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CONTAGIOUS YOU: Unlock Your Power to Influence, Lead, and Create the Impact You Want

By Anese Cavanaugh

“Anese has found the key to a fundamental truth to being human: Your intentions, energy, and presence affect and influence everyone around you. You are contagious. As a leader, this is your most profound responsibility and opportunity. Understanding and working with this truth is the key to building healthy cultures and movements that catch fire. Contagious You will help leaders around the world create the cultures, communities, and impact they envision.”

—Chip Conley, Founder of Modern Elder Academy, author of *Wisdom @ Work*, and Airbnb Strategic Advisor for Hospitality and Leadership

In today’s era of perpetual burnout, we have become accustomed to being too overworked, too unfocused, and just too *busy*. This fast pace of business and hard demands is unsustainable. In order to innovate to the next level of business, a new kind of leadership is required; one that intentionally fosters truly engaged, present, and focused leaders looking to create proactive, energized and impactful workplaces.

In her new book, [CONTAGIOUS YOU: Unlock Your Power to Influence, Lead, and Create the Impact You Want](#) (McGraw-Hill; November 15, 2019), award-winning leadership advisor and strategist **Anese Cavanaugh** offers the tools and inspiration to be a dynamic leader, who has the power to influence and create impactful change inside of an organization. In this much anticipated follow-up to her bestselling book, *Contagious Culture*, Cavanaugh asks that this next era of leadership looks inward to become someone others will *want* to follow, not just one they *have* to follow.

Leaders have tremendous power to influence those around them. Understanding the effects of that on others is crucial to both personal and professional success. The intentions, energy, and presence leaders exhibit can set the tone to create a positive—or conversely negative—culture and results.

Leaders who take the time to self-reflect and answer hard questions about themselves are more likely to cultivate engaged teams with aligned values and goals.

In **CONTAGIOUS YOU**, Cavanaugh encourages readers to strive for that next level of leadership by evaluating their own contagiousness as a leader by asking themselves a series of questions: What is my intention? What kind of contagious do I want to be? What do I want to put out there? What do I want to take on? And in service of what?

“Your ability to grow others, hold space, and truly optimize impact is highly dependent on your presence, your own growth, and your relationship with yourself. So, in order to lead others, you must lead yourself

first,” says Cavanaugh. “If we’re not getting the results we want or having the experience we desire, the first place to look is at how we’re showing up (for ourselves and each other).”

Striving to be a better leader requires regular self-development and reflection to refine the skills needed to successfully lead an organization. And learning how to navigate complex situations is an essential part of any leader’s journey. Whether it’s a team meeting, a one-on-one with a direct report or a brief interaction with a coworker, the energy that is put forth sets the tone, and has the capacity to spread across an entire organization. If leaders want to inspire change within their organization, they need to be the example.

Drawing on Cavanaugh’s proprietary approach to leadership, Intentional Energetic Presence® (IEP Method®), which has been used by leaders at IDEO, Zingerman’s, 15Five, Vistaprint, Fitbit, Kaiser Permanente, GM Financial, and a mix of Fortune 500 companies, **CONTAGIOUS YOU** shows readers how to “own” their leadership, and transform their organization’s culture and approach to work and life.

With practical takeaways and real-life case studies from over 13 organizations in the fields of financial services, healthcare, education, hospitality, and more, Cavanaugh helps readers make a personal impact and reboot their approach to leadership by starting with themselves.

CAVANAUGH CAN DISCUSS:

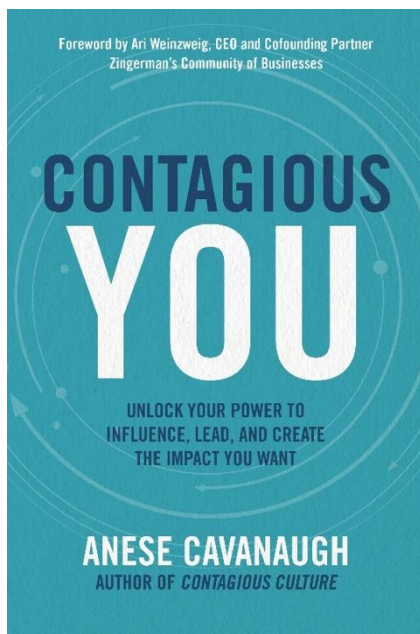
- **Enabling and encouraging positive and *contagious* energy**
- **The cost of negative energy in your organization**
- **How we contribute to our own burnout and what to do instead**
- **Why nourishing our internal state and our mental health comes first**
- **Dealing with emotional vampires at work**
- **Dealing with—and not falling victim—to the lowest energy in the room**
- **Why we need to say “no” more**
- **The essential leadership skills to become a positively *and usefully* contagious leader**
- **Converting conflict into collaboration**
- **Approaching difficult conversations at work**
- **The Contagion Factor Formula™**
- **How to be more productive and intentional as a leader**
- **Applying these principles to your personal life with parenting, relationships, and self-care**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



Anese Cavanaugh is devoted to helping people show up and bring their best selves to the table in order to create significant positive impact in their lives and organizations (while feeling great doing so). She is the creator of the IEP Method® (Intentional Energetic Presence®), an advisor and thinking partner to leaders and organizations around the world, and author of **CONTAGIOUS CULTURE: Show Up, Set the Tone, and Intentionally Create an Organization That Thrives** (McGraw-Hill; November 2015) and **THE LEADER YOU WILL BE: An Invitation** (a leadership storybook). As a leading voice on intention, energy,

and presence in leadership and culture, she helps people unlock potential, collaborate more inspiringly, create more openly, intuit more bravely, and lead more joyfully and effectively. Top innovators and executives in the industries of design, hospitality, finance, tech, performance, fitness, education, and healthcare in companies like IDEO, Zingerman's, Cooper, GM Financial, Vistaprint, 15Five, Fitbit, Vivayic, Kaiser Permanente, and others have engaged with Anese to strengthen team health, maximize leadership impact, and optimize company culture. In addition to appearing in publications like *Harvard Business Review*, the *Huffington Post*, CEO.com, *Forbes*, the *New York Times*, and in her column "Showing Up" on Inc.com, she speaks regularly on stages around the country about leadership, culture, being positively contagious, nourishing our relationship with ourselves, and creating impact.



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Anese Cavanaugh

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Contagious You HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Statistics** on engagement, trust, and the costs of lacking both
- **The Contagious Factor Formula™**: a formula for how contagious you are, which impacts your leadership, sales, feedback, relationships, fitness, parenting, and more
- **Studies** on how long we actually have to make a first impression (hint: it's way less than 7 seconds), and what to do about that so that we set a better tone from the start
- **Suggestions** for a better, more inspiring, expansive, and authentic way to "fix" someone
- **Real-life stories** of how contagiousness plays out, its ripple effects and outcomes, and how to shift them for good
- **Six assessments** to help understand where you're at with impact, your IEP, how people feel about you, the cost of negative energy in your life, and why people may follow you because they have to, not because they want to
- **Ownership and accountability**: what they actually mean, how to inspire them, and how to hold them
- **The new "Want It /Love It Up" and "Do the Work" 5-Step Frameworks** to help you determine what you actually WANT and how to make it happen for real (and authentically)
- **Blindspot identification and optimization**
- The **Portal of Purpose and Impact** and how to open it (there are five required components)
- **Design your IEP**: how to make self-care and self-kind a leadership skill, and create morning, evening, and daily rituals that matter
- **21 Superpower practices** to create impact, protect yourself from negativity, help you influence others, lead well, navigate conflict, and more
- **The Science of Showing Up**: a whole chapter on the science behind being contagious, the IEP work, presence, and influence
- **The 7Ps of personal burnout**: you need them all (address the first 4, and you serve the final 3)
- **Leadership Depression**: how to identify and address it
- **Focus on mental health**: how to get support, ask for help, and make the conversation around mental well-being not only okay, but celebrated
- **New ways to give feedback** on the "soft stuff" and when someone's energy is just under par
- **"OPPPE" (other people's problems, projections, and contagious expectations)**: how to recognize, own, and navigate projection, energy vampires, and those people who just want to stay where they're at and complain
- **Create system wellness** through conflict navigation and proactive *relationship design* and agreements
- **Bring people with you**: how to enroll and serve versus tell and empower
- **Address leadership and energetic hygiene** for yourself and with your team
- **Honor and accelerate team magic**: how to create new structures, frameworks, and principles to help your team soar
- **Create a contagious culture** for your organization using principles from *Contagious Culture and Contagious You* via three lists on HOW to do it (you all kept asking for the "**Culture Change List**"—here it is!)
- And finally, **create contagious impact**, make it real, and be a force for good in the world

ADVANCE PRAISE FOR *CONTAGIOUS YOU*

“There is something truly liberating in the realization that you have everything you need to be a force for positive impact in the world. The what and how of leading from your authentic self is where we can get lost. Lucky for all of us, Anese has everything we need to connect with our intentions, use our self-awareness meaningfully, and have the impact that is truly ‘in service of.’ Our organization would be lesser without her.”
—**Heather Currier Hunt, Global Head of Learning & Development at IDEO**

“*Contagious You* reminds us that each interaction, each choice moment, and each day is paramount in growing as a leader, both now and in the future. Anese Cavanaugh reminds us that we are all leaders in our own way and helps us find and connect with our Essential You. A game-changer for those looking for ways to lead in a way that inspires hope and change.”
—**Marshall Goldsmith, New York Times #1 bestselling author of *Triggers*, *Mojo*, and *What Got You Here Won't Get You There***

“With all the challenges of burnout in healthcare today, *Contagious You* is a critical tool for helping you create and maintain an authentic and sustainable culture of engagement in your organization. From pixie dust to the Neuroscience of trust, Anese empowers us to share our presence, intention, and love for what we do to create a culture of trust which allows us to provide the best team driven approach to deliver amazing integrated care for those who need our services most.”
—**Michael Lalich, MD, Medical Director and Chief of Staff of a large nonprofit integrated health care organization**

“*Contagious You* is a powerful addition to Anese’s already must-experience books and workshops, taking a deeper dive into unlocking your best-self. This book is a great read for anyone ready for a change (big or small) and willing to invest in themselves. Anese offers a blueprint for understanding and implementing the best version of ‘you.’ For the last several years I’ve studied, implemented and shared Anese’s work with everyone I can. Her teachings are among the most impactful and transformational I have ever encountered!”
—**Katie Turner, Head of Global Talent Development and Org Capability for a Fortune 100 Company**

“Reading this book is like having an expert on organizational culture come over to your house, sit down on the couch and tell you how to make the maximum impact in your life. Anese writes in a wonderfully down to earth, informative, and uplifting way. It is impossible to read this book and not come out of it a more powerful and effective person.”
—**Kathie Nielsen, Deputy Superintendent TUSD (Retired), and Professor, Hope International University**

“We’ve all encountered those special people who light up a room, people we would follow anywhere if they asked. Anese Cavanaugh is one of those people, and *Contagious You* is her guide to becoming one yourself.”
—**Blair Enns, author of *The Win Without Pitching Manifesto***

“This book cracks the code on human energy. With insights and assessments, tools and practices, wisdom and wit, Anese teaches us how to cultivate and use our energy—the vital resource we all need to thrive in our personal and work lives.”
—**Wayne Baker, Professor of Management & Organizations and Faculty Director of the Center for Positive Organizations, University of Michigan Ross School of Business**

“Anese’s latest, *Contagious You*, is a gift to yourself and anyone in your span of care: your work team, your spouse, your children, your friends. When we show up in a manner that is life-giving, rather than life-draining, it creates the space for you and others to do their best, be their best. This book will help you accomplish what you want and inspire others to do the same. As we teach at Barry-Wehmiller, YOU are the message. Read this gem so you can be the best one!”
—**Bob Chapman, author of *Everybody Matters* and CEO of Barry-Wehmiller**

A Q&A WITH ANESE CAVANAUGH

1. This year, burnout was classified as a medical diagnosis. Why do you think personal burnout has become so much more prevalent?

I believe a large part of personal burnout is a result of us moving too fast, not being present, not taking care of ourselves, mentally, emotionally, and physically, and not having a healthy relationship with ourselves. It also comes from our internal dialogue, the self-talk that comes with the pressures of today, and our inability to say “no” to things that are out of alignment with our values or simply not within our bandwidth. The non-stop cycle of news, social media, and feeling as though we’re doing too much, yet can’t seem to do enough, also plays a role. We seem to be adding more and more to our plates, yet often do not pause to consider why, what for, and if it’s an authentic “yes” or a “no.” This creates a chronic level of mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion. For example, if I don’t say my real “no” and instead say “yes” to everything, then I’m likely spending excess mental energy stressing about it, physically taxing myself into trying to get it all done, and emotionally having a hard time keeping up and not wanting to let people down. This is something I discuss in the book—the 7Ps—which looks at what contributes to personal burnout, and how people can avoid it.

2. What prompted you to write **CONTAGIOUS YOU**?

After I wrote *Contagious Culture*, I realized that there was a deeper conversation to be had, more skills to be shared, and more nuanced ways to work with leadership and culture that I didn’t see anyone talking about. I also noticed that there were some people who still looked for the “culture change list” and didn’t want to—or think they needed to—do the work on themselves. They just wanted the list. The challenge with that is that list is only as good as the *intentions, energy, and presence* of the people implementing it, so if you’re not showing up well with a compelling and inviting leadership presence, your list is not going to be effective or sustainable. I wanted to deepen that conversation. Finally, I noticed that often the people who wanted “the list” but didn’t want to do the work were the same people whose colleagues and employees (and even spouses) were asking me to write *them* a book to help them better navigate and relate to and sometimes protect themselves from the people who thought this work didn’t apply to them.

I wrote *Contagious You* for people who want to take their leadership work deeper and make it even more powerful. It’s for those who want to strengthen their leadership presence and influence, navigate the challenges that come with negative dynamics, and who want to be able to better lead and enhance their own well-being while doing so. It is also for the people who are struggling to get the results they want, or who sense they can show up better, yet aren’t clear how. I’ve written this to support people wherever they’re at on the spectrum of being a positively and usefully contagious leader or an exhausted and negatively contagious leader.

3. How is *Contagious You* different than your previous book, *Contagious Culture*?

If you’ve already read *Contagious Culture*, *Contagious You* is a great next step. If you haven’t read *Contagious Culture* yet, *Contagious You* is a solid place to start. Both books work well together *and* they stand alone. If you want to optimize your organization’s results, both books are important, speaking to the IEP Method® and the power of influence and contagiousness in different ways.

Contagious Culture helps you and your team apply core principles to create and sustain a positively contagious culture both for your individual selves and within your organization. *Contagious You* dives deeper into You, offering new content, stories, assessments, tools, and frameworks to increase your level of self-awareness, strengthen your leadership and presence, optimize your personal influence and results, navigate relationships, and support your (positive)

impact. The beauty of it is, there's no right or wrong in which book you choose to read first. They organically complement and fuel one another (and of course, YOU!). After all, a contagious culture is simply a bunch of contagious You's hanging out together.

4. If readers take one thing away from reading the book, what do you hope it will be?

While we have zero control of others, or what's happening outside ourselves, we do have control of ourselves and we can change the game at any moment. Our relationship with ourselves and our ability to create our own experience is essential to our leadership influence, impact, and happiness. Self-care, self-kind, and self-authority are our most important leadership assets and skills to develop. And our intentions, energy, presence, and devotion to being of service are at the core of effective and positively (and usefully) contagious leadership.

5. How can leaders make their teams positively contagious and what does that ultimately mean?

No matter how much a leader tries to inspire positive contagious leadership or any kind of behavior, if the leader isn't modeling it themselves, they won't be successful in inspiring it in those around them. They'll be incongruent. So, work your own IEP (Intentional Energetic Presence®), take care of yourself, show up in a way that is genuine, solid, helpful, and positively contagious (in an authentic way), and model and be the change and impact you desire so you're an *invitation* for people to join you there. This is the best way to encourage and create more of the same. How we show up is contagious, so our best bet in helping to make our teams positively contagious is to make sure we are as well.

There are other behaviors and actions we can do to make our teams more positively contagious. For example, remind them why they're important on the team and why their work matters, co-design visions for success as a team and agreements to support them in getting there, and acknowledge them for who they are and the impact they have. A true acknowledgement, seeing someone as the amazing human they are and honoring them, brings people alive, makes them feel seen, and is... contagious. (And then they'll likely spread that contagion to others.)

6. What is Leadership Depression, and who does it affect the most?

Leadership Depression is a term I use to speak to the chronic "go-go-go," and "do-do-do," and "more-more-more" that we have in our lives, and the isolation, pressure, and fatigue that can come with it. I believe that anyone in a leadership or management role is susceptible to it—and I notice that high achievers and people superbly devoted to doing a great job and serving others, are even more so. There are several factors—all are chronic, and they build and accumulate. Some of these factors include wanting to please those you report to while also serving and honoring those you are responsible for leading, shifting identity in leadership as you grow and accelerate in your career, and the idea of "imposter syndrome."

There is a way that we can reboot, pull it back together, regain our space, take a day off, and "head back in," *but* if we don't take care of ourselves proactively in this and change the game (in any of these), no matter how much we build our resiliency, we create a cycle of tension, fatigue, stress, and even "what's the point" and "how am I supposed to keep this up?" Over time, unaddressed, this leadership depression will lead to burnout.

7. How can leaders lead their teams away from burnout?

Make it safe to pause and create space for presence. Keep your team connected to purpose, people, and the "why" and "who" of your work and your team. Celebrate asking for help, and talk about the hard stuff. Make it okay to talk about whatever needs to be discussed as uncomfortable as it may be. And play. Make space for play.

8. Why do we tend to put self-care on the backburner? How can we practice more self-TLC?

For me, this comes down to a lack of presence, awareness, connection to purpose, our relationship with ourselves, bad habits, and making self-care more daunting than it has to be. If we're *present* to ourselves, we're better able to know what we need and when we "need a minute." If we're *aware* of ourselves and how we're showing up, we're better able to sense when self-care is needed (and how essential it is). When we're connected to *purpose*, we're aware that the only way we are going to give it our best and be a sustainable, vital, positively contagious force, is by taking care of ourselves, so we have the energy and stamina to fulfill the work. Self-care IS a leadership skill, and pushing it off is often just an unconscious bad habit that can be changed.

Additionally, we can adjust our relationship with self-care. I notice people make self-care mean that they have to exercise 5 days a week, eat perfectly clean, and indulge in daily massages when really it might simply mean they talk nicely to themselves instead of beating themselves up, choose vegetables instead of fries, hydrate more, give themselves 10 minutes between meetings to reboot, take care, and get to the next one on time. Self-care can also mean they say "no" when something doesn't feel right or good or is beyond their bandwidth (instead of pleasing with a false forced "yes"), that they ask for what they need, they tell the truth, or they opt for less TV and more sleep. In the book I've listed many many ways of self-care that are often overlooked that take little time and energy, yet can be game changers in our well-being and internal integrity with ourselves. We get to define our self-care—and we have to stand for ourselves in order to create the space for it. This only serves leadership and impact. (And it's contagious.)

9. What is the damaging cost of negative energy within our organizations?

The costs are expansive ranging from financial to innovation and creativity, morale, health and productivity, to revenue and customer impact. Any of these areas will be negatively impacted by low energy in the organization. And because the negative is so contagious, these costs can escalate rapidly. For a simple example, just take *one* meeting, put *one* person in it who has negative energy and is sucking the life out of the room, and then notice what happens with the rest of the group. Most often, the room will match the lowest vibe. This results in less productivity, likely less innovation, great thinking, and risk taking, more tension and drama, and more meetings to fix what didn't get done in this one.

If you look at all the people's time in that meeting and what it costs you to have them there, plus the additional meeting time now needed, plus the opportunity cost of what didn't get done, plus the impact of the lower morale that will affect your culture and how your employees will show up in their sales call—you'll find the extensive costs of negative energy. You can even look at the health implications here. If you have a lot of negativity in your organization, you likely have drama and people going home stressed out, taking that stuff home with them and impacting their personal relationships, losing sleep, etc., which ultimately affects your employees' well-being, your health and productivity costs, your insurance claims, and your company workforce retention.

10. What is the lowest energy in the room, and what are some ways to combat it both for yourself and your team?

The lowest energy in the room is that person who seems to be devoted to sinking the meeting or bringing everyone down. They're the person sitting with their arms crossed, brows furrowed, putting out a "vibe" of "I don't want to be here." They may not even say a word, but you can feel them. There are many ways to work with this, and of course, they all start with ourselves first. First, notice how you're showing up in the room, what are you bringing? What are your intentions, energy, and presence? Check yourself first. Next, "bubble up" as I call it—hold your space—don't become or match the lowest energy in the room. You do this by being aware that you have your own space (a bubble) and remembering that you have a choice with what you take on. Third,

don't judge the lowest energy or make it wrong, just notice it, make no assumptions, get curious (you may be reading it wrong, or you may need to do something – either way you won't have your best wisdom if you're not present, not holding your space, and/or in a state of judgement.) These first three steps will help you secure your space and decide what to do next.

My favorite ways to get in front of the “lowest energy” challenge for teams is to codesign up front how the team wants to be together and then to create agreements to support that. Discussing things like how to be responsible for the energy we bring to the table, doing a collective energy check at the beginning of each meeting, setting intentions together, and speaking to the “why” of what the team is doing—and what accountability looks like—can clear energy and help everyone get on the same page. Clarifying people's overall expectations, getting curious, naming any funky dynamics, and assuming good (and that people mean well) also helps.

11. You just mentioned an energy check as one way to help combat this. What is it, and how is it beneficial in meetings?

It's a series of check points that you can do at the beginning of your meetings. I offer a few frameworks in the book that are simple or more involved depending on your situation. The bottom line is that it gets everyone present and current with where they're at, how they're feeling and how they're showing up, and gives people the opportunity to own it and shift according. It's simple and powerful and one of the easiest things I've seen teams integrate to shift their meeting effectiveness and pleasure factor.

12. What can managers start doing today to improve employee engagement?

Model the leadership, presence, and behaviors you wish to see. Listen, be present—truly present—connect your people to purpose and reiterate why you do the work you do. Talk to them, allow for emotional authenticity and for “uncomfortable” conversations about failure, trust, mental health, and any other elephants in the room that keep you from being real. And above all, know that you are constantly generating an experience for yourself and those you lead. Own this experience, be *response-able* for creating it and setting the tone, and stay clear in your intention, and you will invite others to step in with you.

13. As we approach 2020, what advice do you have for the next generation of leaders?

Take care of yourself, own your leadership and experience, stay connected to your intentions and impact. Be humble and in service of others, *and* stand out brave and bold. Be gentle with your leadership and care of others, *and* also rigorous in focus, accountability, and making things happen. Stay connected to the human beings you impact and to the humans who impact you.