

IGNITING THE CORPORATE WORLD WITH THE POWER OF DREAMS

How using our SLEEPING INTELLIGENCE will create a better, more meaningful corporate world in which leaders and employees will thrive and want to work



WHY THIS NOW?

The corporate world is in a dire state. Leaders and employees increasingly see no point in going to work, and a growing stress epidemic, “the great resignation” and “quiet quitting” are symptoms of a world of work deeply out of balance.

In order to attract and retain leaders and employees, the corporate world will have to adopt a new paradigm. A paradigm in which mission and meaning speaks louder than money and (remaining in) power. A paradigm in which humans will truly thrive and want to continue working in.

The time for change is now, so that the corporate world will not increasingly become a reproach to itself.

This change requires leaders who dare to do things differently. Leaders who courageously dare to take a stance against this global catastrophe.

“Igniting the corporate world with the power of dreams” aims to catapult the change towards a better, more meaningful corporate world by:

- 1) Equipping new corporate leaders with one of the very best tools to becoming and staying conscious, completely in tune with themselves and with the new paradigm. Also, a tool that will make leaders more creative, compassionate, and inclusive.
- 2) Equipping senior corporate leaders not only with the courage to make the change, but also the ability to much better embrace, and adapt to, the new paradigm. Ultimately, this will make it easier for senior leaders to give way for the new generation of leaders.



INTRODUCTION

WE NEED A DIFFERENT APPROACH

The new generation of corporate leaders and employees are thirsting for a world in which deeper meaning, and making a real difference with what they do, is the pinnacle of their work life. In order to attract and keep talent, corporate companies are enormously challenged in making a meaningful mission *actually* being the primary foundation of what they do, and titles, results, and revenue (and the status and power that goes along with them) being an important but *secondary* element of this foundation.

On top of this, the idea of “well, this is what we want you to do (since this is how we’ve always done it),” no longer works, and hasn’t done so for a long time. Corporate organizations are being forced to redefine the way they approach the match between individuals and tasks, as the new generation of leaders and employees are eager to put their *true* strengths (what they are naturally good at) to work for a mission they can truly identify with.

Similarly, the past decade has seen a vast increase in the number of overburdened leaders and employees collapsing from stress.¹ “Quiet quitting” and “the great resignation” are phenomena underlining the fact that something is way out of balance in the corporate world. The Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine has further increased this trend.²

It calls for deeply conscious leaders who know who they are, know what they want, and take it as *their natural responsibility* to act accordingly and change the corporate world for the better.

Finally, we are currently witnessing enormous changes in the ecosystem of the planet we live on, changes we now know are man-made. The necessity of compassionate leadership not only entails protecting leaders and employees to prevent burnout. It also entails showing true compassion towards the resources of the Earth.

WHY DREAMS?

Becoming compassionate towards others – and towards planet Earth – starts with learning how to show true compassion towards ourselves. Tuning in on our dreams does exactly that. When we open up to our dreams, we open up to more intuitive, less fixed ideas about the world and about ourselves. We discover how we are much more than our title, and thus also the wrong idea that if we did not have that title, we would have no value. By knowing and embracing who you are more fully, embracing everything you contain, including the very human feelings of not being good enough, of not having what it takes (but still containing these feelings within), makes you a more trustworthy, more certain, more wholesome leader. Why? Because looking into your dreams, your sleeping intelligence, you have dared to take a very deep and very honest look at yourself in the mirror.

¹ E.g., “A Stressful New Decade: The latest information on how stress shapes our minds and bodies”, Kevin Dervishi, Harvard University, 2020

² American Institute of Stress, “Stress in America 2022”: <https://www.stress.org/daily-life>



HOW LEADERS BENEFIT FROM USING THEIR DREAMS

As a leader, do you know what *truly* drives you? Being asked this question, many leaders often say things like that they want to make real change and have real impact. Or that their chief aim is to make their employees develop, thrive and shine. But in 1:1 sessions with leaders where their nocturnal dreams are taken as the starting point, it often turns out that a major underlying and deeply unconscious driver is a fear of not having what it takes, or simply fear of failure, in many cases combined with a deep and unconscious longing for approval. Sometimes this is also expressed as a deep unconscious fear of simply *daring* to be as resourceful as they, in fact, are (e.g., an underlying fear of standing out, or a fear of outshining others). These unconscious drivers naturally have an impact on the way they approach their role as leaders (e.g., by unconsciously being overly controlling, by unconsciously clinging to power, by appearing insecure, or by simply becoming inauthentic clones of other leaders).

DEEP PERSONAL INSIGHT AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

When you start tuning in on your dreams, your knowledge about yourself deepens tremendously. As a leader who works with your dreams, you will typically discover deeply unconscious patterns in the way you conduct your leadership. Not only in terms of the above mentioned patterns, but also on a more personal level – for instance, in terms of a too deep faith in authority, always falling into a submissive role whenever your boss, or other leaders of higher rank than you, are around. Or maybe you have a personal history unconsciously leading you to hold back, conform, and not lead in a way that would be truer to yourself. Finally, our nocturnal dreams are also the place in which body and mind communicate. When tuning in on your dreams, you will be forced to live a (work) life clearly aligned with your body's need for rest, and in general, healthy living (your dreams will be “screaming at you” if you don't). Understanding this deep physiological need in themselves makes it a lot easier for leaders to also embrace the physiological needs of their employees.

AUTHENTIC, COMPASSIONATE LEADERSHIP

In our dreams, we see all that we contain. We meet our inner critic and see the damage it does to us. We meet our inner “controller” – the side of ourselves that controls and pushes us (and maybe also our employees) beyond what is healthy. We discover our inner criminal, i.e., how we sometimes go against ourselves with regards to moral standards (maybe even against the law), potentially in the pursuit of money and power, or simply because of trying to fit in. *But know this:* it is also in our dreams that we discover how deeply creative, how wise, and how strong we, in fact, are. When you as a leader embrace yourself fully, you automatically become better at fully embracing your employees. And you become better at making more informed, more wholesome decisions. In other words, you start leading from a very deep and authentic place.



THE CORPORATE WORLD IS READY—AND SO IS SCIENCE

Over the past 10 years, Michael Rohde Olsen has held more than 200 talks on utilization of our sleeping intelligence (nocturnal dreams), about 50 of these at corporate workplaces, in leadership networks etc.

The interest in the corporate world is big (and rising exponentially), as is the willingness of the corporate world to embrace the vastly effective tools that our dreams are. Leading financial newspapers have begun writing about how dreams and dreamwork can make a huge difference for leaders and employees, and thus the companies they work at. Combined with the solid scientific research underscoring the benefits of proactively using our dreams, the corporate world is at a place where it is now ready to take on nocturnal dreams as a highly effective tool for creating deep personal insight, enhanced creativity, and better, more mission-driven and humanly friendly workplaces.

NOW IS THE TIME

Never has there been a time in history when we know so much about why we dream. Know how dreaming is crucial for our (mental) well-being.³ But also, how *proactively using* our dreams (e.g., through dream incubation; programming our dreams to work on a given problem) can result in enormous creativity in solving work-related problems, and not the least, make better, more well-founded decisions as a leader. And how tuning in on the content of our dreams can result in vast increases in personal insight, ultimately leading to better, more compassionate, and inclusive leadership.

The search engine Google is an example of something that came out of a (recalled!) dream. Co-founder Larry Page woke up with the underlying technical idea behind Google in his head – coming from a dream. The brand name Nike likewise is a result of a nocturnal dream of one of its co-founders. And not to forget – former president Barack Obama used the understanding of one of his dreams to finally come to terms with a feeling of having never been accepted by his father – something that led to him leading from a deeper, more authentic place, no longer unconsciously trying to impress his father.

Deirdre Barrett (psychologist and Ph.D. at Harvard Medical School) has already demonstrated how dream incubation is a highly effective tool for problem-solving in non-corporate settings.⁴ Other studies have shown how dreamwork in general facilitates higher personal insight, higher self-esteem, and better relations with others.⁵ Michael Rohde Olsen and Deirdre Barrett are currently working with corporate companies to demonstrate how dream incubation is also a useful tool in a corporate setting; the results of this are to be published in Harvard Business Review. At the same time, in spring 2023, a major Danish publishing house (Lindhardt and Ringhof) is publishing Michael's third book – a book on utilization of sleeping intelligence / nocturnal dreams directly aimed at the corporate world.

Furthermore, as research has thus already shown how effective a tool our dreams can be for raising individual self-awareness (consciousness), never has there been a time when the need for conscious leaders has been more pressing, as already illustrated.

³ E.g., Hoss And Gongloff editors, "Dreams – Understanding Biology, Psychology, and Culture, ABC-Clio LLC, 2019

⁴ Barrett, Deirdre, "The Committee of Sleep": A Study of Dream Incubation for Problem Solving, Dreaming Vol 3., 1993

⁵ E.g., Hill et.al., Dreaming, Volume 23(1), March 2013, 1-45



ABOUT MICHAEL



Michael Rohde Olsen (born 1975) grew up in a working class family. In 2002, experiencing self-esteem issues, he commenced many years of psychoanalytic therapy (psychoanalysis). Here, he quickly discovered the immense value of actively utilizing his sleeping intelligence, i.e., working with the contents of his dreams.

He immediately saw what the corporate world was missing by not utilizing the immense resource that our nocturnal dreams are, and the vision of igniting the corporate world with the power of dreams was born.

Michael is trained in business and psychology. He has an MSc in International Business from Copenhagen Business School (CBS), and National University of Singapore (NUS). He later acquired a Bachelor of Psychology from Lund University (LU, Sweden), which was where his own research in dreams began.

His international career began when first doing 2 semesters of business studies in Munich (Germany) and London (UK). He then worked a year at the Danish Embassy in Estonia, helping Danish companies making a foothold and exporting their goods and services to the Baltics. During his studies in Singapore, he also worked for American Eli Lilly (pharmaceuticals) at their Asia Pacific regional office. Having completed his master's degree, he continued working for Eli Lilly in various leadership and project management roles within sales and marketing. This also included two longer postings at the company headquarter in Indianapolis (Indiana, USA).

In 2008, he made a bigger career move from pharmaceuticals to teaching project management and leadership in the consulting industry. This move was based on a nocturnal dream of his that made it clear that it was now time for a career change. He worked as a full-time consultant for five years while studying for his Bachelor of Psychology, teaching project management and leadership at diverse places such as the USA, Angola, India, Brazil, France, and Denmark.

In 2012, he established his own company, DreamAlive, and began working as a consultant, helping corporate companies (e.g., AIG, Siemens Gamesa, Lego, AbbVie, Johnson Controls and many more) tap into the power of dreams.

Today, Michael is a best-selling author and an established dream expert throughout Scandinavia, often appearing on TV, radio and in newspaper articles. During the Covid-19 pandemic, he hosted "The Dream Mirror", a national weekly radio show dedicated to talking about the power of dreams. Michael was also presented with the prestigious "Talent 100 Award" by the leading Danish business magazine Berlingske Business, for his abilities as a trainer and speaker.

Read more at: www.michaelrolsen.com