

## **Strengthening our CORE: Recommended Books and Podcasts That Inspire Respect**

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The number of books on my TBR stack (to be read) is a little embarrassing, but thankfully, the number on my *already read* list is pretty hefty. Between hardcover, paperback, e-books, audio books and podcasts, there are endless opportunities to explore subjects that help us become better leaders, colleagues, and sometimes, individuals.

Here are a few that I think align well with our commitment to CORE (Creating Opportunities for Respectful Environments), and I'd love for you to send me others that you've loved that I can pass along in a future article.

### **BOOKS**

**The Person You Mean to Be** by Dolly Chugh offers a practical and compassionate guide for anyone striving to contribute to respectful, inclusive environments—what we might call living into our CORE values. Rather than perfection, Chugh emphasizes progress, encouraging readers to embrace growth, self-awareness, and everyday actions that foster understanding and respect. Through research, relatable stories, and real-world examples, she helps us recognize how we can be more aligned with the values we hold and the environments we want to help create.

**Radical Respect** by Kim Scott offers a powerful framework for creating environments where respect is not just expected but actively cultivated. Through candid insights and practical guidance, Scott explores how to navigate power dynamics, foster open dialogue, and address interpersonal harm with care. The book provides tools for building trust and accountability—key components of any culture rooted in CORE (Creating Opportunities for Respectful Environments).

**The Speed of Trust** by Stephen M.R. Covey highlights trust as a critical driver of strong, respectful environments. Covey outlines how trust-building behaviors like transparency, accountability, and active listening can transform relationships and organizational culture. Grounded in practical strategies, the book supports the foundation of CORE by showing how trust accelerates collaboration, strengthens respect, and creates lasting impact.

### **PODCASTS**

**A Bit of Optimism** by Simon Sinek offers thoughtful, uplifting conversations with guests from diverse backgrounds, exploring what it means to lead with purpose, build trust, and nurture human connection. Each episode reinforces CORE values by highlighting how respect, curiosity, and empathy can shape more positive and inclusive environments—at work and beyond.

**Dare to Lead** by Brene' Brown brings together leaders, culture-shapers, and changemakers to explore what it means to lead with courage, empathy, and clarity. Through honest conversations, the podcast models the skills essential to building respectful, values-driven environments such as trust-building, accountability, and the power of vulnerability. Each episode offers practical insights for anyone committed to creating workplaces rooted in psychological safety and belonging.

**Work Life**, by organizational psychologist Adam Grant, explores the hidden dynamics that shape how we work and interact. Each episode offers evidence-based insights and engaging stories that challenge assumptions and reimagine workplace culture. With a focus on fairness, inclusion, and collaboration, the podcast encourages listeners to build environments where respect, curiosity, and growth are at the center, key components of a truly respectful workplace.

I hope that you'll take some time to read or listen to some of these amazing resources and let me know what you think at [Bettina.straight@gmail.com](mailto:Bettina.straight@gmail.com), just title it CORE Resources.