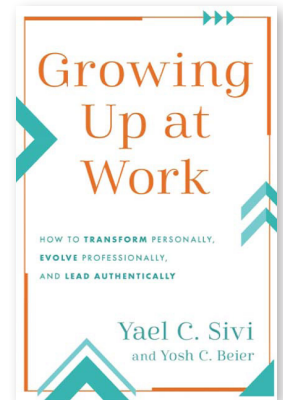


Growing Up at Work

How to Transform Personally, Evolve Professionally,
and Lead Authentically

by **Yael Sivi and Yosh Beier**



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THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

The workplace can be the source of tremendous growth and satisfaction, as well as the source of tremendous anxiety, frustration, and fear. But through this frustration and fear, we can find our greatest potential if we're willing and able to seek out opportunities for growth. *Growing Up at Work* covers a list of unique areas where we often face common challenges at work, as well as actionable practices we can use to turn them to our advantage. From fear-inducing bosses to difficult conversations we'd rather avoid, by *Growing Up at Work* using the methods found here, you can become more effective, inspiring, and authentic in any workplace.

Do you feel like an imposter at work? Do you enjoy your work but feel like the rest of your life is devoid of meaning? Do you often find yourself feeling fearful or intimidated by a superior or coworker? This book provides you with step-by-step instructions and practices to help you overcome them and make your career a source of fulfillment and positive transformation.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to become an emotionally mature leader and create healthy employees, teams, and organizations.
- How to achieve authentic, positive leadership growth through self-awareness and openness to growth.
- How to take command of anxiety, insecurity, and fear in the workplace.
- How to realize extraordinary result if you choose to grow from the inside out.

Introduction

In all of our work, we are constantly reminded that changing behavior on the surface, while sometimes effective, is often not sustainable. It's our belief and experience that the deepest and most meaningful change comes from the inside out. When we closely examine and shift our behaviors and patterns, transformation is possible.

For transformation to occur, we must grow and change. This takes time-and sustained practice. Using in-depth client stories as a way to illustrate what integrated personal and professional growth looks like, we portray this process realistically and in ways that we hope will encourage you to do your own work.

In this book summary, you'll find the following:

1. Lifelong practices for personal transformation and professional evolution that we introduce to clients and that you can bring into your own life.
2. Theories and concepts underpinning our coaching approach, which centers around Gestalt therapy, a humanistic form of psychotherapy grounded in the present moment experience of the client and the therapist, as well as Adult Development Theory, a model that describes how our consciousness can evolve in adulthood.

I Feel Like an Imposter

Everyone sometimes feels like they don't belong or haven't earned their spot. Here are some practices to try if you ever find yourself feeling this way.

Distinguish your thoughts from your feelings. If you're feeling bad, stop and investigate the story you're telling yourself.

Come back to the present. Name what you're seeing, feeling, hearing, tasting. Get back into your body. Exercise or meditate, whatever it takes to get you out of your head.

If you become aware of your inner critic, practice becoming aware of your critical voice and also practice standing up to your critic. Journaling can be a great tool for this, and you can do it as if you're writing dialogue between two different characters.

Say kind words to yourself on a daily basis. Talk about what you appreciate about yourself. Practice talking to yourself

the way you would talk to somebody you love. You can do this in a mirror, in a journal, or by looking at a picture of yourself at a younger age.

Take five minutes to talk to yourself out loud about the things you appreciate about yourself. Write down how you feel afterward.

I'm Their Manager, But I Want to Be Their Friend

If you're a manager, track how you spend your time in and outside of work with the people who work for you. In general, it should be equitable across the whole team. Be consistent when connecting with people— asking them about their weekends, for example. Keep in mind that how you spend your time is always sending messages, whether you realize it or not.

Speak about other people as if they are in the room with you. Gossip is never helpful and almost always has the potential to harm. If you need to vent or process something, find a trusted peer or advisor or coach to talk with— not the people who report to you.

It can sometimes help to put yourself mentally in the position of your team— what would they want from you? What behaviors would they expect and need? Are you delivering those? Try making decisions from a place of fairness. Consider whether your feelings about people and your relationships with them might be affecting your decision-making or judgement.

I Take Care of Everyone Except Myself

Take feelings of guilt and resentment as useful signposts: When chronically felt, they almost always point us to ways in which we are being confluent with others.

Practice setting boundaries before you think you should. This is similar to stopping work before you are tired. There is lag time, and you are not practiced in resting boundaries to protect your brown time, energy, and well-being.

Think of it as putting on your own proverbial 'air mask' before you help others with theirs. If you are feeling drained, tired, or ambivalent about offering your help or taking care of others, start by meeting your own needs first— and then see where you land.

In general, practice saying 'No' more often— at home and at work. You can say it with love and with kindness, but you can still say it. Practice not volunteering for so many things and see how that feels. If you feel agitated, that is

natural—practice tolerating your discomfort before doing something about it.

I'm Just Not Good Enough

Practice not just reacting to your negative self-talk, but pausing enough to discern and to listen to what that self-talk is saying. When you hear a negative voice in your head, work to replace it with words that feel more supportive to you. If it's hard for you to do this, imagine the most loving person in your life—real or imagined—saying affectionate and supportive things to you. What would they say? Don't rush this. Feel how you are affected by these words. Do this as regularly as you can.

Practice self-care and do things to create ease and relaxation for yourself. Some of us are just not practiced at feeling relaxed. Consider these ideas: Get a massage, take a hike, enjoy a nice meal. Remind yourself what joy, fun, and relaxation feel like.

I Know I Should Address This Conflict, But I Don't

When you find yourself avoiding conflict, try to articulate to yourself: What is the story I'm telling myself about having this conversation? If I do it, what do I think will happen? How likely is that?

If you're a manager or leader, practice what it's like to express yourself as directly as possible without disclaimers, caveats, or indirectness. Find an accountability partner at work to help remind you of your intention and to practice with when you need the support.

Use feedback tools to support you in speaking truthfully and thoughtfully in a way that will get you closer to what you want.

If you're really worried, experiment with having a difficult conversation through role-playing with a coach or friend.

I Don't Want to Play Politics

Some of us simply don't want to speak up because we don't want to 'take sides.' But this can be a damaging mindset if taken to an extreme.

Practice speaking truth with care. This means that you don't have to share every thought in your head, and you don't need to cushion the blow so much that people don't actually understand what you're saying. Speaking truthfully

means we discern what's important for us to say and what we would regret not saying.

Practice showing up in your work interactions from a place of trust versus fear. Ask yourself: What would I say right now if I weren't scared? How could I say that thing clearly and with care for others? Practice communicating from a place of pleasing yourself versus pleasing others. It can be helpful to rehearse difficult conversations in advance.

People Think I'm a Jerk

Do you feel that despite your best efforts, you come across negatively to the people around you at work? There are some practices you can try to work through this.

Daily journaling is an excellent means of accelerating self-awareness and helping you change what needs to be changed.

Read articles and books that can help you step outside of yourself. *Leadership and Self-Deception*, by the Arbinger Institute, can be extremely insightful. Other helpful resources include *The Fearless Organization* by Amy Edmondson and information about Project Aristotle on the Google website.

Approach interactions with positive intentions. Plan ahead for being intentional, kind, and collaborative. Listen more than you speak, and realize that in conversation we tend to be in either inquiry mode or advocacy mode. Inquiry mode brings people closer. Advocacy mode can sometimes push others away.

People Don't Trust Me

If you find that you're not a trustworthy presence at your workplace, start by reflecting on these questions:

How well do the people around me know me?

How much do I allow them to know me?

How well do I know myself?

Is there any unresolved grief, pain, or trauma from my past or present that I am 'managing' each day so that I don't feel it?

Is that grief, pain, or trauma expressing itself in other ways?

How do I show up to people in different contexts? Do my friends know me as the same person that my colleagues know? Am I hiding or 'shape-shifting' in any of these spaces?

What kinds of relationships do I want to cultivate at work?

When someone reaches out to you for advice or guidance, seize the opportunity. Make sure you are genuinely there for them. Meanwhile, you may want to work with a therapist or coach to deal with any unresolved trauma or grief in your past; it is almost impossible to do this on your own.

I'm Successful, But I Have No Life

Be honest with yourself. Assess how satisfied you are across different areas of your life (e.g. friendships, hobbies, personal growth, health, career, etc.) and talk to a friend or coach about your scores. This is also called the Wheel of Life exercise. Are your scores OK with you? Is this the life you want to live? What scores do you wish were higher? What would that life look like?

What trade-offs are you making? Are you OK with them? What tweaks could you make to be more in balance with yourself?

Keep coming back to the question of what success means to you—not anyone else. Write down your operating instructions for being happy. Compare that list to how you're actually spending your time. Is there enough overlap for you?

I Have to Be Perfect

Perfectionism can have many causes, but there are three routes that can help us break out of it. Perfectionists fear that if they do anything less than perfectly, they will not be able to live with themselves and their self-esteem will take a terrible blow.

Here are some ways to break out of a perfectionist mindset.

Practice doing things imperfectly

Set yourself a time limit for any task. When your time is up, stop what you're doing and consider how you feel

Try telling your colleagues that you fear you may be a perfectionist and you want to approach things differently in the future

In your interactions at work, try using suggestive language: "What if we tried..." "I wonder what would happen if we..."

I'm Scared of My Boss

If you find yourself often entering into a Child state of fear relating to your boss, take a moment to become aware of it next time it happens. Breathe, and try to pivot into what your inner adult would do or say.

If necessary, take a walk or ask for a moment to collect yourself. Your inner child should not be running a meeting, having a difficult conversation, or trying to lead a team.

As a professional and as a leader, practice communicating, managing, and leading from the psychic space of your Adult state. If you don't know what that means, ask yourself: What does the wisest, most mature part of myself feel and think right now?



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