

DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



Listen to the podcast on all good platforms and on [WeNeedSocial.com](https://www.weneedsocial.com)

Episode 7 – Jon Husband & Harold Jarche

Thriving in the Wirearchy:
Networks Trailblazers Jon Husband & Harold Jarche



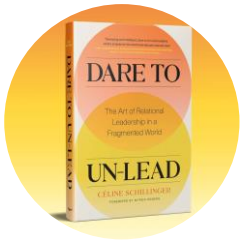
Networks change how we work, lead and even think. Is hierarchy replaced by “wirearchy”? What new skills do we need to master? 25 years ago, Jon Husband was one of the first to perceive the transformational effect of networks on work and business; Harold Jarche envisioned that they require a new form of literacy. Leading figures of the "future of work," Jon and Harold discuss the implications of the networking phenomenon on our lives in the office and beyond.

Podcast Transcript

Celine: It is tempting to think that more leadership or some kind of improved leadership will help us and our organizations work better. But what if leadership was part of the problem instead of the solution? What if our understanding of it only maintained principles of the past, which no longer serve as well?

That's what I explore in my book, *Dare to Un-Lead*, and today in this podcast. Join me and my guest, a person quoted in the book or in tune with its values, to learn from them what it takes to un-lead and succeed together.

Welcome to the seventh episode of the Dare to Un-Lead podcast, where we explore some of the themes addressed in [Dare to Un-Lead](#); the book. We started with the crisis of work and leadership in organizations that are often misunderstood for machines, but you can't fix a team or a business as you would repair a broken engine because they really are living organizations and that changes everything.



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



What we need today is a reinvention of leadership, which can take place around three universal values. We covered the first one: Liberty, in episodes three to five of this podcast. Susan Scrupski kicked off equality in episode six. More precisely, equality in diversity.

And what makes it possible? In my opinion, networks. Networks as technology and networks as operating principles. That's the topic of chapter seven, and that's what we're going to talk about today with my two guests. Two? Yes, for a change. Plus, not only is this multi-person conversation a good illustration of the topic, but my guests have a particularly deep understanding of networks and how they change work and leadership.

Jon Husband and Harold Jarche are familiar names to those interested in new forms of work. Both live in Canada: Montreal, for Jon and Sackville New Brunswick, for Harold, almost all the way to the east.

Jon is a thinker, a speaker and an advisor involved in the deep sociological and psychological changes introduced by the network era. Prior to working on his own, Jon has been involved in some of the foundational elements of the management systems we know today, such as talent strategies, org design, job evaluations, compensations, and so on. He knows this stuff from within!

Harold Jarche is also an advisor, a writer, speaker, and - I love that from his LinkedIn profile - "a keen subversive of the last century's management and training models". Harold spent 17 years in the Canadian Armed Forces where he developed a passion for training, learning, well, everything knowledge, and most likely one of the fields that is most transformed by networks. Harold is an active blogger and a partner in the [Internet Time Alliance](#), an international think tank focused on organizational learning and performance.

I met Harold and Jon through, guess what? Social networks, and I had the pleasure of meeting Jon in person several times. I have a deep respect for their respective work. They provide, in my opinion, essential guideposts for navigating the present and future of work. I also admire their work ethic, the way they lead their lives in alignment with their values of open collaboration and knowledge sharing.

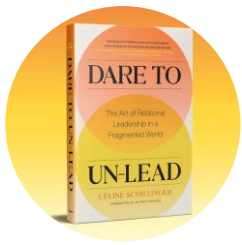
Hasn't *this* become subversive, indeed?

Jon, Harold, thank you so much for accepting my invitation. I'm excited to hear from you today.

Let me start with the question I ask each guest on this podcast. I'll start with you, Jon. Jon, what is your art, the professional practice that you would describe as unique to you or that you perform in a unique way? What is your art and what led you to this?

Jon: That's an interesting question, particularly as I approach, let's call it early old age, and look back on the twisting and winding path that got me here. And as I look back, I find myself increasingly... probably because I'm independent, very much like the curious 18 year old who went to university and began experiencing life outside of home.

I think my art has become an enduring curiosity about human beings, why they do what they do, how they work, how they live. Coupled with a very good and deep knowledge of the history of organizations, why people organize to do what they do, what motivates them, what keeps them going, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations.



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



To encompass that, and what led me eventually to study networks, was the combination of that curiosity, that knowledge, and what I would call a Jesuit-like training in the applied methodologies that organizations are using. In other words, all of the basic tools of 20th Century industrial era management science.

The combination of those three led to significant disenchantment and disillusionment. But that's what I do: I watch and I recognize patterns, I think earlier than many people; and put that against the background of where we've been for the last a hundred years.

Celine: What about you, Harold? What's your art?

Harold: My art, well... You talked about me being “a keen subversive of the last century's education and management models”, that actually came from a reader, I didn't make that up. Somebody actually said, well, This is what you do, Harold. So, that's part of it.

I came across a term this year, which I think describes me. My wife has always said that I'm 10 to 20 years ahead of everybody else, which is why I've had certain challenges in running my own business because people go like, what the heck is this guy talking about? The term that I came across is called “Sentinel Intelligence”. There are some people who sort of see the signs that a lot of other people don't see.

In some ways it's a curse, because it's kinda like, “how come you don't see this? Isn't this obvious?” And I think that is one thing that I also bring to my clients. And I've been lucky to have a few clients who've actually appreciated that. But trying to find them is difficult, so I think that's a problem being either Cassandra or being a little too far out there.

Jon: If it's any consolation, I've been called Cassandra a number of times in my working life as well.

Celine: And how did the two Cassandras of you got connected?

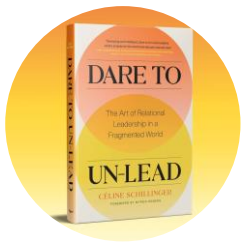
Harold: I actually dug through my blog posts to figure that one out, Jon.

Celine: And?

Jon: Well, it'd be the early 2001 or 2002, I would think. When many of us had our hair on fire about the potential of these liberating tools in this liberating environment. I know that's a question that's coming up. One of the reasons why there was so much excitement is because there had been 50 years of growing anxiety about all of the different kinds of constraints placed on workers under evolved management science.

Harold: Yes. We got connected through other bloggers and people that you mentioned, Johnny Moore, Rob Patterson, and a few others who were talking about how the web is changing relationships and particularly hierarchical relationships. And that's how we started connecting through them.

Because by 2001, I wasn't blogging, but I was reading a lot of blogs and I was one of the few people commenting on the blogs, which was kind of [rare], people weren't doing much commenting early on. That's how I got to know a number of people. “Hey, you wrote, you comment, you do that, [let's get] connected’. And so yes, it's been a solid 20 plus years that Jon and I have known each other.



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



Celine: The internet is considered to be officially born in 1983, somehow, and soon after came the first online virtual communities. Do you remember when and how you got involved in digital networks, Jon?

Jon: Yes, I do very clearly. In keeping with what I said before about my curiosity, I had been reading a lot in the mid-eighties about the coming information age and the knowledge age and so on. And so, I was aware that there was this thing called the internet.

In fact, I think I still have it around somewhere, a Fortune magazine with a cover about this thing called the Internet coming. At the date of publication of that particular issue of Fortune Magazine, there were only 74 websites on the planet. And they were wondering if this thing was going to stick around. And then came the .com boom and the .com bust right at the end.

That was around the time I came up with the notion of wirearchy. But also, I was involved in a number of early networks like Tribe, Friendster, Orkut. I was also paying attention to what is a topic of considerable discussion these days: “natural language processing” back then. As I was involved in designing and building a piece of software for blogging called Qumana. So yes, I was pretty actively involved in the first five years of the 2000s.

Celine: And how about you, Harold?

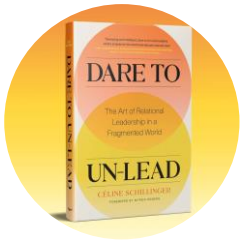
Harold: I come from a very non-techy background. As a matter of fact, you could almost call me a modern Luddite in my early years. I had no interest in this. I took a computer programming course in 1979 and I failed. The professor called me in and he said, what are you majoring in? I said, history. “So, are you planning on taking another computing course?” I said no. He said, all right, you pass, get outta here. That was a course in Fortran, using punch cards. That's like 1979.

Then leap forward to 1993. I had just transferred and became a training specialist in the military. I got posted to an Air Force unit and we had just purchased 100 new helicopters and my job was to design all the training. I had to understand computer-based training because we had this new thing coming and flight simulation. And so, it was like, you gotta learn about technology, whether you like it or not, buddy.

And I did. I was stationed in Montreal at the time. There was this place called A Window on Technology in downtown Montreal. I went there because I was just getting started on a master's in education. I went there with a friend of mine and we saw this thing on a computer and it showed a website. A light went on because the website was in Germany and it was like, I can post something in Canada, somebody in Germany can read it, vice versa. And the light went on: this is going to change everything because anybody can post anything and they can share anything everywhere. I became sort of a web network evangelist that minute. That was in early 1994.

Celine: You were right! This changed everything, including the power structures. So now comes the big question, Jon, about wirearchy. What is wirearchy?

Jon: Well first of all, it's just a made-up word, just to be clear about that, that myself and then a few other people have imparted some meaning to through its definition.



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



On purpose, I've always left it just as a definition of an emergent principle because I'm not sure that it's makeable into any particular method, although a little bit later I'll probably talk about how I think I see it all around us. But to continue on with the story I started:

I had ended up by the year 2000 having spent about 15 years as a management consultant, working with mainly the tools or the methods for developing the different levels in organization charts and the compensation strategies and the performance management strategies that went along with that.

The company I worked for was the dominant provider of these methods to large organizations all around the world. It's a method that was derived in the fifties. It's very, very clever, but it's very industrial engineering-based, very logical, very straightforward, based on inputs, throughputs, and outputs, and really codified. I think generically, in terms of the definitions that are used in the method, virtually all of Frederick Taylor's principles of Scientific Management [are included].

And by the time, mid-nineties rolled around, I had been reading a lot about the emerging knowledge management, living organizations, organizational learning, Peter Senge's work, Arie de Geus' work, all sorts of other people, again, remembering that I'm curious about people and why they do what they do.

And I ended up quitting the management consulting company, which was very, very traumatic for me just as I had turned 40. It really kind of blew up my life, but I couldn't see myself continuing in that firm with those old methods when I thought something so exciting as this information age and the era of networks was coming at us.

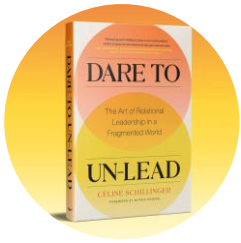
So, I ended up quitting and then a few years later I was in the middle of the .com boom. And I was actually reading an article or had just read an article by Peter Drucker titled "[Beyond the Information Age](#)". And the last few paragraphs [form] a section titled; Bribing the Knowledge Workers.

In it, he basically said, eventually in the economy that we're moving into, those who are knowledge workers, who produce the value out of knowledge and information are going to be the ones who own the means of production. And once they realize that, and a significant number of them realize that, then power shifts begin to happen with respect to traditional hierarchies. And I went, aha! And the light went on.

Actually, it was the next day when I was in the shower I was thinking about this new magazine that had come out, Wired Magazine. I was thinking about what is the "archi" or the architecture, the rules and the principles for living and working in this wired information age that's coming at us, and I just... Wire, it sounded like high, hierarchy, wirearchy – bang! I knew what I meant and I went out and wrote it down. Again, I had the benefit of probably 25 years of studying organizations and things like stocks and flows of knowledge, and where knowledge comes from, how information is used and so on. And [wirearchy, the definition](#) came to me that day.

It's a dynamic flow of power and authority based on knowledge, trust, credibility, and a focus on generating value.

Now, I've been asked a hundred times, or a thousand times: isn't that too generic? But if you think of what's going on with the several billion of us connected now, whether it's dystopian or whether it's utopian, what's involved: we are constantly exchanging "knowledge", and we are building or losing



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



trust and credibility as the case may be in many instances today. What circulates online creates opinion, whether it's correct and based on fact or not. An opinion is what creates energy for action. So we have this, this kind of ongoing tug of war that I don't expect is going to end anytime soon. It's just going to continue to evolve as we learn how to work with it, deal with it, master it, learn from the very large mistakes that will be made and so on.

So, it's really a principle based on the exchanges of information and what will be built out of that, whether it's for the better or for the worst. And, there will be examples of both.

Celine: Jon, do you mean that with wirearchy, or with the advent of this new era, job titles, reporting structures, hierarchical power, et cetera, all things expressed in org charts, have become meaningless?

Jon: I don't think so. No, I don't think they're meaningless. I think that what existed before, or what still exists in many, if not most cases, is a classic organization chart with boxes that have job titles in them, and then underneath somewhere in the files of each worker and each human resources department, there are additional documents that'll go along with, [such as] your KPIs or your OKRs, your performance objectives, your salary range, the different competencies you're expected to have in the competency models that attached to those and so on. I don't think those are meaningless. They have been a set of tools to implement a general thesis, or ethos, of management science.

But I think that because of the much more rapidly moving workplace now, these things will change in terms of their intent and perhaps their use.

I wrote an essay I think a long time ago called: Our Agreements are Our Structures. Because *what we've agreed to* is the job descriptions and performance kits that are around us in the org charts. I think all of those things are going to change. They've been used typically almost like a subway map or a city map where you're looking at a human organization and this is the way things officially are supposed to work.

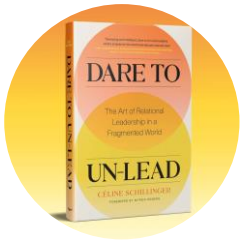
What we all know is that there's an awful lot that goes on in the white space of organization charts or in workarounds or in people that are dissatisfied with their titles often because a better, a different title would give them more money and put them in a different salary range, which is what a lot of consulting is about, actually. I think they're around to stay [but] they're going to become more flexible. I think jobs are going to be seen or are already seen as roles, instead of jobs, so that they can be redefined more easily.

These things are not going to go away. They're going to get retooled. They'll also be retooled because many organizations now use software platforms to manage much of the information about the employment relationship.

Celine: Harold, what does wirearchy mean today? Why does it matter?

Harold: I've written a number of posts on wirearchy and pretty well incorporated it into my own work. When you think about it, more and more of the work that we're dealing with, the situations are [getting more] complex or even chaotic.

What wirearchy puts forth with this idea of a two-way flow of trust and information and knowledge is that, it's only when information flows fast that we can make better decisions. And I say that



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



knowledge flows at the speed of trust; which basically incorporates the wirearchy organizing principle.

Too many of our organizations are structured around being able to deal with what Dave Snowden calls the [ordered domain](#) when things are clear or complicated. And that's why we have these job roles. But to deal with complexity, or even chaos, we need much looser, what I call [temporary negotiated hierarchies](#).

So, somebody has to be in charge, okay? Today, you're in charge Harold; tomorrow, Jon, you're in charge. Right? Because the situation is different. And so, you need to be able to have that ability to reorganize very very quickly. But you also need to have strong networks to know where you can get the right information, at the right time, from.

When you go back to wirearchy, this is an organizing principle. From that, we can then build different organizational models.

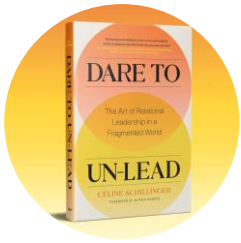
Jon: Harold has built, some years ago, a very interesting diagram where he took essentially what's recognized as the [Cynefin framework](#) symbol of four plus one areas, the center being disorder, but laying on top of that, I think it's [Verna Allee's](#) work on value networks where you get this notion of different looseness and tightness of hierarchies depending upon the situations that you find yourself in.

One of the things that's interesting, particularly given that we're talking about wirearchy now, is that two things have really stayed with me. One is the rise of awareness of complexity and complex adaptive systems. And, the fundamental issue of complexity is that different parts are in interaction, are in motion. Whereas the underlying assumption in the previous era of industrial things meant that there was often a fixed sequence of tasks that produced an outcome. It's a very different notion as opposed to all sorts of different parts of, let's say, a knowledge network, interacting with each other. Out of that emerge appropriate responses that are scaffolded into eventually an appropriate response or not.

So, this notion of complexity becoming more tangible, more in our awareness, I think is compounded by the fact that we haven't really gotten into the topics like PKM or working out loud, where so much more of what we do has a number of defining characteristics that weren't there before. They're visible all the time on a screen. They're searchable, they're linkable. You can do much, much more with this information, once you know where you're navigating. And what's really important to keep in mind is that, with all this interaction, it brings placing things into context to the fore, always. You know, if I could say anything adopting that real estate maxim of "location, location, location", for networks, it's "context, context, context", always context.

If you look at the notions of complex adaptive systems in Dave Snowden's and others work, when you move into less certain, more complex conditions, you are seeking to find what are the constraints and what are the boundaries that operate such as to allow you to, first of all, understand and get a handle on what's going on, and then respond in appropriate or intelligent ways.

Celine: It is said that the advent of networks signals the end, or the beginning of the end, of autocratic top-down management. Harold, is the democratization of work something we should aim for? If yes, why, and where do we start?



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



Harold: Well, I said that knowledge flows at the speed of trust. And if you think about the requirement to form and reform who we work with and how, and how we work together, democracy, where everyone is an equal or has some equality, really gives you much more agility. While a structured hierarchical organization is only as smart as the individual at the top; that's a huge limitation.

One thing that I put forward in terms of leadership is that leadership is helping make your network smarter. It's helping them make better decisions.

If you think about that from the perspective of our elites in many of our democracies, they haven't helped make their network smarter. They haven't helped to make their community smarter. If you dumb down the networks around you, they're going to be making decisions that maybe aren't in your best interest.

So again, the democratization of knowledge, I think, becomes essential to be able to address the complex things that we really need to. We don't have enough of those deep conversations about these fuzzy unfixable unmanageable types of things that we have to deal with anyway, and some kind of democratically organized structure, I think, is the only one that's going to allow that information to flow as fast as it can.

We saw that outside of government, in the initial days of the pandemic, when we didn't have a vaccine: how scientists in China and in Europe and the US and Africa were throwing stuff out there online for people to take a look at. That's how they were able to identify, sequence the gene; and then they were able to start developing the mRNA vaccines. And that was through open, democratic [ways], no one was really in charge of it. They were just throwing it out.

Now, we seem to have reverted back at the other end of the pendulum, unfortunately,

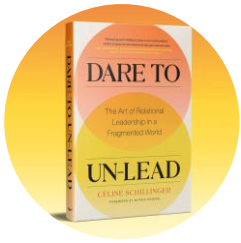
Jon: If I could add to what Harold said around the question of the end of top-down autocratic management, I would say no. We're not going to see the end of top-down management. However, I would say that conditions of wirearchy sharpened the game for leaders in terms of being seen and being heard. To walk their talk, which has always been right at the top of the flip chart lists of what's not going well around here.

But I do think it'll take longer. It's partly generational. I think we will see the end of the autocratic part of top-down management, [we'll] have much more feedback and listening loops going on. However, I do think that there will be places where autocratic management takes root.

Celine: Jon, how do we resolve conflict in a network when precisely there's no boss deciding for the rest of us?

Jon: I think that's a very, very interesting question. One of the things that these network conditions put into play in a very important way is the notion of decision making. And it's coupled to Harold's notion of knowledge flows at the speed of trust.

There's an awful lot of knowledge that has stopped being put into action because of the protocols and the policies and the guidelines in place at a given organization and the penalties for going outside those guardrails.



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



I don't know what the answer is to collaborative decision-making, particularly on large scales. There are a number of schools of practice involved in what's called large scale change. And I think your friend [Myron Rogers](#) has done a fair bit of that kind of work. There are ways to get large groups of people together, put issues on table, work them out with the help usually of facilitators; and then [take] what has been worked out by a diverse and inclusive set of processes to say, "here's what we're looking at. What should we do about it?"

I would also think that a lot of Dave Snowden's recent work in the last two or three years has been about different kinds of both what he calls assemblages and processes to put those into place, that seek out diversity of opinion and inclusion of different viewpoints in order to capture – capture might not be the right word – to process as much of the complexity as possible in a given context.

But in terms of, is there a method for making decisions amongst large groups of people with diverse sources of information, knowledge, and opinion? I don't think so. There will be group processes and a number of the people that we all know already work with those.

Celine: To make decisions, we need to form opinions. That may be the point where we get to PKM. Harold, what does PKM stand for and why does it matter? And how do we develop the skills we need in the world of today?

Harold: First, speaking of opinions, one of my mantras is: strong opinions, loosely held. And I think that, which is part of the whole notion of perpetual beta, all of the models that we use to inform us are in beta. We need to use them to make decisions, but we also have to be able to discard them if they're no longer useful.

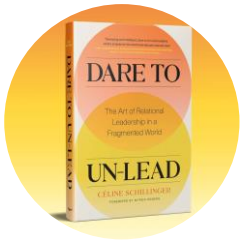
PKM was called personal knowledge management. I've developed a framework, and I use the term [personal knowledge mastery](#) and I'll explain why.

For me it came out of – I guess you'd call it creative desperation. In 2003, I lost my job. And here I am in Sackville, New Brunswick at the time, population 5,000, only a thousand kilometers to Jon's house. So it's far away from Montreal and a thousand kilometers down to Boston and I lost my job. There was no real work in the area. And I decided, consulting is something that I've done and something I understand. I understand these learning technologies but I couldn't afford to fly to conferences and pay the fees and stuff like that. And I had to figure out, how the heck am I going to stay current?

And so, I started researching on the web and I started blogging. And I came across this thing called personal knowledge management, which is like, how do I organize my information, make sense of it, and sort of get going? I just started writing about it and going back and forth, and trying different ideas and learning out loud without even using that term.

And some other people connected with me on the blog. Like the conversations about wirearchy with Jon. Over time the first thing that really hit me was - because I started in 2004 writing about it, and I think it was 2007 or 2008 that Domino's Pizza contacted me, their Head of Leadership. He said, I've been reading about this PKM thing. Could you run a workshop and incorporate it into our leadership program? I go, sure. It wasn't even a thing! And then it developed over time.

I call it personal knowledge *mastery* because I wanted to get away from the KM (knowledge management) world. KM was a lot of top down stuff. It was knowledge *management*: we're going to build these repositories... we've got these systems like Cognos Center, whatever.



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



For me, it's about every person trying to [access knowledge]: how am I going to seek out the information and the human connections that I need? It's the **seek**. [Then] what do I do to make sense? Because if you're not doing anything with this stuff, you're just collecting a whole bunch of stuff. It's just stuff, right? So, what am I doing to actually make **sense** of this? And then, what am I doing to **share** that at the appropriate times? That's the whole notion of leadership and networks, helping make the network smarter. I'm trying to share at the appropriate time with the appropriate people and maybe help them get their work done.

And so, PKM has kind of progressed along that, and I guess, in some ways, I'm known as the PKM guy now. Not that that was ever the intent, but we've run the programs. We just finished developing a program called Working Smarter at Citi. We finished that in 2020. It's based on the PKM framework, curiosity, seeking, sensing and sharing. Citi is running 5,000 people a quarter through the program. Because they realized that collaboration wasn't happening between departments or between the greater network with suppliers, consultants, and things like that. That program has been very successful in terms of how it's received. It's an informal and social learning program. It's not a "check the box" and "answer the questions" and "do things like that". The proof is in the pudding: the framework, the structure makes sense to a lot of different people.

For me, it really has become my own sense-making framework. And the core for me is my blogging. I celebrated my 19th blog anniversary two days ago.

Jon: Congratulations.

Celine: Amazing. You run [PKM courses](#), I enrolled in one of them and can only recommend people to check that out because they are really extremely useful.

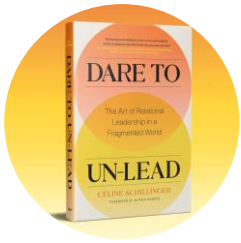
Jon: If I can add to both your testimony and Harold's, I consider PKM an absolutely fundamental, an essential skill for operating not only a wirearchy, but tomorrow's network conditions for everybody. I think it's the kind of thing that everybody should get at least an introductory course to before they get out of high school.

Because we're spending all day on our screens, every day surrounded by and penetrated by flows of information - and it's only going to get more intense, more frequent - so having this skill is a survival skill. It's also a skill for, I think, participating responsibly in networks of knowledge where people are trying to get things done.

Harold: Yes, and PK Mastery is quite different from a lot of other PKM products and processes that are sold out there because there isn't a recipe and there's no technology. And what it's about is, discovering through trial and error what works for you, and then developing your way of practicing it.

So, everyone practices PK mastery differently. That is a real challenge in terms of selling it. And also, the initial learning curve for a lot of people is kind of like, "well just give me the answers, give me the recipe". And there isn't one.

Celine: It's modern literacy, I would say. We're coming to the end of this conversation unfortunately, which I could keep going for another couple of hours. Let me ask just a few last questions.



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



Jon, there's a growing disenchantment towards the effect of social networks on society. It was hoped that they would support diversity in our global village. Now it seems quite different. Thirty years later, have networks failed us?

Jon: No, I don't think so. I think that what we're seeing is - this might sound presumptuous, but has been largely predictable. I remember bloggers talking about the ravaging effects that commercializing everything would have.

When social networks first came onto the scene, we felt like they were liberating because as Harold said, you could actually share something with somebody in Germany or Poland or Japan and you could eventually have Skype, you could talk to them, you could do all this connecting. And there were a bunch of visionaries including [John Perry Barlow](#) that wrote about the freedom of information and so on and so forth. But we've seen the pernicious effects of the only way that you could get money to scale to be as large as Facebook or Twitter, was to go through an IPO and then, you know, who controls the IPOs? They are the venture capitalists in the big brokerage houses. And so on.

However, I think networks are here to stay. I don't think they're going away. I think they have reflected on who we are. It's not the tools that are causing all the uproar. Anonymous imbeciles, including us, the notions of anonymity make it a lot easier to say stupid things, when you might not if you're at a backyard barbecue.

So, I don't think they've failed us. I think they're still toddlers or young teens in terms of maturing, in terms of how we use them.

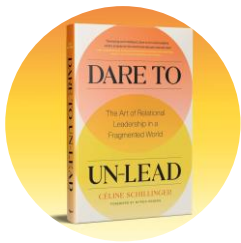
Celine: Harold, how can organizations make the best of networks?

Harold: I think organizations can make the best use of networks when leadership starts reaching out and networking, starts practicing. I've noticed that particularly in the learning sphere or in knowledge management. If you want to have more collaboration, you want to have more cooperation - I differentiate the two - the leadership has to practice it. Because it's leadership by example. We know that humans learn much more through modeling than they do through shaping. In other words, you have a formal training program that has nowhere near the impact of the modeled behavior within the organization.

It is when the leadership starts connecting outside, when they start sharing, that all the two-way flow of trust and information starts happening. In all the analyses that I have done in organizations over the years, the problem is management. You fix management, you fix the organization.

Jon: I agree completely with Harold. [Tom Peters](#) wrote many years ago, managing by walking around. So, I remember Harold and I were talking about "managing by blogging around". Participating in social networks in a real and authentic way helps build trust and credibility, period.

Celine: I want to close this conversation by paying tribute to someone you have both known and met, Esko Kilpi, who was an amazing thinker of work and digital leadership and who's quoted many times in *Dare to Un-lead*. To Kilpi, work and leadership are an interaction. I mentioned that the raw material of collaborative work is the exchange of information, not the information itself. So, warm thoughts to his family and to everyone who has been inspired by this amazing thinker.



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



Now my last question to both of you is: What would you say to someone who hasn't read *Dare to Un-Lead* yet? Apart from "read it". Jon?

Jon: *Dare to Un-Lead* is a highly personal story of Celine's experience with the world of work and herself in that world of work. And her signature path through that world of work has led her to seek out and earn a deep understanding of the dynamics of work, both in the old world and in the new and emerging world. So, she has done a great job of putting that together in a very accessible style that also goes deep into these issues. So yes, read it.

Celine: Harold?

Harold: I agree with Jon. I feel the same thing. I think the real sweet spot of *Dare to Un-Lead* is that it's a personal story. It's not an academic going out there researching, you know, "these are all the traits of leadership" and putting it together, but it's your story.

And then in addition to that, as you said, Esko is quoted several times, and so are a whole bunch of other people. And I think that weaving together all of those stories and making it personal... I mean, this crap that, "this is business. It's not personal" that we have heard over the years, which is total crap because it *is* personal, because *we are people*. We either need to work in the organization, we are *in* the organization, and people in leadership positions (I don't call them leaders, but people in leadership positions) have a responsibility and they have a huge impact *on other people*.

That is what I really like about your book Celine. It's that yes, it is personal.

Jon: The second time when I got fired the meeting started with "it's not personal, it's just business" :-)

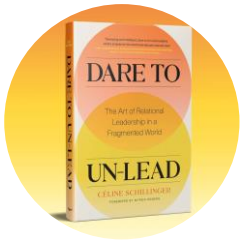
Harold: And I'm sure it felt pretty darn personal :-)

Celine: Thank you so much, Jon, Harold. This book is a network and you are both illuminating this network with your perspectives, your brio and insights and foresight, I would say. So, thank you so much for having been in this conversation. We will post all resources under the podcast and people will be able to find you and explore your work more if they're interested and I'm sure they will be. Thank you so much.

Jon: Thank you, Celine.

Celine: Great insights. Thank you all for listening. You'll find more info in *Dare to Un-Lead*, the book. And all links in the podcast episode description.

And now what else? Action! To explore further and apply these ideas to your own context, reach out to me celine@weneedsocial.com Let's un-lead together!



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



Podcast Resources

[Jon Husband](#) envisioned the disruption of workplace power structures under the influence of digital networks at a time I was just getting started with this thing called “email” (thank you for noticing I was not precisely an early adopter... email was invented around 1971!)

Harold Jarcho started blogging in 2004, when I only did so ten years later. Both have known each other for about 20 years, and are affected by the “curse” of noticing things – patterns, risks, possibilities – much before the average of us. It is not always easy to be right before everybody else, but it is certainly exciting. Jon and Harold pull from their experience insights and suggestions that can help us thrive in a wired world – in the wirearchy.

In this episode, we allude to wirearchy and PKM. Both have precise definitions:

[Wirearchy](#) is “an emergent organizing principle that informs the ways that purposeful human activities and the structures in which they are contained is evolving from top-down direction and supervision (hierarchy’s command-and-control) to champion-and-channel ... championing ideas and innovation, and channeling time, energy, authority and resources to testing those ideas and the possibilities for innovation carried in those ideas.

The working definition of Wirearchy is “*a dynamic two-way flow of power and authority, based on knowledge, trust, credibility and a focus on generating value, enabled by interconnected people and technology*”.

[Personal knowledge mastery](#) (PKM) is “a set of processes, individually constructed, to help each of us make sense of our world and work more effectively. PKM keeps us afloat in a sea of information — guided by professional communities and buoyed by social networks. The PKM framework — **Seek > Sense > Share** — helps professionals become knowledge catalysts.”

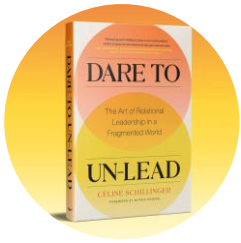
Curious to know more?

Read [Dare To Un-Lead: The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World](#).

Jon Husband can be found in Dare To Un-Lead on pp. 8, 77, 154, 155, 156, 159

Networks can be found throughout the book (which is *also* a kind of network in itself!)

- networks, 140–63;
- about, 141–42, 163, 194;
- Bonetto Fabrol winery example, 140–41;
- collaborative work, 152–53;
- Collective intelligence, 182–85;
- Connecting the system to more of itself, 174–76;
- connective labor, 152;
- cultivating external networks, 87–88;
- development and pervasiveness of, 142–43, 145–46;



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



- diversity and, 160–61;
- dual operating system, 180–82, 186, 237;
- Equality and, xvi, 156;
- holding together, 191;
- information in, vs. hierarchies, 158–59, 174–75, 178;
- integration and, 161–63;
- internet, 143–45, 156;
- leadership in, 154, 265;
- limitations of, 179–80;
- new social movements and, 221–23;
- power dynamics and, 157–58;
- power-over vs. power-with, 158–60;
- rhizomes, 147;
- social networking tools, 177–79;
- wirearchy, 154–56, 174;
- work as a social act and, 151–54;
- In workplaces, 148–51. See also hierarchy

Esko Kilpi has been a major inspiration – may he rest in peace. He is in the book:

- on appreciating the whole human in work, 211;
- on being present for each other, 203;
- on communities of intent and impact, 253;
- on competition, 122;
- On hierarchies in network architectures, 159;
- on knowledge work, 151;
- on leadership, 154, 260, 265;
- on power dynamics, 157;
- on volunteer groups, 175;
- on widening circle of engagement, 270;
- on work done in interaction, 151, 152, 153–54

Read Jon Husband's eBook [Wirearchy - Sketches for the Future of Work](#) (2015)

Watch [Jon Husband's](#) talk at SocialNow Lisbon (2019): "[Wirearchy: Strengthen Your Organisation by Creating Stronger Connections](#)"

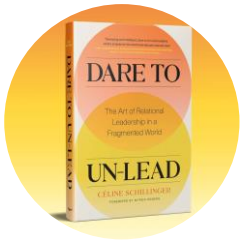
Read Harold Jarche's [Perpetual Beta](#) e-book series and **subscribe** to his [blog](#)

Register for a [Personal Knowledge Mastery \(PKM\) workshop](#) hosted by Harold Jarche

Read the books & articles mentioned in our conversation, as well as Jane McConnell's [The Gig Mindset Advantage: Why a Bold New Breed of Employee Is Your Organization's Secret Weapon in Volatile Times](#) (2021)

Connect with Jon Husband on [Twitter](#) and on [LinkedIn](#)

Connect with Harold Jarche on [Twitter](#) and [Mastodon](#) and on [LinkedIn](#)



DARE TO UN-LEAD

The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World

The Podcast



Curious to use these ideas in your work? Get in touch!

Meet me on

[Twitter](#)

[Mastodon](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

[Amazon](#)