



Care to Dare

Unleashing Astonishing Potential Through Secure Base Leadership

THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

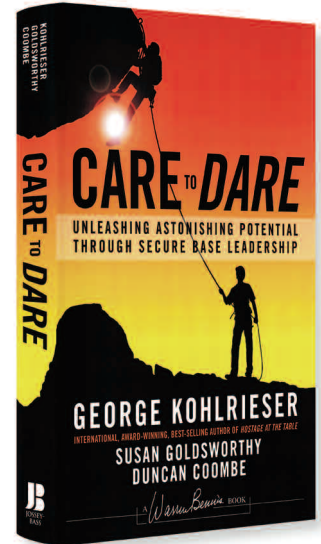
Care to Dare shows you how great leaders all over the world unleash astonishing potential within themselves, their people and their organizations by building the trust, delivering the change and inspiring the focus that underpin engagement and create conditions for innovation. These are “Secure Base Leaders” who masterfully combine caring and daring.

You, too, can become a Secure Base Leader in your work and your life. No matter where you work and whom you work with, how little support you feel, how small your budget, or how busy you are, you can learn specific skills and develop a way of being and doing that delivers sustainable results through inspired relationships. Secure Base Leadership, based on trust, confidence and challenge, is the best way to liberate yourself, your team and your organization.

Secure Base Leadership works at the personal, team and organizational levels. It is not just a set of skills — the “doing.” It is first and foremost a way of “being.” You care enough to dare people to reach for their dreams, and in the process, you can return to your very humanity.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- To provide a sense of protection, safety and caring.
- To become a source of inspiration and energy.
- To unleash astonishing potential by building trust, delivering change and inspiring focus.



by George Kohlrieser,
Susan Goldsworthy and
Duncan Coombe

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THE COMPLETE SUMMARY: CARE TO DARE

by George Kohlrieser, Susan Goldsworthy and Duncan Coombe

The authors: George Kohlrieser is an organizational and clinical psychologist. He is professor of Leadership and Organizational Behavior and the creator and director of the flagship High-Performance Leadership Program at one of the world's leading business schools, International Institute for Management Development (IMD), located in Switzerland. His first book, *Hostage at the Table: How Leaders Can Overcome Conflict, Influence Others, and Raise Performance*, was an international bestseller.

Susan Goldsworthy is founder and CEO of Goldswolf & Associates, a company specializing in leadership development, executive coaching and change communications. She works with a number of international clients, is on the faculty at Webster University's Geneva campus and is an executive coach and consultant lecturer at IMD.

Duncan Coombe is a teacher, researcher, author and adviser. He is on the faculty of Ashridge Business School and is a consultant to the Fowler Center for Sustainable Value. He works as an external consultant to a variety of for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

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Preface

Hostage negotiators, business leaders or anybody in a position of influence succeeds when they are “secure bases” for others. For the purposes of leadership development, we define a secure base as a person, place, goal or object that provides a sense of protection, safety and caring *and* offers a source of inspiration and energy for daring, exploration, risk-taking and seeking challenge.

Care to Dare shows you how to provide that magical combination of safety and stretch and how to become a “Secure Base Leader” no matter where you are working and regardless of your title or your profession.

Secure Base Leadership works at the personal, team and organizational levels. You care enough to dare people to reach for their dreams, and in the process, you return to your very own humanity. ●

Your Leadership Opportunity

Great leaders all over the world unleash astonishing potential and achieve sustainable high performance simply by tapping into their own secure bases and becoming a secure base for other people. We define high performance as challenging yourself and others to see and achieve what is beyond normal expectations.

Attachment theory revolves around the basic premise that all humans have an innate desire to seek closeness to

and comfort from a person who gives them a sense of protection. Researcher J.W. Anderson noticed how children would explore but always keep their mothers as a base — a secure base.

A secure base provides protection and encourages risk-taking. A secure base both waits and intervenes. You can be a secure base for others only when you have multiple secure bases yourself.

If you only provided safety, you would be a source of great comfort for the other person; however, without inspiring him to explore, take risks or seek challenge, you actually overprotect and limit his potential. Providing only one side of the equation reduces the ultimate performance of the people you want to lead — either because they are too comfortable or because they are too anxious.

In the words of leadership guru Warren Bennis, “The basis of leadership is the capacity of the leader to change the mindset, the framework of another person.”

In many ways, being a Secure Base Leader is like “belaying” a rock climber. A rope is looped through an anchor above the immediate climbing area. The climber is attached to one end of the rope. The belayer, using a special device clipped to his harness, holds the other side of the rope so that the climber has enough slack to move, but not enough to fall any great distance. As the climber advances up the mountain or wall, the belayer



1-800-SUMMARY
service@summary.com

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Rebecca S. Clement, Publisher; Sarah T. Dayton, Editor in Chief; Andrew Clancy, Senior Editor; Amanda Langen, Graphic Designer; Corbin Collins, Contributing Editor

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watches the climber intently and takes up slack as needed.

All bonds start as “attachments” that are basic connections. An attachment progresses to a bond when there is an exchange of emotion and a depth of contact — a “chemistry,” if you will. However, bonds are not permanent, nor should they be. “Separation” from a bond at the right time is natural, just as it is natural for a child to leave a parent.

The “Mind’s Eye” is the part of the brain that manages our focus. The Mind’s Eye directs the focus of a “flashlight” to shine on either the positive or the negative. Secure Base Leaders influence the way others make that choice. They ensure that the Mind’s Eye of the individual or team is focused on the goal, the benefit, the desired results, the learning, the opportunity and the possibility. ●

Secure Base Leadership in Action

The behaviors of Secure Base Leaders are clear, practical and learnable. In fact, you may already be exhibiting some of the nine characteristics:

- 1. Stays Calm.** A Secure Base Leader remains composed and dependable, especially when under pressure. This characteristic is so fundamental that a leader needs to master it before he is able to portray other characteristics.
- 2. Accepts the Individual.** Secure Base Leaders show caring for the human being before focusing on the issue or problem. They separate the person from the problem. As far as possible, they avoid judging and criticizing people.
- 3. Sees the Potential.** Secure Base Leaders see the employee’s potential talent versus his current functioning or “state.” This characteristic is not about short-term potential. Instead, it is about a deeper vision or even a dream for the person’s deepest potential — not in one year, but in 10 or 20 years.
- 4. Uses Listening and Inquiry.** Our research reflected a stylistic preference of Secure Base Leaders toward listening and inquiry rather than “telling” and advocacy. They mastered the arts of asking open-ended questions and engaging in a dialogue to seek a greater truth.
- 5. Delivers a Powerful Message.** Secure Base Leaders are masters at coming up with pithy sentences, or what we call “bull’s-eye transactions.” Secure Base Leaders are good at introducing these bull’s-eye transactions when it really matters, not hours or weeks later

when the moment has passed.

6. Focuses on the Positive. Secure Base Leaders are good at directing the Mind’s Eye of other people to focus on the positive rather than the negative. They help others to see their potential and the opportunity for learning, even in a crisis or time of difficulty.

7. Encourages Risk-Taking. This characteristic goes beyond acceptance and beyond seeing the potential. It takes those concepts into direct action. Secure Base Leaders actively dare people to unleash their potential by providing tangible opportunities for risk-taking.

8. Inspires Through Intrinsic Motivation. When leaders are invited to talk about the people and events that have influenced them, they do not reference money or financial reward at all. Intrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable.

9. Signals Accessibility. People believe that their Secure Base Leaders are always accessible and available rather than detached and unavailable or “too busy.” What is important is the perception that the secure base is available if needed.

Linked to the bonding cycle and the Mind’s Eye, these nine characteristics work at the individual, team and organizational levels. ●

Build Trust Through the Bonding Cycle

Central to our mission to humanize organizations, bonding is the guts and emotion of leadership. It is the “caring” part of Care to Dare that we find is often neglected in businesses. A leader can be extremely disciplined, focused and goal-oriented, but without interpersonal bonding, she will probably fail.

A form of synergy, we define bonding as forming an attachment that creates more physical, emotional, intellectual and/or spiritual energy than the person or people involved could generate independently.

Bonding is an emotional connection that invites the other person to feel a sense of protection and safety as well as energy and inspiration. Humans cannot thrive without bonding. If you do not bond, you will spend your life in search of what bonding was designed to give.

One manifestation of bonding is the ability to feel empathy and compassion for the other person.

A common misconception is that bonding equals friendship. You do not have to like someone to bond

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with her. You only need a common goal. Hostage negotiators succeed in 95 percent of cases precisely because they are able to bond around a common goal.

When you are bonded, you dare to take a chance on the other person. A Secure Base Leader communicates acceptance and takes a risk toward activating the potential in a person.

Attachment, bonding, separation and grief are the four stages of the bonding cycle:

- **Attachment.** Whether to a partner, a new job or a new project, people first become attached to someone or something. When we are attached, we feel safe enough to let our natural guard down. Attachment is a drive to be in proximity to, to be next to or to be connected.

- **Bonding.** Not every attachment leads to an emotional bond. Bonding flows from what you do with the connection initiated through attachment. When the attachment leads to an exchange or source of energy, and emotion and depth of contact, a chemistry between people and the synergy around a common goal, it transforms into a bond.

- **Separation.** All bonds eventually lead to a transition or to an end — an uncoupling, a disconnection or a de-bonding. Change, if only through the natural passage of time, brings about separation. Separation is all about letting go of somebody or something, and it is a preparation for something beyond grief.

- **Grief.** Grief is an extension of the separation stage. Grief is the experience of saying goodbye in order to say hello. It ideally leads to a new attachment or to a renewal of an attachment. Grief involves the emotional experience resulting from the ending or transition of the bond. If you cannot grieve, you will never be able to bond effectively. ●

Deliver Change: Embracing Loss Through Grief

Many people, many executives and many organizations are uncomfortable with loss, separation and grief. There is no significant personal loss that will not permeate your leadership performance. Your work as a Secure Base Leader requires you to identify your losses and grieve them. If you do not “unload your heavy baggage” or burden of loss, you will not be able to access the energy you need to bond with and inspire others. The outcome of resolved grief is the ability to feel joy and gratitude again.

Resolving grief is essential to achieving results faster,

with higher levels of motivation and engagement, and to delivering the change inherent in innovation, growth and even corporate survival.

The late Dr. Elizabeth Kübler-Ross was one of the first people to identify the stages of grief:

1. Denial
2. Protest-anger
3. Sadness-missing
4. Fear-terror-panic
5. Rationalization
6. Acceptance
7. New attachment or renewal
8. Forgiveness
9. Gratitude

Grief in organizations may appear in situations like:

- A new CEO struggles to win over an organization after the departure of the much-loved former CEO
- After not gaining a promotion, a high-potential employee disengages and then subsequently resigns
- A star performer becomes demotivated following a divorce

Many people are surprised to learn that major gains also include losses that need to be grieved:

- The loss of familiar colleagues after a promotion
- The loss of entrepreneurial spirit after a company progresses out of the startup phase
- The loss of urgency after a huge project is completed

The problem is that organizations tend to skip over the stages of grief and expect employees to bond to the new people or project or strategy or office layout immediately. Skipping stages can result in people getting stuck in their perceived loss and being unable to fully engage in a new bonding cycle — one in which they can say hello to new goals and people.

Here are some ways to use your knowledge of the bonding cycle and grief curves to deliver change as a Secure Base Leader:

- **Embrace grief.** Remember that grief during change is natural. By understanding the process of loss and grief as well as the bonding cycle, you can lead the change, instead of allowing resistance to the change to lead you.

- **Accept emotions.** Grief is not talked about much in the workplace because it is a personal emotional reaction to loss, not an intellectual one. You can encourage the change process and reduce resistance by creating safe environments for people to express emotions.

- **Recognize the pain and sell its benefit.**

Recognize the pain of others by putting words to it: “I know you miss the old team leader.” Then go on to “sell the benefit” of that pain: “The new team leader has contacts throughout the company that will pull in extra resources.”

- **Slow down.** It takes time for people to express the feelings associated with loss, and you can’t schedule a time in Outlook.

- **Use ritual.** Some ideas include a farewell speech by the departing team member, going-away gatherings to reflect on what was and working together to dismantle a project room after the deliverable is achieved.

- **Move on together.** It is important that people do not wallow in grief and become victims or complainers. Different people in different parts of the organization will go through the stages of grief at different speeds. ●

Bringing Forward the Power of the Mind’s Eye

Your Mind’s Eye guides you to make sense of the events, experiences, challenges and opportunities in your life. The choice you exercise by being the master of your fate is determined by the focus of your Mind’s Eye.

If bonding is the “heart” of leadership, the Mind’s Eye is the “head.” Secure Base Leaders influence the Mind’s Eye of others to maintain focus on the end game and thereby achieve goals, meet stretch targets and deliver results. Being a Secure Base Leader involves actively and constantly focusing the Mind’s Eye of the people you want to influence and propel to high performance.

The brain is fundamentally hardwired to look for danger, pain and the negative. Our brains have one overriding goal beyond all others: survival. By connecting to somebody or something we each can achieve a feeling of safety that switches off the brain’s search for danger. When we feel safe, we can open our minds to the most powerful forms of exploration. Explosions of creativity follow. Caring leads to daring as the focus turns to possibilities. With a secure base, people reap myriad benefits.

While one event can adversely affect a person’s life, the cumulative effect of a series of events generally leads to the viewpoint a person holds of himself or herself, of others and of life itself. You can take control of your future in two ways: First, understand how past experiences affect the present. Second, select the secure bases who will support your dreams and aspirations.

Secure bases shape the Mind’s Eye of others in three main ways:

Brain Science and Change

Our brains have a friend or foe “early warning system,” a flashlight that changes focus based on very quick judgments about whether someone is a friend, and therefore treated “fairly,” or whether they are a foe, and therefore treated with suspicion. When the foe system is alerted by a perceived sense of threat, people will shut down, become distant and focus on problems as they attempt to reduce the perceived danger.

Brain science also demonstrates that people are fundamentally motivated by a sense of belonging. Researchers have discovered that social exclusion lights up the same parts of the brain as physical pain. When people say “I feel hurt,” they really do feel the pain.

- **Modeling.** If you are positive and optimistic, there were secure bases in your life who modeled this attitude. If the parent is relaxed and confident, the child wants to go out and explore. If the parent is anxious or nervous, the child picks up on the anxiety and may be fearful and cling to the parent’s side.

- **Influencing self-theories.** People with fixed mindsets are likely to play it safe and not take risks. Their “view of self” is therefore defensive. If people have a growth mindset, they view the world from a learning, potential and possibility perspective. Their “view of self” is dynamic. Secure bases help others focus their Mind’s Eye toward a growth mindset and away from a fixed viewpoint.

- **Improving self-control.** Secure bases help others direct their focus in a way that encourages self-control. Each of us has to exhibit self-control to turn the flashlight from the instinctive negative to the positive. Secure bases can direct the person’s focus away from the immediate frustration, temptation or perceived loss and toward other current or future benefits.

A final fundamental aspect of the Mind’s Eye is its relationship to state and results. By “state” we mean how a person is at any one moment in time — her physiology, attitude, emotions, mood, behavior and beliefs as they all come together, internally and externally. By training your Mind’s Eye, you can influence your mental and physical state to determine a better result. Can you change the fact that the plane is delayed? No. So shift your Mind’s Eye from the pain of the delay to the gain of what you can do with the two hours you didn’t plan to have. ●

Achievement: Playing to Win

When you Play to Win, you combine all of the components of Secure Base Leadership — the bonding, the processing of losses through grief and the Mind’s Eye — and put them in service of achievement.

Because Playing to Win is inherently sustainable, it delivers healthy high performance. Again, high performance is challenging yourself and others to see and achieve what is beyond normal expectations.

The intersection of varying levels of caring and daring creates four quadrants:

• **Playing to Win (High Caring + High Daring):** Playing to Win translates into your willingness to take the necessary risks to succeed. You are there to cover others’ backs and, at the same time, to challenge your followers with tough feedback and high expectations.

• **Playing Not to Lose (High Caring + Low Daring):** If you are Playing Not to Lose, you are focused on failure, possible mistakes, worries and what could go wrong. You tend to be too cautious, are afraid of making decisions and avoid risk-taking.

• **Playing to Dominate (Low Caring + High Daring):** Playing to Dominate means focusing on results at the expense of relationships. If you continue to use this approach, you can become detached from your people.

• **Playing to Avoid (Low Caring + Low Daring):** When Playing to Avoid, you demonstrate the highest levels of defensiveness, risk avoidance, fear of making mistakes and even withdrawal. In other words, you have disengaged and “checked out.”

Playing to Win is the leadership approach in which you lead at your best in a sustainable way and have your deepest impact on others and your organization. ●

Strengthen Your Own Secure Bases

Ask yourself:

- Who were my secure bases growing up?
- Who cared about me and also dared me to attempt the impossible?
- Which experiences influenced the leader I am today? What are the “roots of my leadership”?

Self-awareness is a key component of Secure Base Leadership. Through self-awareness you can strengthen your knowledge of your own secure bases, whether they are people from your present or past, goals, or objects.

Each secure base is a building block of your foundation. All these blocks fit together to create a strong base — one from which you interact with the world.

The two most important kinds of secure bases are people and goals:

• **People:** Start by identifying those people in each aspect of your life who give you both a sense of protection and inspire you to explore and grow. Your secure bases will be those people who supported and encouraged you while you spread your wings and sought to reach your highest potential. Someone from your past who has since died may still be a secure base. Avoid putting your secure bases — or anyone — on a pedestal, as doing so will only lead to disappointment.

• **Goals:** Reflect on the goals you’ve set throughout your life. Many of the goals that become secure bases for us can take many years to achieve and also involve moments of failure along the way as well as success. When the goal is a secure base, it gives you a source of energy and inspiration to pursue challenges in the present and future. Goals also provide what researcher Daniel Pink described as the “three factors for motivation”: a sense of purpose, mastery and autonomy.

You have developed mindsets, beliefs, perspectives and knowledge based on your experiences and the people you have encountered. Neuroscience has proven that past experiences become hardwired into the brain. Certain events become associated with specific states.

We agree with research that proves that great leaders are made. Leadership is a culmination of life experiences and intentional development efforts. Secure Base Leaders develop an integrated understanding of how their past impacts the present, and then, armed with this knowledge, they develop new habits and patterns that allow them to be successful in different ways.

In our experience, those courageous enough to look back and really understand how their past experiences influenced their behavior are able to liberate themselves from those patterns. If you have had a network of secure bases throughout your life, you may be able to internalize those experiences and ultimately become your own secure base. ●

Become a Secure Base for Others

Part of the deep work of becoming a Secure Base Leader involves becoming aware of, and in some cases changing, very deeply ingrained patterns in the ways you interact with others. Some of those patterns are reflected in your “attachment style”— the way you connect to

people. Your journey should include an understanding of your attachment styles.

We have integrated Eric Berne's Transactional Analysis concepts into a model you can use to assess yourself and come to understand how and when you move across styles:

- **Secure:** Approachable, high self-esteem. "I'm OK, you're OK."
- **Anxious:** Insecure, overly dependent. "I'm not OK, you're OK."
- **Detached:** Withdrawn, depressed. "I'm not OK, you're not OK."
- **Avoidant-dismissive:** Independent loner. "I'm OK, you're not OK."

Ask yourself:

- *What was the predominant style of the people around me during my childhood?* You are likely to repeat the dominant attachment styles of your mother and father. As with any pattern you have developed over time, you can learn to change your style if it is not serving you well.
- *During times of great pressure and stress, which style do I tend to adopt?* Notice under which conditions you exhibit each of these styles and, very importantly, notice your habitual movement when under pressure.
- *Do I sometimes behave in ways consistent with styles other than my predominant style?* Keep in mind that we all exhibit elements of each style some of the time.

Connecting with others also involves picking up on the "signals" they are sending about themselves, their emotions and their needs. Signals are the verbal and nonverbal messages that confirm or deny the truth of a person's communications. Most signals are subtle. Sometimes signals are conscious, sometimes unconscious.

Four main sources of human signals are part of the verbal or nonverbal exchanges between people:

- **Body:** "Body language" includes gestures, posture, facial expressions and tone of voice. These can be conscious or unconscious, positive or negative.
- **Emotions:** Examples of basic emotions are anger, fear, joy, sadness, disgust and surprise. These emotions activate the body, which in turn sends out signals.
- **Mind:** You send signals about what is going on in your mind. What you think becomes a signal, often (but not always) through the words that you use. What you believe about the other person affects the signals you send.
- **Spirit:** Spirit indicates the intention that is behind all other signals: your purpose, your motivation while you are taking action, and your end goal. Signals from the spirit convey a sense of judgment. ●

The Brain, Mirror Neurons and Bonding

Mirror neurons give humans the ability to learn through imitation — you watch someone do something and you imitate it. The more you copy someone's action, the easier it becomes, and eventually you can do it almost without thinking.

Research indicates that the basic need for relatedness, empathy and bonding is actually a biological wiring that is activated through such a learning process. Bonding can be learned by watching others and experiencing how they bond.

The mirror neuron system provides scientific validation of the need for empathy and authenticity in order to engage and inspire followers.

Transform Your Organization Into a Secure Base

Remember that in addition to people, other entities can also become secure bases when they provide a sense of protection and a feeling of comfort as well as offer a source of energy and inspiration to explore, take risks and seek challenges. When the company provides that combination of safety and stretch, it becomes a secure base to any employee or external stakeholder who feels those benefits.

Your ultimate success as a Secure Base Leader comes when you influence not only a handful of individuals but also the very culture of your organization. Secure Base Leaders are like puzzle-makers who put all the pieces in the right place.

Transforming your organization into a secure base will eventually lead to a change in its culture:

- Remember that any change involves loss. People need to grieve that loss.
- Focus on the learning you can achieve along the way, not just on the end goal.
- Work with what you can change rather than worrying about those pieces you can't change.
- Strive for excellence — not for perfection.
- Break the big challenges down into small steps.

You will begin the transformation process by encouraging as many leaders as possible to integrate secure base concepts into their approaches and attitudes. The success of an organizational change program is directly related to the level and breadth of senior leadership involvement.

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The more leaders you can get to be secure bases, the more people will be inspired to be secure bases and the more likely the broader organization will become a secure base.

You can integrate the core ideas of Secure Base Leadership into every human resource process. It is important to see Secure Base Leadership as a set of behaviors that can be identified, taught, learned, encouraged, assessed and rewarded. Can you find a way to incorporate elements of both caring and daring into a person's job description? We are amazed at how individual objectives often ignore the caring aspect of leadership. You will better integrate Secure Base Leadership when you write objectives that are more clearly focused on both caring and daring. If you do not review the elements of Secure Base Leadership during an annual performance review, you'll miss a critical aspect of the "reinforcement loop."

In order to transform your organization into a secure base, you need to address its goals, vision and mission. People need to bond with other people and to goals. The goals, vision and mission of an organization can infuse a deep sense of caring and daring into all employees and even other stakeholders. ●

Humanize Your Leadership and Your Organization

When we ask senior leaders to reflect on their learning experiences, they often tell us that they "feel human" again. Or they say they have "gotten back in touch with their humanity." Somehow, their very nature as people has become hidden over their years of corporate life. The experience of feeling alive again represents the essence of our mission to humanize organizations.

We recognize the tough realities of business in the 21st century. We know that organizations need to change to survive and thrive. What concerns us is the way that change is often implemented. Everywhere we look, we see more focus on efficiency and survival and less focus on people.

You begin humanizing your organization by opening yourself up to the humanity of others, and you begin that process by first attending to your own humanity:

- **Elevate your hopes and dreams.** Find a way to elevate your hopes and dreams, your passion and joy, your conviction and determination, and your spontaneous enthusiasm for your work and for your life.
- **Show vulnerability.** Remember that showing

emotion is a sign of strength. In your vulnerability is your humanity, and in your humanity is your strength. We have seen time and time again that when a leader opens up others open up too.

- **Uplift people around you.** This means focusing on developing strong, enduring bonds with people while also maintaining a challenging and opportunity-focused mindset. The Mind's Eye is always focused on Playing to Win.

The way leaders organize work can either support or block people's very humanity. You can help humanize your organization by changing some of the traditional and even newer ways work is organized:

- **24/7 contact.** The brain works more effectively and efficiently when it has regular breaks. Wean yourself off any email addiction you may have and encourage your people and teams to do the same.

- **Make time to build relationships.** Does your organization schedule work in ways that enable people to get to know each other as people? See what you can do within your sphere of influence to create time for bonding.

- **Recognize the human cost of virtual teams.** Organizations are increasingly fragmented and project-based, with people more attached to their work and their direct colleagues than to the company.

If you choose to act as a Secure Base Leader and adopt a Playing to Win approach, you will respond to challenges by seeking both survival and great relationships. You will always be asking yourself, "How can we win and keep the human dimension thriving?"

Each organization is potentially a place of thriving, flourishing and growth. It can also be a place where human beings are devalued. The turning point is leadership. And within leadership, the essence is Secure Base Leadership. When you take the journey to become a Secure Base Leader, you enhance first your own human spirit, then the human spirit of others and finally the humanity of your organization. ●

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

If you liked *Care to Dare*, you'll also like:

1. **The 5 Levels of Leadership** by John C. Maxwell. The levels represent stages in leadership development reaching the pinnacle of leadership: when you are followed because of who you are and what you represent.
2. **Leaders at All Levels** by Ram Charan. Charan offers a solution that outlines a new model for succession and leadership development.
3. **Leadership Gold** by John C. Maxwell. Learning more about leadership will make a difference in you, and you will make a difference in the lives of others.