



# Five Human Quirks

## And How They Become Mindtraps

by Jennifer Garvey Berger

"...our human instincts, shaped for (and craving) a simple world, fundamentally mislead us in a complex, unpredictable world."  
- Jennifer Garvey Berger

### 1 Trapped by Simple Stories:

#### Your Desire for a Simple Story Blinds You to a Real One

"Leaders who put too much too much faith in their heroic tales of the past and project simplistic versions of the future can be alluring - and ruinous. To escape we need to find our way out of our simple stories and back into our complex real ones."



#### Key Question:

How is this person a hero?



#### Key Habit:

Carry three different stories.

### 2 Trapped by Rightness:

#### Just Because It Feels Right Doesn't Mean It Is Right

"...Because we believe in what we see, and we don't notice those things we don't see, we have a sense of our being right about most things most of the time... When leaders believe they are right in a complex world they become dangerous because they ignore data that might show them they are wrong; they don't listen well to those around them, and they get trapped in a world they have created rather than the one that exists."



#### Key Question:

What do I believe?

How could I be wrong?



#### Key Habit:

Listen to learn rather than listening to win or fix?

### 3 Trapped by Agreement:

#### Longing for Alignment Robs You of Good Ideas

"Too much agreement, while pleasant, makes us follow a narrow path rather than expanding our solution space. It makes it harder to prepare us for whatever the uncertain future demands...With complexity, we need diversity of experience, approach, and ideas, and we need to learn how to harness conflict rather than push it away."



#### Key Question:

Could this conflict serve to deepen a relationship?



#### Key Habit:

Disagree to expand the solution set rather than agreeing to contract it.

### 4 Trapped by Control:

#### Trying to Take Charge Strips You of Influence

"When we care about big, complex, intertwined issues, leadership requires the counterintuitive move of letting go of control in order to focus on creating the conditions for good things to happen - often with outcomes better than we had originally imagined."



#### Key Question:

What can I help enable?

What would enable me?



#### Key Habit:

Experiment at the edges.

### 5 Trapped by Ego:

#### Shackled by Who You Are Now, You Can't Reach for Who You'll Be Next

"When we try to defend our egos rather than grow and change, we end up perfectly designed for a world that happened already, instead of growing better able to handle the world that is coming next."



#### Key Question:

Who do I want to be next?



#### Key Habit:

Listen to learn from yourself.

"Understanding new ways to notice and escape these mindtraps turns out to be a kind of super power that allows you to see new opportunities, create new solutions, and move forward with more finesse and less angst."

- Jennifer Garvey Berger

# Building A Ladder

Connect to **purpose**.

Connect to our **bodies**.

Connect to our **emotions**.

Connect to **compassion**  
for ourselves and others.

