

Leadership Bookclub – Handout

Chapter 4 – Start with Heart

Key Themes

- Work on me first, us second → The only person you can directly control is yourself.
- Motive shift → In tough conversations, motives can slide unconsciously from solving a problem to saving face, winning, or punishing.
- What do I really want? → Keep asking until you move past emotional/short-term answers to deeper, long-term goals.
- Behavior reveals motives → Watch how you act (interrupting, rolling eyes, dismissing) to uncover your true motive.
- Refocus with four questions: What do I really want for myself? For others? For the relationship? What should I do right now to move toward that?
- Refuse the fool's choice → Don't accept 'attack or avoid' as the only options. Look for the AND: How can I be candid AND preserve the relationship?

Illustrative Stories

- Bathroom sisters → Claimed they wanted relief, but really wanted to be first/right.
- Greta (CEO) → Shifted from anger to dialogue by asking 'What do I really want?' and salvaged a tense cost-cutting meeting.
- Social media debate → Example of falling into the 'fool's choice' (truth vs. friendship).

Practical Takeaways

- Notice when adrenaline hijacks your motive.
- Use long-term framing ('What kind of person do I want to be?').
- Clarify both what you want AND what you don't want before speaking.
- Replace 'fight or flight' with creative AND solutions.