN

A sustainable transformation of the world will be much more difficult unless people can find themselves and be guided by good values. In his book *The Authentic Shift*, Carl Lindeborg provides concrete tools for this journey. Examples from science, philosophy and his own long career are combined with concrete exercises in a book that never gets boring.

GUSTAF LIND, CEO, WWF SWEDEN

With insightful perspectives and thought-provoking reflections, Carl shows how your actions shape the world and how you can navigate both internal and external challenges. For all of you who want to move towards a meaningful and conscious future – here is a goldmine of tools that will lead you to a deeper understanding of yourself and the world.

SOFIA LINDMAN, FUTURE OF WORK EXPERT AND KEYNOTE SPEAKER

The Authentic Shift is a tough but necessary read that allows you as a leader to find your hidden abilities and gives you the tools to practise them. It is through the opportunity to grow as a person that we can help others. Therein lies the leadership of the future. Read, practise and re-read.

JON LEO RIKHARDSSON, CEO, HSB SÖDERMANLAND

An exciting journey of discovery with rich language and practical exercises that have helped me further my work as a leader. If you are interested in leadership and curious to blaze new trails, I recommend you read this!

JENNY RUNDBLADH, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT STOREBRAND GROUP ASA

In today's reality, where crises are constantly occurring, more and more leaders are beginning to realise that leadership must be based on an authentic core in order to be able to lead. I have had the privilege of working with Carl Lindeborg for over a decade, and have learnt all I can from him. This book summarises and expands on all that Carl does for organisations. It is not a shortcut, because there is no such thing; the work will have to be done by the reader. But it is the most honest and best guide to authentic leadership I believe can be written. I highly recommend it!

ANNA SERNER, BOARD EXECUTIVE AND FORMER CEO OF THE SWEDISH FILM INSTITUTE

Carl is a master at transforming complex theories into practical steps and combining intellect with heart. *The Authentic Shift* is a thorough guide for those who want to live more from the heart.

SOFIA SIVERTSDOTTER, AUTHOR

Humanity is facing such great challenges at the moment that many of us need to achieve a whole new level of personal development to meet the accelerating complexity these challenges bring. In *The Authentic Shift*, Carl Lindeborg systematically guides those who want to help create a meaningful future for themselves and others, in a way that both demands and gives a bit more. Like a warm pat on the back for those who have already come a long way and think big, but who still want to take the next step.

JOHAN SKÖLD, SERIAL ENTREPRENEUR AND INVESTOR

Carl offers a framework and concrete tools that have been invaluable for me to better understand others, but perhaps most importantly to better understand and develop myself. I can highly recommend the book for those who seek continuous development.

ANDREAS STENBÄCK, CEO VOLATI

We are living in a time when old meets new – in terms of technologies as well as ways of thinking. Fossil fuels versus solar and wind. Short-termism and self-interest versus long-termism and public interest. The transformation that needs to occur requires maturity in more and more of our leaders, or it simply will not happen. Carl Lindeborg's new book helps anyone who wants – and dares – to achieve the insight and motivation that will make us positive agents of change in a time when the alternative is economic, social and ecological crisis.

ANDERS WIJLMAN, HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE CLUB OF ROME

If you are going to read one book for your own development, I highly recommend *The Authentic Shift*. It is a handbook for those who want to understand what it means to be part of the new and necessary paradigm of leadership. Humanity is facing an existential crisis and the book provides some of the answers for how you can be a force for the change required. It provides the reader with a mix of research, personal stories and practical exercises that will develop your inner self and provide new perspectives on how to develop as a leader and a human being.

LASSE WRENNMARK, FOUNDER OF COMPANIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

Carl's book provides a qualified and comprehensive guide to transforming yourself in a tangible and enriching way. Rarely has so much deep knowledge been offered in such a concise and accessible way. Whether you are experienced or young, manager or employee, or simply a human being in an exponentially more complex world – this is a book you will wish you hadn't waited to read.

CHRISTIAN ZUBOR, CEO AND PARTNER, DAROW

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Introduction

I HAD ARRIVED where I had thought I wanted to go. I had worked hard and purposefully towards a destination I thought was mine, but I found myself in a place where I didn't want to be.

During a dark and foggy winter in Brussels, I was working on another consultancy project. It was about downsizing in a large company. Ten years of effort had brought me here, to the big arena, to skill and confidence in the role of management consultant, to financial freedom and expensive interests, to airport lounges, business class and countless taxi rides. To what I thought was success and happiness in life.

I had long been convinced that this was the right path, but now for the first time I began to have doubts. My body already knew. During my time in Brussels, while building a large Excel model, working long hours and staying luxuriously in the hotel's biggest suite, I had a bad cold. It was the kind of cold that should mean resting in bed, but that could still be defied with work and activity. Of course, a cold is nothing special. It's just that this time it never went away. Week after week it lingered, and after a couple of months I finally started to interpret it as a sort of ultimatum from my own body.

The journey to this point had been intense and demanding. Sometimes painful, but often fun and exciting. The dopamine was flowing and I'd had plenty of kicks from it, but their effects vanished faster and faster, just to be replaced by the desire for the next kick. In Brussels another feeling came that was new to me. At first it was subtle and easy to shake off, but it returned and grew in intensity.

Reluctantly, I finally realised that the feeling was emptiness. It seemed to tell me in a low but persistent voice that I needed to stop running after the next thing and the next kick, and instead just stop. Stop and actually admit to myself that something important was missing from my life.

Just a few days after the end of that project, I'm on a small plane on my way to Laos in Southeast Asia. After much hesitation, I have finally decided to listen to my body's signals and emotions and take a longer break. I've been granted three months' leave of absence. I've left my phone and computer at home. All I have with me is a small backpack with the essentials and a big question about what is missing inside me.

Next to me on the plane sits a large man with a shaved head. It turns out he runs a company in Amsterdam. Once a year he goes on a retreat to a Buddhist monastery in Laos. 'To reboot', he explains, and tells me how these days equip him to better fulfil his mission as a leader, while remaining sustainable and harmonious in himself as a human being. I had decided to be open to anything that might come up on my journey, and when he asks if I want to go with him to the monastery, I say yes.

The next day we're walking along a muddy road through lush vegetation and eventually arrive at a small temple building on the outskirts of the World Heritage city of Luang Prabang. We open the door and see that the monks are already gathered. They are sitting in rows on the floor, backs straight, chanting in undulating monotone unison. We sit at the back. It is beautiful, almost hypnotising and, to me, completely surreal. The contrast with the environment I am used to is almost brutal.

When the session is over, the younger novices approach me. They invite me into their simple room with its earthen floor. They bring out water and dry biscuits and ask questions about me and my world. But they are, of course, completely uninterested in promotion rates, nightclub scenes or designer clothes. They ask about other things that are more philosophical and I feel that they really

see me as a fellow human being. It feels somehow liberating, as if a previously unconscious façade that I've been keeping up is suddenly starting to crumble.

AFTER THE EXPERIENCE in the temple, I slowly began to realise something – which might be obvious to an outside observer, but was still shrouded in mystery to this ambitious twenty-seven-year-old version of myself. I realised that in the midst of striving for achievement, goals and external validation, I had lost the most important thing: what really makes life worth living. I had lost my sense of deeper meaning and I had lost touch with the light-hearted, playful side of myself. Life had become routine and too serious, and I had become someone who was not all I could be.

These realisations helped me to see that I had unconsciously built up a façade of how I thought I had to be in order to be appreciated and admired. The insecure, validation-seeking part of me had been hiding behind a driven, professional and confident face, which had indeed carried me forward at full speed, but now felt painfully limiting.

These thoughts opened a new door within me, a door that never can close again. The emptiness was starting to be replaced with a longing for something deeper, something greater. I suddenly felt an almost irrepressible desire to find my authentic self and a place where life was connected from the inside out.

A few days after my experience in the little temple, I wake up in the room of my simple hostel, which is truly as far as you can get from the hotel suite I had become accustomed to, with its three unnecessary television sets. After a while, I notice something feels different. I realise that the sniffles I've had for so long are almost gone, the habitual sore throat no longer exists, no matter how hard I try to feel it, and my head feels clearer again. After three long months, the cold has finally let go. My body had asked a clear question and something inside me had finally answered.

IT'S BEEN TWENTY years since this first awakening to a deeper and more authentic dimension of myself. The exploration of leadership and personal development has been the common thread in my life ever since. I still find this field incredibly exciting and my experience is that it is perhaps now more relevant and important for us to invest in than ever before.

For a few years after the experience in Laos, I continued to backpack for long periods of time. In between, I worked as a personal trainer and mental coach. The trips were often to inaccessible and unfamiliar places, and all the impressions I got and lessons I learnt along the way eventually became like a second higher education. A life education that contained everything my economics degree had not taught me. I encountered foreign cultures, participated in development programmes with innovative teachers, and spent a lot of time by myself. I searched for the keys to my own potential, as well as for insights, methods and tools that could help more people on their journey through life.

The experiences I gained led to a long series of columns on personal leadership in *Affärsvärlden*, a leading business magazine in Sweden, and then to the books *Ditt briljanta jag* (Your Brilliant Self) and *Modig* (Brave), both published in the late 2000s. Since then I have focused on the arena I started in and have worked with leadership, change and development in organisations, especially in the business world. Over the years, I have had the privilege of meeting and working with thousands of leaders from hundreds of different organisations, both in Sweden and abroad. Many I have met through my roles as programme director and faculty at SSE Executive Education, Oxford Leadership and Companions for Leadership. There have also been many guest lectures in different contexts, for everyone from high school students in Sweden to MBA students at Harvard Business School.

Many people I've met along the way say personal development is a priority for them. The vast majority also agree it is increasingly important to invest in their own development in order to keep up

and be both sustainable and relevant in the accelerating times we live in. But if personal development is so central to so many, what kind of development do they actually mean? It depends, of course, but one type of fundamental development or growth that we humans unconsciously or consciously engage in during our life's journey is captured in the concept of adult development. This book has been created and designed with precisely this developmental dynamic in mind.

Towards the Next Wave of Human Development

If you step into your own shoes ten or twenty years ago and compare yourself with the here and now version, you can most probably recognise how you are something more today. You have grown and developed compared to, say, when you started working, became a parent for the first time or went through a difficult period. You have learnt more about yourself and gained new perspectives and resources that your younger self had not yet developed. This maturity makes you interpret and relate to certain types of events, challenges and opportunities differently and perhaps in a more resourceful and nuanced way than you would have done earlier in your life.

It is this type of growth that adult development theory seeks to capture and describe. This theory emerged in the mid-20th century and recognises that we as humans are by no means finished with our development when we leave our teen years, but can continue to grow throughout our lives. Interestingly, our development seems to go through clearly distinguishable stages. Each new stage of development builds on the previous one, changing the way we create meaning in our lives and how we understand ourselves and the world around us.

Psychology professor Clare W. Graves and psychologist Jane Loevinger are some of the pioneers who created research-based

theories on how the adult self develops in stages. In recent decades, Robert Kegan, a psychologist and professor at Harvard, has been instrumental in describing the developmental potential in all of us from an academic perspective. My own understanding of the dynamics of adult development has developed through exposure to many sources, once of them being studies and collaboration with David Rooke, who co-authored the article ‘Seven Transformations of Leadership’ in the Harvard Business Review and developed one of the most widely used profile tools in the field: the Leadership Development Framework.

In recent years, as the world has become increasingly complex, adult development theory has received more and more attention from companies and organisations and has begun to influence how, for example, leadership programmes are designed and how roles are assigned. No stage of development is in itself better than any other, but the capacity to cope with change and navigate well through complexity seems to increase with each new stage we discover and integrate within ourselves.

I will describe the different stages of development in more detail in the next chapter. For the sake of simplicity, here I have divided them into two major waves of development as an introduction.

I CALL THE first one the ‘conventional wave’. For most of us, this development starts in our early school years, when we suddenly discover that we are not the centre of the universe. How there are other people we need to adapt to. Here fitting in to the group becomes central. We start to think alike, to dress alike, to be alike. We want to belong, plain and simple. This inner logic shapes us until one day when we realise that we don’t actually think like the group, at least not about everything. That’s when we begin to discover our own unique identity, our own will and our own ideas of what is right and wrong.

In the latter part of the conventional wave, our sense of direction is strengthened and we become adept at navigating and prioritising within a broad yet relatively clear and stable framework. Comparing

ourselves to an external benchmark energises us and drives us forward. It becomes important to perform and be recognised for our performance.

In modern society, the conventional wave of development forms the basis of values, behaviour and a sense of meaning for a large part of humanity. This has taken us very far in a short period of time and contributed a lot of value. But – because there is a big and crucial but – the big challenge today is that this wave of development is now reaching its limits.

More and more people, many organisations, and not least our planet, are noticing that a too narrow growth-oriented logic eventually creates side effects and problems that it is not designed to solve. Thus, it is becoming obvious that the conventional wave must be complemented by something else, something more. We need to go well beyond this wave of foundational development and grow and evolve further to be able to navigate well through a changing world and skilfully meet the increasing complexity we face.

This need is reflected, for example, in the Inner Development Goals (IDGs), an initiative that aims to highlight the inner human capacities that can accelerate the realisation of the UN’s global sustainability goals in Agenda 2030. The initiative consists of a framework, inspired by adult development theory, with 23 capacities to develop divided into five areas.¹

SO WHAT HAS suddenly become so critical to develop within us? Many of the resources needed only become fully available to us when we reach the next wave of development, which I call the ‘emerging wave’. A sign that we are moving towards this wave of development is when we become increasingly aware of the dynamics of our inner landscape in the form of thoughts and feelings. We create a more intimate relationship with ourselves and discover a clearer authentic compass, which is less influenced by the outside world and feels true at a deeper level.

We become clearer about our core values, feel more confident in being who we are, and become more curious about diversity. We strengthen our capacity to deal with uncertainty, hold multiple perspectives simultaneously and navigate innovatively outside the conventional framework. This means we can face greater complexity in life without losing our footing and we can more easily see the changing dynamics of the larger systems we are part of.

As you shift your focus from the conventional wave of development to the emerging wave, you embrace the 'authentic shift' within you. The authentic shift means you take the gifts of the conventional wave and move beyond, to where a new kind of personal growth begins and where you can discover and strengthen new, and, from a future perspective, crucial, inner resources.

When the door to the authentic shift was pushed open in me during that challenging period in Brussels and the eye-opening solo trip to Asia, I didn't know what was happening. I didn't know that the emptiness, confusion and insights I was experiencing would become a springboard for a whole new wave of personal development. I lacked guidance and had to find my own way forward, which was exciting but definitely not always easy.

Now, many years later, it is clear to me that we all take our own unique adult development journey. It is equally obvious that there are clear patterns repeating themselves in our psyche as life calls on us to grow. When you are familiar with these patterns and proactively capitalise on them, you move forward more easily on the path that is yours to walk. In this way, you accelerate your development as a human being and make yourself increasingly relevant and powerful in the changing world we live in.

My intention in writing this book is to use the patterns of adult development as a foundation, but above all to write a practical and concrete development guide for continuous personal growth. The objective is to support you in taking bigger and faster developmental steps – towards, through and beyond the authentic shift.

A Guide to the Authentic Shift

Based on the thousands of hours of experience I have had conducting leadership programmes, it has become clear to me which processes are most relevant, where significant potential exists for real change and growth, and what has the greatest impact. This book is designed from these observations. It is filled with perspectives and tools that I continuously see making a positive difference to many people.

Whether you see the 'emerging wave' right in front of you or you are right in the middle of it, my hope is that with the help of this book you can activate and strengthen new inner resources that can really make a tangible difference in your life.

These emerging resources typically make life more meaningful, exciting and successful. They contribute to greater positive ripples in the contexts in which you operate, and they can make a real difference in the world. A world in urgent need of more people with authentic capacity who are willing to step up and lead.

The Authentic Shift is a book for those who are ready for the next leap in their development. It is written for those who have realised that a significantly bigger impact in the external world does not come from running a little faster, getting a little smarter or becoming a little more efficient, but from the creation of a longer lever, anchored deep inside. It is for those who seek the next level of authenticity, flow and power in their lives.

This book is also for those looking for understanding and tools for how to be a good coach and guide for others approaching the authentic shift.

My hope is that working with this book becomes life-changing for you. I hope it will help you to take further steps in your development and thus also grow in your most important roles, such as leader, colleague, friend or parent.

More specifically, I've often seen this inner work lead to:

In Yourself

- Greater awareness of how you function on the inside
- Inner peace, greater presence and deeper fascination with life
- Change of thought patterns and behaviours that no longer serve you
- A more helpful self-image and stronger self-compassion
- A clearer inner compass to help you make wise choices faster
- Feeling grounded in yourself when the world feels uncertain or chaotic
- Strong visionary ability as a co-creator of the future

In Relation to the World Around You

- Greater curiosity about diversity
- Enhanced empathy
- Clearer value-driven behaviour in challenging situations
- Systems thinking and navigation beyond the conventional
- Greater involvement in the major issues facing humanity
- Stronger creative footprint in the world
- You becoming a stronger role model for others

A Labyrinthine Journey of Discovery

The labyrinth is a classic metaphor for the inner journey that people have returned to again and again throughout history. We encounter it in Greek mythology. It is also found in the centre of the floor of Chartres, the Gothic cathedral outside Paris, as a hidden challenge and a silent way of telling you that what you seek is deep within you, not somewhere out there.

When the cathedral was built in the 13th century, heaven ‘some-where out there’ was the carrot to strive for. Even today, we are tempted to look outside ourselves, and just as easily we risk losing touch with our own inner depths. It is easy to be seduced by the new heavenly mirage in the form of prestige, likes, money and lots of material things, triggering short-term feel-good rewards at the expense of long-term emotional wealth.

You can see the journey through and beyond the authentic shift as an adventure through your own inner labyrinth. You first need to move deeper inwards to be able to reach further outwards. Along this journey of discovery, you will gradually learn more about yourself, peel away the conditioning and patterns that hold you back and refine your awareness of your authentic core.

The labyrinth as a metaphor captures several relevant dynamics. In a labyrinth, the path is initially hidden, just as the path to your authentic self is rarely obvious from the start. In the labyrinth, there are also many different paths to explore and you may sometimes not know which one leads in the right direction until you try it out. This reminds us of the dynamics of personal development, or any complex change process for that matter. You make progress by setting intention, testing, evaluating and learning more and new things, over and over again.

To reflect our complexity as human beings, imagine it is a living labyrinth you are exploring. It is dynamic and responsive. When you make a certain choice in life, the structure of the labyrinth can change. Some choices lead to new and perhaps unexpected

openings. Other choices may add extra turns to the maze or close doors that were previously open.

Discovering the labyrinth is your own adventure. It is your unique personal journey. Although you can be inspired by the examples of others, you can never copy someone else's route. As your own adventurer, you need to find your own amazing, non-linear path inwards and outwards. What this book provides is a number of different keys to try in the way that works best for you. The keys can help you find and open doors to rooms in the labyrinth where new insights and resources can be revealed and activated.

The Keys of the Labyrinth

You will be introduced to a total of nine keys, all of which can help amplify and accelerate the authentic shift within you. The keys are those I have found most helpful on my own journey and those I have found important for my clients and course participants.

These keys interact and build on each other. Those you explore early in the book enable you to work more powerfully with those that come later. The keys are sorted into three groups that give the book its overall structure – Foundation, Deepening and Realisation.

Each key opens the door to three inner resources. These are specially selected to help you be all that you can be in a changing and accelerating world. You will have the opportunity to recognise and reinforce these resources in yourself through reflection and concrete practice.

Here is an overview of the journey you are about to embark on:



PREPARATION

The Way Forward is Inwards

We start by putting our era into a wider context, delving into why we're seeing relentless acceleration and increasing complexity, and why it is more important than ever to invest in our own inner development. We take a holistic perspective on the potential to grow as human beings and you will familiarise yourself with the different stages of adult development.

PART I: FOUNDATION

Inner System Awareness – Key 1

The basis for the authentic shift is an expansion of inner awareness. This first key is about strengthening your ability to notice thoughts and feelings without being controlled by them. Here you familiarise yourself with the shortcomings of the Stone Age brain, strengthen your 'meta-awareness' and deepen your emotional presence.

Climate for Growth – Key 2

This key is about how to create a supportive inner climate that can become a catalyst for accelerated growth. This is where you will get a chance to optimise your constant flow of thoughts and emotions. It includes looking at your relationship with your inner critic, empowering your inner coach and cultivating self-compassion.

Active Resonance – Key 3

Your inner state and your capacity for resonance, i.e. the quality of contact between yourself and the world around you, influence your experience of life and determine which options are available to you at different moments. In this third key, you become familiar with the states of 'contraction' and 'centring' and develop the ability to direct your inner dynamics more clearly. You will also explore what

active resonance can mean for you in relation to other people and to nature around you.

Balanced Intelligence – Key 4

You don't move all the way through the authentically expanded wave of development using intellectual intelligence alone. The logical abilities of the left brain need to be balanced with the creative powers of the right brain. And the intelligence of the head needs to interact with the wisdom of the heart. This key is about what balanced intelligence could mean and how to activate it. The goal is to be able to draw on multiple intelligences to go both deeper and broader than you may be used to.

PART II: DEEPENING

Inner Unlimitation – Key 5

This key is about the authentic core, inside life's layers of imprint and conditioning. Who are you at your core? How can you clarify the essence always there deep within you, regardless of life's ups and downs? This key gives you the opportunity to reflect on how you perceive your identity, which parts of your self-image you may have outgrown and how you mentally can unlimit yourself to be able to take further steps towards your full potential.

Value-Driven Authenticity – Key 6

The deepening continues by exploring your most authentic values. You will map your value hierarchy and learn to distinguish between superficial and deep values. You will also have the opportunity to translate your values into concrete guiding principles, prepare for internal value conflicts and clarify a series of important choices that will help you act with inner alignment and integrity.

The Source of Meaningfulness – Key 7

This key is about the part of you that drives motivation, flow and energy. You meet the timeless question of the meaning of life, from both a philosophical and a research-based perspective. You will learn more about the dynamics of self-realisation and the differences between external and internal motivation. You will also have the opportunity to clarify your most important sources of meaningfulness and to reflect on what could be your higher calling in life.

PART III: REALISATION

Creating the Future – Key 8

With new insights come new intentions. Key 8 helps you to shape a future where your life is well connected, all the way from your deepest intentions to what the world around you needs. Here, you will reflect on the impact you want to make, proactively track the future and activate the magnetism of a personal vision. You will also have the opportunity to concretise the journey ahead in the form of a roadmap.

The Hero's Journey – Key 9

As you grow as a person and leader, and create authentic goals and visions for yourself, you take on what might be called 'the hero's journey'. As your own hero (or heroine!), you need to leave your comfort zone for a while to face new challenges, explore new opportunities and develop new resources in a kind of creative dance. This last key equips you mentally for this non-linear movement. It also helps you establish the necessary continuity in your development efforts to really get the results you want over time.

OVERVIEW OF KEYS AND INTERNAL RESOURCES



Tools Along the Way

Before setting out on this journey, I want to share a few words on how to maximise the benefits of working with the nine keys. As with any skill, be it piano playing, programming or inner skills, theoretical understanding is not enough to get results. What really leads to change is repeated practice, combined with reflection.

Therefore, each key contains a combination of theoretical perspectives, interspersed with practical examples, exercises, tools and questions to reflect on. I cannot emphasise enough how the more thoroughly you work through the exercises and questions, the more likely you are to shift and upgrade something within you.

So I encourage you to pause regularly and put genuine time, energy and focus into the exercises and the reflective questions. In this way, you anchor what you have just read within you, before it is time to move on to the next key and the next resource. Then, when you have finished the book, you can return to the parts that feel particularly important to you and work further with them.

The Authentic Shift can be seen as a leadership programme in book form. I hope you can use it as a helpful companion on your development journey over a longer period of time, in the same way as if you had participated in a leadership programme over several sessions. This can be powerful, as it takes time for insights to mature, thought and emotional patterns to be reshaped and neural pathways to be upgraded. You might well work with the book for 3, 6 or 12 months, or even longer.

Now let's look at some concrete tools that can support you along the way:

Authentic Reflection

In working with each key, you will have the opportunity to reflect on questions designed to support you in finding insight, integration and clarity. Reflection is not about coming up with the 'right' answer as quickly as possible. Curiosity, patience, and an anything-goes

attitude are your best allies. Try sit with a question for a while, without specific expectations, and see what comes up in your mind.

Mental Workouts and Everyday Tools

You will also learn practical exercises to help you build and reinforce good habits and patterns. The more you practise the exercises, the more likely you are to get lasting results. The effect is typically dosage-related. The exercises are divided into two categories: *Mental Workouts* and *Everyday Tools*.



You can also listen to some of the exercises in guided form. You can find them on my website (www.carllindeborg.com/resources) and they are free of charge. A headphone symbol next to the exercise means there is an audio version available.

Reflection Book

An invaluable tool is a specific notebook for the thoughts and reflections that emerge along the way. This becomes a place for your insights, learnings, intentions, feelings and wonderings. When you express in writing what is going on in your head, you clarify things and create more space in your mind. Any notebook will do. We have also developed a specific 'workbook for reflection' for this purpose. If you open this book from one side, you will find structured writing space, key by key, resource by resource and reflection question by reflection question. If you open it from the other side, there is free space to keep your own development journal (www.carllindeborg.com/resources).

Helpful Learning State

Also think about how you can create a helpful focus for your work with the book. This is something I always bring up with a new group starting a leadership programme. What external and internal environment facilitates learning and development? Where and when do you tend to feel calm, focused and receptive?

An important part of the helpful learning state is to lighten up on self-imposed performance requirements, switch on curiosity and remember that inner development is often a non-linear, iterative and labyrinthine process. From this perspective, all of life can be seen as your training ground, where virtually every interaction and experience can potentially be a source of practice, learning and insight.

Good Learning Partners

It is powerful to explore the authentic shift along with one or more learning partners, i.e. others who are also curious about their personal development and inner potential. It is enriching to be able to talk and share insights, experiences and perspectives from time to time. It is valuable to be able to support and coach each other and celebrate together along the way. Regular meetings with learning partners also contribute to the momentum and sustainability of the process.

Investing Time

For many of us, time is a scarce resource. That is why it is so important to be able to create protected time blocks for the most important things in life. If you want to get the most out of your journey with this book, you will need to invest some time. The book does not offer a series of quick fixes or life hacks. It is created for those who are looking for grounded, powerful and lasting inner development towards one's full potential as a human being.

However, the time needed is not overwhelming. Reading with good focus a couple of hours a week and practising the exercises 5–15 minutes a day will take you a long way. Continuity is much more important than quantity or speed.

Think about what time investment in yourself and in the journey with the book you would like to make. How can you create time blocks for reading, reflection and practice? Can you maybe re-allocate time from other activities that you habitually engage in, which are actually not as important as the investment in yourself?

AUTHENTIC REFLECTION

Before moving on, take a long, slow and deep breath. Relax your body. Stop right where you are.

Take a few moments to notice the surrounding space, the sensation of your own body and the feeling you have right now.

Take another calm, conscious breath, zoom out and expand your perspective. Without thinking too much, let glimpses randomly flash by from your life's timeline, from everything you've been through, everything you've learnt, everything you've developed in yourself that led to who you are right now. The joy, the pain, the insights, the doubts, the determination, the growth.

And then, see if you can get a sense of the continuing unfolding of life, a sense that nothing is finished, how the creative movement is there, stretching out into a future of potential.

See if you can sense that there is something more ahead, something more you can be – as a person, as a leader – that additional inner resources are waiting to be activated. Resources that can help you successfully navigate through an increasingly changing world, where previous maps and compasses will no longer suffice. Stop for a moment and notice what comes to you.

Then reflect on the following questions:

- *How do you relate to the idea that personal development can be seen as a journey of discovery through an inner labyrinth? What experiences of your own come to mind?*
- *Now that you have read the introduction, what do you hope to gain from working with this book?*

- *Based on the brief description of the nine keys, which ones particularly speak to you right now?*
- *To enable lasting results that really make a difference in your life, what do you think is required of the book? What will be required of you?*
- *How can you take advantage of the 'tools along the way' to maximise the chances of learning and growing?*

So, that's it. The first reflection is done and you are up and running. Once again, welcome to *The Authentic Shift*. Thank you for being here.

The Way Forward is Inwards

ON ONE OCCASION, I was leading a strategy workshop for a management team. They were jointly responsible for a large organisation with thousands of employees in many countries. One of the team members had recently taken on a new major role where he needed to meet the needs of external customers while simultaneously delivering internally to the other divisions. At the same time, new competitors were entering his market, taking advantage of new technologies, and in his own organisation he had inherited old conflicts with multiple stakeholders involved.

During the workshop, the management team discussed where they wanted to take the company in the long term. Several of the complex and long-term issues they faced were related to the new responsibilities of the promoted man. In the dialogue, I noticed how he often became defensive, wanted quick answers and came up with solutions that often felt grounded in the current culture and business logic of the company, even though the company now clearly needed to become something it had never been before.

The man had been with the company for a long time and had been successful in his previous role. He was skilled, experienced and in many ways ready for greater responsibility, but he did not seem to have developed the internal resources needed to navigate the increasing complexity of his new role. Although he got various

kinds of support, he simply could not make it work. His behaviour led to more and more conflicts, the necessary change in the business did not happen and he eventually had to leave the company.

We can all see that the world is changing, faster than ever before. The list of things that are rapidly transforming is long. It includes everything from how we socialise and communicate on a daily basis, to how our workplaces need to function to be viable in the long run. One of the key elements of this ongoing trend is increasing complexity, as the man in our example experienced. Right now many of us deal with a level of complexity in life that very few people in history have ever experienced. Think of all the responsibilities, information, communication, technology, deadlines, goals, relationships and roles you have to juggle on an average day. Compare that to the everyday life that shaped your DNA – what would have been an average day during the Stone Age. The difference is huge. And the gap continues to grow almost exponentially between what you were biologically created for and what your life now demands of you.

YOU MAY HAVE come across the acronym VUCA as a description of the changing context that affects us all in some way. The US military, among others, has used it to describe conditions that are Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous. This type of systemic conditions allowed COVID to evolve from nothing to a force that affected the entire world within weeks and months. VUCA conditions also played a part in the tenfold increase in the prices of electricity and gas in Europe to previously unimaginable levels following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Another acronym is BANI, which describes the emerging world as Brittle, Anxious, Non-linear and Incomprehensible.

VUCA and BANI are two ways of describing how the world we live in today, and will live in tomorrow, offers endless opportunities and equally endless challenges, demanding something completely new of us. The external disruption we see is rapidly driving the need

for what we might call internal disruption – that is, new ways of functioning on the inside that complement and transform the mental functionality and instincts we carry from the pre-programmed hunter-gatherer within ourselves.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a context for the rest of the book, and hopefully also to make you even more motivated to invest long-term in your own development in these exceptional times. We will look outwards and highlight some of the changes we see around us. We will also look inwards and explore what we can learn from adult development theory about how to create and sustain a good match between our increasingly fast-paced external world and our timeless inner world of potential.

The Acceleration Circle

When I started my first office job in the mid-nineties, it was like entering a completely different universe than the one we encounter in our workplaces today. The pace was so much slower and the predictability so much greater.

Most of us didn't have mobile phones yet, and the few who did struggled to carry around something that looked more like a brick than today's smartphones. Nobody communicated by email. People were stressed when the fax machine did not work. The internet was completely unknown and Google didn't even exist as a company. The morning post delivery was a big event, everyone had their own office, the staff coffee break was sacred and when someone was off duty, they were virtually unreachable.

In less than thirty years, the conditions of what we call work have fundamentally changed. It is like we're in the middle of a Pac-Man video game. As a player, your task was to gobble up tiny dots in a maze while four ghosts tried to stop your progress. If you completed the challenge, you moved to the next level where a new maze and more hungry ghosts were waiting for you. What was different in the

new level? Well, the pace was turned up a notch. Everything went a bit faster.

Those dynamics are reminiscent of our reality right now. When you master this year's level of life and advance into next year, what can you expect? Well, many things will be quite similar, of course, but the underlying pace will be another notch higher. The difficulty of this new level will be just slightly harder, so you barely notice the difference, but the further back you look, the more clearly you see what a massive journey we've been making in a very short time. And there is every indication that we have many, many more levels ahead of us, at an ever-increasing pace, with ever-increasing complexity. So, in Pac-Man terms, we'll be facing ever more complicated mazes and more and more hungry ghosts to master at an ever-increasing rate.

WHAT ARE THE mechanisms that make acceleration seemingly inevitable? Can't we just pause here? Do we really want to accelerate the pace of our lives further away from what we are naturally designed for? Professor of Sociology Hartmut Rosa works at the Friedrich Schiller University of Jena in Germany. He tries to explain this speed dynamic by distinguishing three categories of what he calls social acceleration.²

One category is *technological acceleration*. That is, innovations that make it faster to travel from point A to B, faster to communicate, faster to produce goods and services and so on. Obviously, a Slack message reaches the recipient faster than a physical letter. Air travel is obviously faster than a horse and carriage, and automated, robotic production is faster than manual labour.

The next category of acceleration involves *social change*, such as changing patterns of family life, changing forms of work such as the gig economy and remote or hybrid work, and new lifestyle trends.

The third category is the *pace of life* itself, where the number of tasks and activities to be performed per given unit of time seems to be constantly increasing. This makes many of us feel that there

is nowhere near enough time for everything we want to do and accomplish. Yet paradoxically, we have access to more time-saving technologies and support than ever before.

Rosa explains how these three categories of social acceleration mutually influence and reinforce one another in an ever-faster spinning 'circle of acceleration' that seems to be unstoppable. The availability of email, for example, dramatically shortened the time it takes to reach a person with a written message, which leads to many more messages being sent and an increase in the demand for quick responses, contributing to the acceleration of the pace of life. This in turn creates social change as to how and when we work and socialise with family and friends, which in turn creates new needs for new technologies that solve new challenges, and so on.

This acceleration circle is powerful and we risk being swept along at ever-increasing speeds, to ever-more advanced Pac-Man levels. Rosa puts it drastically, saying that the acceleration circle traps our lives in a vice. That doesn't sound particularly uplifting, but many of us can probably relate to the feeling of constantly juggling daily activities and, against our own will, becoming reactive, chronically fully booked and, in the worst case, eventually overwhelmed and exhausted before we are perhaps saved by a few weeks' holiday.

So what is the way out? My experience from working with clients and course participants is that planning, structuring and focusing practices are helpful and take us part of the way. But the most important way forward, the one that can truly transform our relationship with our accelerating world and give us a whole new set of resources to draw upon, is the path that leads inwards.

As the world becomes increasingly complex and turbulent, it is clear we are facing a paradigm shift. Not only a technological shift, but also a shift in consciousness and leadership. To match the external acceleration, we need to grow faster than ever within ourselves.

In *The Authentic Shift*, Carl Lindeborg condenses twenty years of experience in developing leaders and supporting organisations to manage change. In this practical guidebook, he outlines the ‘keys’ that lead to the next paradigm and the inner resources that will help you navigate powerfully and successfully into the future.

An exciting journey of discovery that helped me develop my work as a leader. If you are interested in leadership and curious to blaze new trails, I recommend you read this!

JENNY RUNDBLADH,
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT STOREBRAND GROUP

We are living in a time when old meets new. The transformation that needs to occur requires maturity in our leaders, or it simply will not happen. This book helps anyone who wants – and dares – to achieve the insight and motivation to be a positive agent of change.

ANDERS WIJLMAN,
HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE CLUB OF ROME

The most honest and best guide to authentic leadership I believe can be written.

ANNA SERNER, BOARD EXECUTIVE AND
FORMER CEO OF THE SWEDISH FILM INSTITUTE