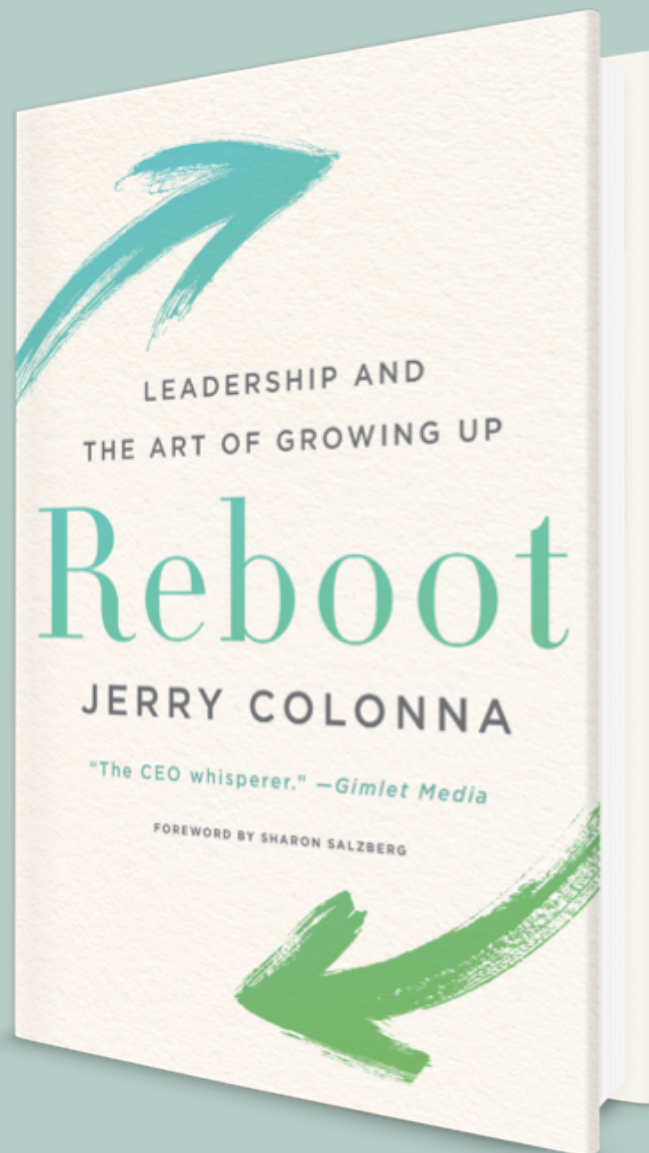


A READING GUIDE FOR

# Reboot

BY JERRY COLONNA



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# Reboot

## A READER'S GUIDE

"A well-asked question creates a sense of well-being even as it disrupts the story making that has protected us for so long." - Jerry Colonna

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1. How did my relationship with money first get formed and how does it influence the way I work as an adult? What was the belief system around money and work that I grew up with? (Chapter One)
2. How can I lead with the dignity, courage, and grace that are my birthright? How can I use even the loss of status and the challenge to my self-esteem that are inherent in leadership to grow into the adult I want to be in the world? (Chapter Two)
3. In what ways have I depleted myself, run myself into the ground? Where am I running from and where to? Why have I allowed myself to be so exhausted? (Chapter Three)
4. Who is the person I've been all my life? What can that person teach me about becoming the leader I want to be? What is the story my family told about being real, being vulnerable, and being true? (Chapter Four)
5. Why do I struggle so much with the folks in my life? Why are relationships so difficult? What am I not saying to my co-founder, my colleagues, my family members, my life partner that needs to be said? (Chapter Five)
6. What's my purpose? Why does it feel like I'm lost while I struggle to move forward? How do I grow, transform, and find meaning? (Chapter Six)
7. How has who I am shaped the way I lead others and myself? What are the unconscious patterns of my character structure that are showing up in my organizations? (Chapter Seven)
8. How might I survive my life of heartbreak? How might I live in peace? (Chapter Eight)
9. What kind of leader and adult am I? What is enough? How will I know when my job is done? (Chapter Nine)

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## A READER'S GUIDE

### A CONVERSATION WITH JERRY COLONNA, AUTHOR OF *REBOOT*

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1. Why are “growing up” and the journey to leadership intertwined?

*JC: Learning to lead is tough. But within that difficult practice is the opportunity to confront the various aspects of ourselves which have held us back from realizing our full, human potential.*

2. Why are high-achievers often the least prepared to become leaders?

*JC: The challenge for high-achievers is that they've often linked their self-esteem, their self-worth, to achievement of a goal. As a model for development, that link can be a powerful motivator and is often used to propel someone forward. But when someone is asked to lead, they are often confronted with more unknowns and more uncertainty than they've ever had to face. Then, when these unknowns undermine perceptions of success, the high-achieving leader often faces a profound loss of self-confidence and, worse, lose an internal sense of self-worth.*

3. When asked how we are, why do so many of us reply “I’m busy,” and what’s wrong with that?

*JC: When we strive in order to quiet the voice that says we're unworthy, we'll often find ourselves speeding up: doing more, faster and faster. That creates an addictive busy-ness to our lives which, perversely, makes us feel worse. We can never be busyness enough, to feel worthy enough.*

*There's a corollary to this in that we will often use busyness as a mask. If we slow down, then we might actually have to face whatever it is we are running from. Of course, every wisdom tradition I've encountered ultimately teaches the same thing: slow down and face the demons.*

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#### 4. What is radical self-inquiry?

*JC: I chose this term to describe the way we can slow down, stop the spinning and constant pitching (to ourselves and the world) that we're some magical unicorn or that we're some unique expression of utter failure. It's the process of stopping, unmasking ourselves—with laughter, love, and compassions—and allowing ourselves to feel what we are truly feeling so that we may ask of ourselves the most important questions. Questions such as: How do I define success in my endeavors, and where does that definition spring from? What do I believe about the world and how does that shape who I am, and what I strive for?*

#### 5. Why is radical self-inquiry essential to leadership?

*JC: This internal self-examination is essential for leadership because of the power dynamics of leadership. A leader who is unwilling to unmask themselves will often warp and twist the culture of the organization, unconsciously turning those over whom they have structural power, into two-dimensional players in their private little theaters. The result is organizations and communities that are toxic and harmful to the participants (and, often times, the planet and the larger communities). A leader who is unwilling to look honestly and openly at their internal demons, is incredibly dangerous to themselves, and those anyone they work with.*

#### 6. Why are questions instead of answers more essential to the process of becoming a leader?

*JC: Because no one but you knows the answers. No one but you has you're your company, your organization, in this moment, with these conditions. No one but you has lived your life. Indeed, it's often another form of story-making, a leftover childhood survival strategy that believes one is safe if one stays small, that leads one to believe someone else must have the answer. When we outsource to someone else the answers to our life's questions, we often end up with answers that don't fit. And because they don't fit, they unintentionally make us feel inadequate. They won't work, and therefore, there must be something wrong with us.*

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## A READER'S GUIDE

### A CONVERSATION WITH JERRY COLONNA, AUTHOR OF *REBOOT*

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7. What are a couple of the most important questions one needs to ask oneself in order to reboot?

*JC: What kind of company do I want to work for? (Because, if you have power, you're creating that every day with your actions and feelings.) What kind of adult do I want to be? (Because, despite the childhood survival strategies you deployed, you get to re-wire your habitual reactions and choose.) In what ways has my old programming, the old subroutines that were laid out in childhood, helped me become the adult I am today? In what ways might they be longing to be transformed?*

8. What are the most common situations a leader encounters in which their personal baggage might hold them back from leading effectively?

*JC: One of the most challenging, and common, situations is dealing with conflict. I've found that leaders will often respond with either more aggression, shutting down disagreement with too much energy, or—more commonly—be conflict avoidant, driving the naturally occurring tensions underground only to pop-up throughout the organization as passive aggressive “politicking” or active-aggression and fighting.*

*Another common challenge is that the leader, out of a childhood fear of being wrong (with all of its shameful and fearful consequences) will fail to be clear—clear about objectives, clear about roles and responsibilities, clear about definitions of success and failure. The result is the organization drifts and bumps along, with the best people leaving because, without clear direction, they miss the pleasure of doing good work.*

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## A READER'S GUIDE

### A CONVERSATION WITH JERRY COLONNA, AUTHOR OF *REBOOT*

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9. What was your reboot awakening like and how did it guide you toward your current phase of your life as leader of reboot workshops and author of *Reboot*?

*JC: Well, it didn't feel so much like an awakening—a moment of transformation like Saul on the road to Damascus becoming Paul--as it did a gradual realization that everything that had worked in the past was no longer working. It was a multi-step process that began with me, in effect, hitting an emotional bottom. I was standing near the smoking remains of the World Trade Center. At that moment, I could have chosen to fall even deeper into the pit. Instead, I began to climb out. So I hit that broken-open-heart moment. And then I did something, which in hindsight, was probably really wise: I sat still. I sat down and didn't simply meditate but, in effect, turned my whole life into one extended meditation session. Reading, journaling, getting healthy, taking workshops—sitting under a virtual Bodhi tree—like the Buddha—and, saying “Fuck it. I'm not moving until I figure it out.” I give myself a lot of credit for having the guts to sit still and face what I'd been running from. From that moment, I began to build the man I am today.*

10. Why are grit and resiliency misunderstood by so many leaders?

*JC: I think because we fear not being “strong” enough and so we pursue a false notion of grit; we see it as something brittle. Resiliency is, by definition, adaptive, flexible. We learn from our mistakes and challenges. We over emphasize the “taking a punch” image of strength and de-emphasize the “learning from failure and pain.”*

11. Why do you say true leaders infuse the profanity of Work with the sacred duty of Work?

*JC: The sacred duty of Work is to show how, even in the most mundane and prosaic tasks of work, there's an opportunity for growth and self-actualization. When I was a teenager, I loaded boxes onto trucks while working for a garment company in Manhattan. When I was in college I cleaned apartments to make extra money. Both of those experiences infuse my attitude toward work today as a leader.*

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### A CONVERSATION WITH JERRY COLONNA, AUTHOR OF *REBOOT*

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12. How can we transform untamed hungers and compulsions into tools for creating organizations of growth?

*JC: The first step is to name them and the second is to take them. Stop denying them and then, as a result, projecting them onto others. When we take them back, we can understand the roots of those compulsions and see them as expressions of our wishes to feel loved, be safe, and belong. Then we can use our adult brains to reframe them so that they are less fearful and more generative.*

13. How can we reboot, grow up, and lead?

*JC: Start by standing (or sitting) still.. Then, bravely, turn around and look at the demons you've been running from. Then, take your seat as the leader, sit royally as if you have every right to your (position/role?) Drop the self-delusions and ask yourself what matters most to you. Then, lead—make decisions and offer a vision—from that place (despite your uncertainties).*

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## A READER'S GUIDE

### JOURNALING INVITATIONS

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*The process of radical self-inquiry into one's own leadership journey is supported by standing still and taking the time to ask oneself open, honest questions around the rules we carry. Following each chapter will be a series of questions to prompt your own inquiry. Consider these as invitations to inquire within.*

#### **CHAPTER ONE:**

- How did my relationship to money first get formed?
- How did that relationship shape the work I've chosen and my definitions of success and failure?
- How does it shape my view of the quality of others' work and contributions?
- What was the belief system around money and work that I grew up with?
- How does that impact my view of my own worthiness?

#### **CHAPTER TWO:**

- How can I lead with the dignity, courage, and grace which are my birthright?
- How can I use even the loss of status and the challenge to my self-esteem which are inherent in leadership to grow into the adult I want to be in the world?
- At the end of my tenure in my current position, what would I like to feel about myself?

#### **CHAPTER THREE:**

- In what ways do I deplete myself and run myself into the ground?
- Where am I running from and where to?
- Why have I allowed myself to be so exhausted?



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## A READER'S GUIDE

### JOURNALING INVITATIONS CONTINUED

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#### CHAPTER FOUR:

- Who is the person I've been all my life?
- What can that person teach me about becoming the leader I want to be?
- What was the story my family told about being real, being vulnerable, being true?
- What do I believe about vulnerability and how might that serve me?

#### CHAPTER FIVE:

- Why do I struggle with the folks in my life?
- Why are relationships so difficult?
- What am I not saying to my co-founder, my colleagues, my family members, my life partner that needs to be said?
- What's being said to me that I'm not hearing?

#### CHAPTER SIX:

- What's my purpose?
- Why does it feel I'm lost while I struggle to move forward?
- How do I grow, transform, and build a life of meaning?

#### CHAPTER SEVEN:

- How has who I am shaped the ways I lead others and myself?
- Which of my unconscious patterns might be showing up in my organization?
- How have those patterns benefitted my organization? How might they be holding it back?

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A READER'S GUIDE

## JOURNALING INVITATIONS CONTINUED

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### CHAPTER EIGHT:

- How has my heart been broken?
- What have learned about myself as a result of that heart being broken?
- What are the ways I embody resiliency?
- What does a life of peace and equanimity feel like?

### CHAPTER NINE:

- How will I know my work is done?
- What will being an adult feel like for me?

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A READER'S GUIDE

## A POEM & NOTES FROM JERRY COLONNA

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*Jerry Colonna: "The one poem more than any other I wish I could have included is "Lead" by Mary Oliver. I used it as inspiration for Chapter 8.*

*For me, it perfectly encapsulates the ordinary heartbreak of every day-- something I find so incredibly difficult. Whether it's the death of a loon, loss of a relationship, or the ending of a dream, Oliver's poem conveys the quiet, searing heartbreak of loss.*

*I knew I wanted to take the reader to a place of comfort from that loss. In my work, everyday, the folks with whom I work every day face seemingly unendurable heartbreak. I know that I need to help them see that, as I say in the book, 'this, too, shall pass.' "*

*Continue to the next page to read, "Lead" by Mary Oliver.*

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A READER'S GUIDE

## A POEM

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### LEAD

Mary Oliver

*Here is a story  
to break your heart.  
Are you willing?  
This winter  
the loons came to our harbor  
and died, one by one,  
of nothing we could see.  
A friend told me  
of one on the shore  
that lifted its head and opened  
the elegant beak and cried out  
in the long, sweet savoring of its life  
which, if you have heard it,  
you know is a sacred thing,  
and for which, if you have not heard it,  
you had better hurry to where  
they still sing.  
And, believe me, tell no one  
just where that is.  
The next morning  
this loon, speckled  
and iridescent and with a plan  
to fly home  
to some hidden lake,  
was dead on the shore.  
I tell you this  
to break your heart,  
by which I mean only  
that it break open and never close again  
to the rest of the world.*

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A READER'S GUIDE

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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### COMPLEMENTARY SELF-GUIDED COURSES FROM REBOOT:

#### **The Leadership Reboot**

Become the leader you were born to be. Reading, audio and questions for reflection are sure to prompt potent conversations with yourself and others about your relationship to work. [reboot.io/5day](https://reboot.io/5day)

#### **Shadow Reboot**

Learn how to work with shadow in this 5-Day course. We talk about Shadow a lot here at Reboot, and we do for a reason: Shadow is at the helm of the majority of conflicts that we help our clients sort out. This course will guide you through understanding what shadow is, how to recognize shadow in your life and work, how shadow presents in partnership, understanding the loyal soldier and other survival strategies, reclaiming your shadow, and the role of shadow in the organization. Ready to take a deeper dive into your own radical self-inquiry and glimpse the unconscious forces that are holding you back, keeping you small, or at the root of conflicts and struggles in which you repeatedly find yourself? [reboot.io/shadow](https://reboot.io/shadow)

#### **The Inclusivity Reboot**

What does it mean to build organizations of belonging? How can you build an organization safe enough for the whole human to show up at work? In this course, we discuss the hidden power and privilege that can pervade an organization and consider what is needed--beyond HR trends, and into matters of the heart--to create and sustain real places of belonging for all employees. We hope, by the end of the course, you have a sense of how you relate to belonging yourself, and how you create belonging in your communities, work, home, life. [reboot.io/inclusivity](https://reboot.io/inclusivity)

#### **Reboot Your Year**

Reboot Your Year is our invitation for you to pause and honor the transition into this new year. This simple, yet powerful, five-day course will guide you into through this annual transition with grace and open you to the promise and hope of the year ahead. The course unfolds through daily emails, each with a koan to consider and a guided journaling practice hand crafted by the Reboot team. Each day's practice takes less than 20 minutes to complete. Share it with teammates and colleagues - and family. [reboot.io/rebootnewyear](https://reboot.io/rebootnewyear)

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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### MORE COMPLEMENTARY SELF-GUIDED COURSES FROM REBOOT:

#### **The Co-founder Reboot**

Solidify your cofounder relationship. Sign up, invite your cofounders, and enjoy five days of rich material that may shift your cofounder relationship for the better. [reboot.io/cofounder-reboot](https://reboot.io/cofounder-reboot)

#### **Reboot Your Happiness at Work: A 10-Day Course In Mindfulness**

We teamed up with Meditation teacher Sharon Salzberg, to create this ten day course of insights and guided meditation to help you find space for mindfulness and compassion in your daily practice at work. This is a great course to do over 2 work weeks with your entire team for a company-wide course in mindfulness from one of the world's leading instructors. [reboot.io/reboot-your-work](https://reboot.io/reboot-your-work)

#### **Reboot Your Board**

In this course, we take you through the practical challenges of growing and developing a high functioning board. As Brad Feld, Fred Wilson, and Jerry discuss, the board-leadership relationship doesn't have to be a challenge. In fact, it can be one of the most rewarding aspects of your leadership journey. When done well, the board-CEO partnership can help each party grow and become the best possible person they can be—all while supporting the core purpose and mission of the business. [reboot.io/reboot-your-board](https://reboot.io/reboot-your-board)

#### **Reboot Your Anxiety**

Anxiety is something that many of our clients — and many of us here at Reboot — have struggled with. We wanted to shed some light on how to free oneself from the grip of anxiety, so we joined forces with Josh Roman, COO at Claritas MindSciences, and Dr. Judson Brewer, Claritas MindSciences founder, Director of Research at the Center for Mindfulness at UMASS, Author of The Craving Mind, psychiatrist, and addiction expert, to bring you this five day course. We'll look at the difference between stress and anxiety, how anxiety works in our brains, how it shows up for you, what makes us anxious and finally — how to step out of the anxiety cycle. We hope to share with you tools work with your anxiety in a generative way. [reboot.io/anxiety](https://reboot.io/anxiety)

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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## THE REBOOT PODCAST & EPISODE LISTENING GUIDE:

The Reboot podcast showcases the heart and soul, the wins and losses, the ups and downs of startup leadership. On the show, Entrepreneurs, CEO's, and Startup Leaders discuss with Jerry Colonna the emotional and psychological challenges they face daily as leaders. [reboot.io/podcast](https://reboot.io/podcast)

We've pulled together a listening guide for our podcast that puts each episode (and some extras) into the following topical categories:

- **Leadership, Development, & Community**
- **Major Transitions & Connecting to Purpose**
- **Fear & Failure**
- **Mindfulness & Meditation**
- **Communication, Conflict Management, & Scaling**
- **Anxiety, Mental Health, Depression, & Burnout**
- **Venture Capital, Boards, & Raising Funds**
- **Confidence, Believing in Yourself, & Imposter Syndrome**
- **Shadow & Superpower**
- **Partnerships & Co-founder Conflict**
- **Resiliency & Radical Self-Inquiry**

We've even added a bunch of additional resources and supplemental readings that pair well with the podcast discussions. We hope this is a useful tool for you—and your colleagues, friends, family, or anyone you know who's wondering about the intersection of work and meaning, life and purpose.

**GET THE GUIDE HERE!**

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