



OPRA CONFERENCE

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

Unlocking Your Power and Your Voice to Drive Outcomes in the Workplace

Prepared by Toni Murphy



About Toni...

- Has led several **2,000+ people** organizations
- **First** person of color and millennial to lead **B2B segment** at Comcast
- Drove **double-digit revenue growth** while delivering the **highest employee NPS** in the Enterprise
- Highly regarded as a turnaround / **transformational** leader
- **Favorite quote:** *"The future bears down upon us with the hazards of the unknown. The only way out is through."*

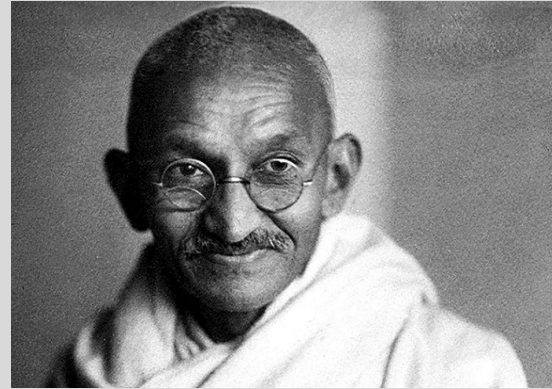
-- French Philosopher Plutarch



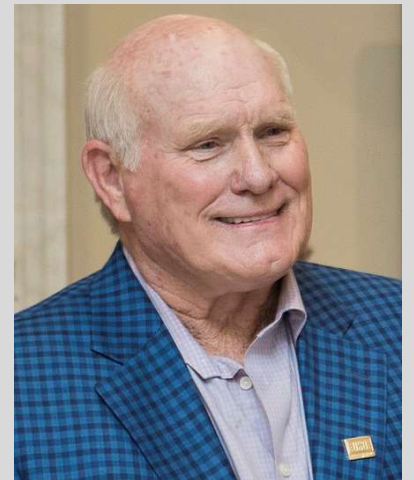
WHAT IS AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP?



**Who do you
consider to be
an AUTHENTIC
Leader?**



**Who do YOU consider to be
an Authentic Leader?**



What is Authentic Leadership?

- A leadership style defined by transparency, agility, self-awareness, strong personal “ethos”
- Being true to oneself and belief systems
- Demonstrating a strong sense of purpose or identity
- Understanding one’s personhood – good, bad or indifferent
- Unequivocal and steadfast in who they are and their approach on the world

Examples

- **Oprah:** The “Belonging” movement
- **MLK:** Constant and urgent need for love and justice
- **Vera Wang:** Uncompromising beauty
- **Terry Bradshaw:** Unabashed views on difference makers in sports
- **Vince Lombardi:** A winning mindset and culture
- **Mahatma Gandhi:** Peaceful resistance



THE JOURNEY TO AUTHENTICITY

What holds us back from being Authentic?

The Safety in Conforming to "Accepted Norms"

- Every organization has defined and undefined normalized behaviors
- These norms get reinforced as accepted through the lens of who is rewarded and who is not
- Conformity sometimes becomes synonymous with success

The Fear of Judgment and Rejection

- We observe or experience being rejected when we express a different way, idea or approach
- We are publicly or privately criticized for our views, making us more hesitant to be authentic

A Lack of Self-Awareness

- This is where our actions (or lack of actions) do not line up with our expressed beliefs
- It may give an impression of indecision or a lack of TRUE guiding principles

What holds us
back from
being
Authentic?

Authentic

Inauthentic

Sticktoitiveness

**Strong belief
system**

**Courage +
Ownership**

**"People pleaser"
mentality**

**Imposter
Syndrome**

Past Trauma

**Family / Societal
Pressures**





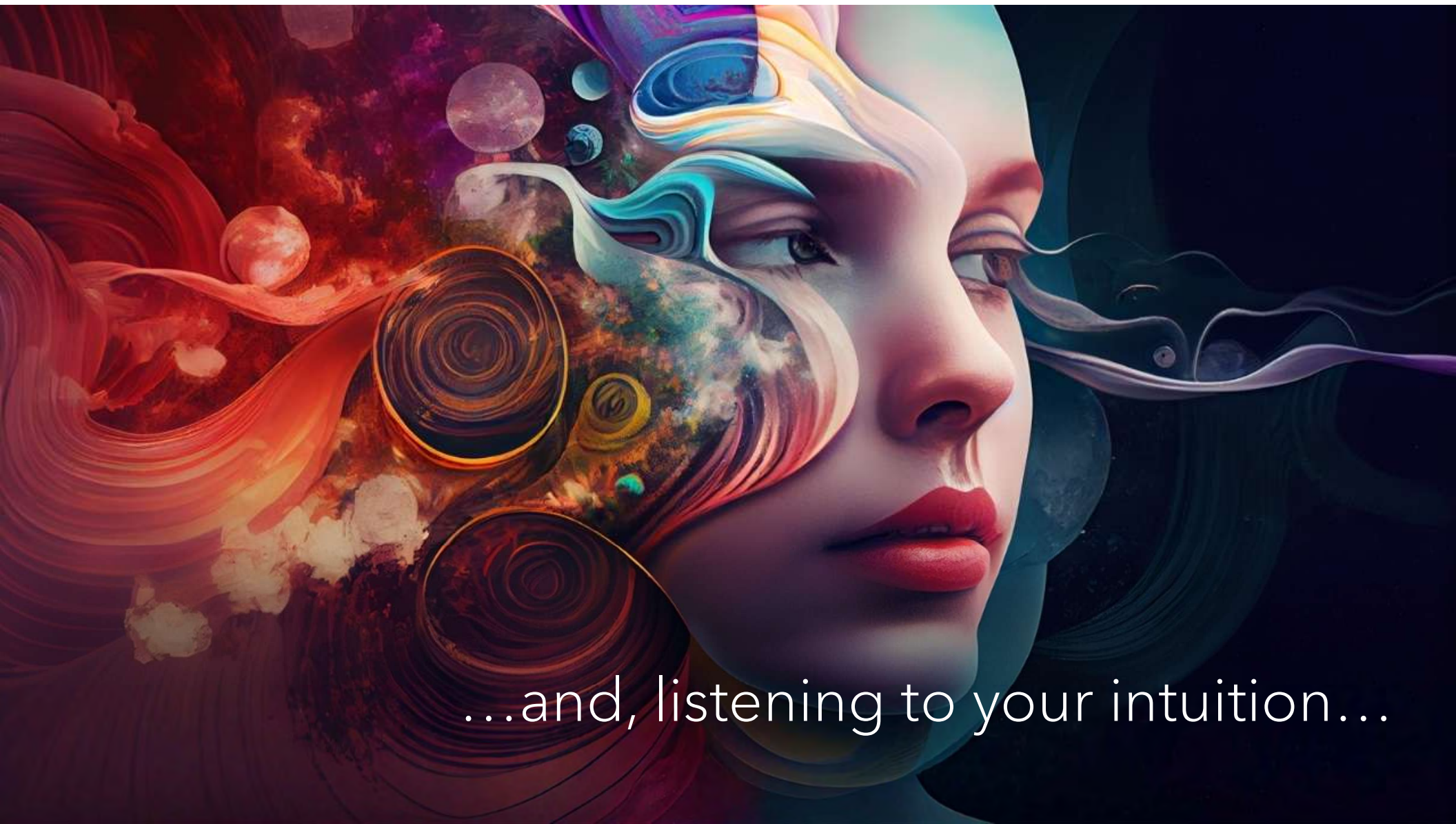
UNLOCKING YOUR POWER AND YOUR VOICE

Unlocking Your Power and Your Voice

It starts with...

...embracing your story...





...and, listening to your intuition...



... AND LIVING YOUR VALUES...

- Even when it is inconvenient.
- Even when it is unpopular.
- Even when it comes with a cost.
- No matter how big or small the moment is.
- And especially when others are watching / waiting on you.
- And especially when you are perfectly positioned to make a difference.



THE TEST

"The Test" of Authentic Leadership

Navigating difficult situations and cultures
while staying true to oneself

Dealing with your self-doubt
and their skepticism / "labeling"

Being agnostic to
the outcome

Trusting the Process

Isolation,
misunderstanding
and loss

Leaving room for you
to evolve

Best Practices for Cultivating Authentic Leadership

Self-Reflection

Take time to understand who you are and ask yourself, "What is my purpose? What matters to me?"
People are drawn to those who are rooted in their WHY.

Mentorship

Find the authentic leaders in your life. Watch how they articulate their vision for themselves, how they operate in harmony with their values and how they deal with challenging situations.

Communication

Find opportunities to share your values and beliefs, anchored by stories that showcase what you stand for.

Practice

Pay attention to your intuition. Instinctively, we know when we are being "nudged" to live out our principles.
Practice being vulnerable. It allows teams to be more open.

Engagement

Over time, being authentic will become easier. You will know it is working by how well the team exhibits honesty, openness. It can also lead to greater empathy and innovation within the team.

Data in support of Authentic Leadership



Researchers have previously found authentic leadership to be positively related to employee performance ([Clapp-Smith et al., 2009](#); [Wang et al., 2014](#); [Ribeiro et al., 2018a](#)). ...**When employees sense their leaders' respect, consideration, concern, and support and perceive them as authentic, workers can more easily excel** ([Hinojosa et al., 2014](#)). The [Social exchange theory] ([Blau, 1964](#)) proposes that each person's behavior is contingent on other individuals' behavior. **Subordinates working under an authentic leader's guidance may feel, in accordance with the norm of reciprocity** ([Gouldner, 1960](#)), **the need to improve their performance to repay the leader's positive behaviors and thus balance the exchange relationship** ([Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005](#)).

In addition, the broaden-and-build theory ([Fredrickson, 2004](#)) posits that, **when staff members are exposed to positive emotions, these feelings will have long-term effects on workers that are essential for successful individual performance.** [Hao et al. \(2020\)](#) found that individuals experiencing upbeat emotions and deep trust repay their leaders with higher performance.



CONCLUSION

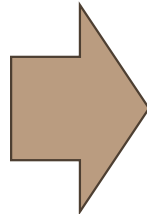
In Summary

Authentic Leadership is quickly becoming the **STANDARD** of leadership in the workplace

- **You are enough.** Your teammates want to know you, your story and your WHY. It is the fastest way to garner mindshare and to ensure team safety, honesty, collaboration and transparency.
- **Authentic leadership requires situational and self-awareness.** You know when and how to engage. You are thoughtful about what and when you share.
- Leading authentically is not without its challenges, skeptics and critics. **Moments of adversity will shape how others perceive what you proclaim as your values.**
- Modeling Authentic leadership **gives everyone else permission** to be themselves.
- It is proven to **drive short-term and long-term performance** for the individual and everyone they touch.

THANK YOU!

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