KRIS LONSWAY

ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST | LEADERSHIP COACH | SPEAKER | AUTHOR

Author of ***Mindful Leadership: Lead with Intention. Build Thriving Teams. Create Lasting Impact.***

"*Mindful Leadership* isn't about meditation, though mindfulness practices can certainly support effective leadership. At its core, mindful leadership is about *leading with awareness and intention*. It's about understanding who you are, what matters most, where you're headed, and how your actions affect others. "

ABOUT KRIS

Dr. Kris Lonsway is an organizational psychologist, a leadership coach, a speaker, a wellness advocate, CEO of The Lonsway Group, and the founder of OptWell. For more than thirty years, she has helped leaders and organizations navigate change, strengthen culture, develop talent, and build thriving, high-performing teams.

Throughout her career, Kris has served as head of human resources and organizational effectiveness, led teams and global initiatives, coached executives and emerging leaders, taught MBA leadership courses, addressed audiences across sectors, and served on numerous boards. Her practical, evidence-based approach blends leadership development, well-being, and real-world experience to help people lead with greater intention and create lasting impact.

Kris is the founder and president of OptWell, a nonprofit serving Chicago's western suburbs and surrounding communities. Inspired by her family's experience with Alzheimer's disease and her own genetic risk, she is passionate about translating emerging brain health science into hope and action. In partnership with Octane Films, she is writing and producing Mission Cognition, a brain health documentary. Kris also serves as an Alzheimer's Association Awareness Champion and advocates for brain health, resilience, and lifelong learning.

Outside of work, Kris is a competitive tennis and pickleball player who believes many of the same principles that drive excellence in sport also shape leadership and life. A graduate of Texas A&M University and the University of Illinois, she holds a BS in Psychology and a PhD in Industrial-Organizational Psychology. She is honored to be part of Tasha Eurich's 2026 Wellness Women of the World Cohort and the Tasha Ten community.

Kris believes leadership begins with self-awareness and self-leadership and extends outward to strengthen teams, organizations, communities, and lives. Through coaching, speaking, writing, and community leadership, she helps people lead with greater awareness, intention, and impact.

She lives in the Chicago area with her husband and enjoys spending time with their two young adult sons. Learn more, subscribe to her free Mindset Matters newsletter, inquire about speaking or executive coaching, or explore additional leadership and wellness resources at KrisLonsway.com and OptWell.org.

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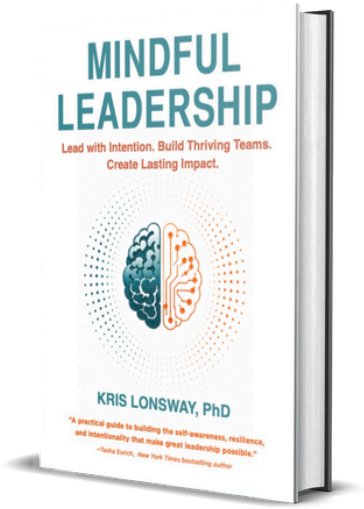

ABOUT THE BOOK

Mindful Leadership

Lead with Intention. Build Thriving Teams. Create Lasting Impact.

October 2026

Mindful Leadership: Lead with Intention. Build Thriving Teams. Create Lasting Impact gives leaders at every stage a practical, research-grounded roadmap for becoming more intentional about how they lead themselves and others.

Drawing on organizational psychology and more than 30 years of executive coaching and leadership experience, Kris Lonsway, PhD, combines research, real-world stories, coaching insights, reflection questions, and practical tools in a three-part Reflect–Refine–Reignite framework. Readers learn to deepen self-awareness, clarify purpose and direction, strengthen essential leadership skills and habits, build trust and psychological safety, navigate relationships and conflict, develop others, enhance resilience and well-being, and create the conditions for teams to thrive.

Rather than presenting leadership as a set of techniques to master once, Mindful Leadership approaches it as an ongoing practice of reflection, growth, and renewal. The goal is not simply to become a more effective leader, but to lead with greater intention, help others flourish, and create lasting impact.

Some Key Insights You Will Learn:

- How to deepen your self-awareness by exploring your purpose, personal values, passions, powers, aspirations, and the future you want to create and identify the weaknesses that matter and develop a clearer vision for the leader you want to become.
- How to multiply your impact by developing and empowering others, strengthening engagement, building high-performing teams, and creating intentional cultures where people can thrive.
- How stress shows up in the workplace and what stress-induced default behaviors look like.
- Why high performers often struggle silently. Stress, trauma, burnout, anxiety, perfectionism, and self-doubt can quietly shape how leaders think, communicate, and lead.
- How adversity can deepen empathy, purpose, and perspective. Mindful leaders do not simply bounce back; they rise forward with greater wisdom and self-awareness.

INTERVIEW TOPICS

- **The Connectivity Between Health and Leadership Prowess:** The micro-health habits that have a significant impact on your leadership
- **Why Great Leaders Pause Before They React:** How leaders can become less reactive and lead with greater intention
- **What Mindful Leadership Really Means:** Why mindful leadership is about more than mindfulness or meditation
- **The Reflect–Refine–Reignite Framework:** A practical framework for becoming a more intentional and effective leader
- **The Leadership Skill Nobody Talks About:** How physical and mental health shape leadership performance
- **Leadership Longevity:** How leaders can stay sharp, resilient, and effective for the long haul
- **Leadership That Multiplies:** How great leaders delegate, empower, and develop others
- **The Executive Attention Crisis:** How distracted leaders lose connection with their teams and what to do about it
- **The Self-Awareness Advantage:** How leaders uncover their strengths, blind spots, and impact on others
- **Mental Toughness Without the Armor:** How resilient leaders navigate pressure, setbacks, and uncertainty without becoming rigid or shutting others out
- **Conflict Without the Casualties:** How leaders can address disagreement directly while strengthening trust and relationships
- **The Conversations Leaders Avoid:** Why giving candid feedback is essential to growth and how to say what needs to be said without damaging the relationship

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SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What is "mindful leadership," and why is it about more than mindfulness or meditation?
- Why do even highly successful leaders fall into reactive or habitual patterns, and what does it take to lead with greater intention?
- How can leaders become more self-aware, especially when they may not be getting candid feedback from the people around?
- How can leaders sustain high performance without sacrificing their own well-being or that of their teams?
- What does mental toughness really look like in a leader, and how is it different from simply pushing through adversity?
- Why do so many leaders avoid conflict, and how can they turn disagreement into something productive?
- How can leaders give difficult feedback in a way that is both candid and constructive?
- How can leaders become more comfortable having the conversations they would rather avoid?
- What's the difference between being a "nice" leader and being a leader who genuinely cares about people?

ENDORSEMENTS

"*Mindful Leadership* gives leaders at every stage a practical, research-grounded framework to deepen self-awareness, strengthen teams, and lead with greater intention and impact. This is the kind of insight most leaders only access through executive coaching, yet Kris makes it available to everyone."
— Marshall Goldsmith, Thinkers50 #1 Executive Coach and New York Times bestselling author of *The Earned Life, Triggers, and What Got You Here Won't Get You There*

"Most leaders spend their careers trying to change others. Kris Lonsway reminds us that the most powerful leadership work starts within. *Mindful Leadership* is a practical guide to building the self-awareness, resilience, and intentionality that make great leadership possible."
— Tasha Eurich, Organizational Psychologist and New York Times Bestselling Author (*Shatterproof, Insight, Bankable Leadership*)

"Kris Lonsway bridges leadership science and human performance in a way that is both practical and compelling. *Mindful Leadership* is a valuable resource for leaders who want to strengthen themselves, their teams, and their long-term impact."
— Dr. Tommy Wood, BM BCh, PhD, Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Neuroscience, University of Washington, and author of *The Stimulated Mind*

"A leadership coach in book form. This is thirty years of coaching wisdom distilled into practical tools for building trust, navigating tough conversations, and developing the people around you. Definitely worth checking out!"
— Steven Rogelberg, Chancellor's Professor and Author of *The Surprising Science of Meetings and Glad We Met: The Art and Science of 1:1 Meetings*

"I highly recommend Kris's exceptional book. It highlights the critical importance of mindful leadership as an essential capability for leading successfully in the 21st century—and shows you how to recognize, develop, and nurture it within teams and organizations. Deeply practical and insightful, it is filled with real-world examples. This book is a practitioner's dream."
— Stefaan van Hooydonk, Founder, Global Curiosity Institute, Bestselling Author of The Workplace Curiosity Manifesto

"Leadership starts with understanding yourself. That's a lesson I've learned throughout my entrepreneurial journey, and it's the foundation of *Mindful Leadership*. My friend Kris Lonsway combines practical tools with genuine wisdom to help leaders build trust, develop others, and create cultures where people thrive.

If you're looking for practical wisdom, not just theory, to help you lead with greater purpose, resilience, and impact, *Mindful Leadership* belongs on your shelf."
— Brett Alexander Hurt, Entrepreneur, Investor, and Bestselling Author of Love Conquers Fear: Humanity, AI, and the Age of Abundance for All and The Entrepreneur's Essentials

"Blending practicality with genuine hope and grounding research-based insights in stories from complicated real lives, Lonsway delivers a compelling guidebook for anyone seeking a richer, more rewarding, and more authentic life."
— Professor Kathleen M. O'Connor, Director of Executive Education, London Business School

"Kris consistently leads with clarity, integrity, and genuine care for people. I saw this firsthand during a large-scale organizational redesign, where she helped senior leaders build alignment and trust through a period of significant change.

Mindful Leadership reflects exactly who Kris is. The practical wisdom in these pages will help leaders strengthen relationships, develop others, and create healthier, higher-performing organizations."
— Lisa Evans, Senior Director, Talent Development, Conagra Brands

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"As a longtime beneficiary of Kris's wise counsel, I felt I had a good sense of what I might find in Mindful Leadership. But this book digs even deeper than I imagined, jam-packed with exquisitely detailed, insightful, and eminently useful guidance for effective leadership. It should be required reading for any organization's leadership team."
— Gil Schafer, Founding Partner, Schafer & Company Architects

"I've had the great fortune of working with Kris on my leadership journey. Kris's metrics and methods are both straightforward and achievable; they build upon one another and, in the process, build competence and self-confidence. Mindful Leadership distills her decades of coaching experience into a framework that offers everyone the opportunity to become the best leader that they can be."
— Jihad Shoshara, MD, President and CEO, Pediatric Health Associates; Vice President, Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

"Having recently partnered with Dr. Kris Lonsway as the keynote speaker for our Healthcare Administration Alumni event, I experienced the same practical, engaging leadership approach reflected in *Mindful Leadership*. Leaders at every stage will find actionable tools to strengthen teams, communicate more effectively, and lead with greater intention."
— Dr. Kimberly Rusk, Chair, Healthcare Administration, Loyola University Chicago

"When I joined Rice University as associate dean, I turned to Kris to help align my new team. She helped us establish shared goals, clarify roles, and build the trust that makes healthy, high-performing teams possible. I continue to draw on that work today. Mindful Leadership captures the same research-based, practical approach, giving leaders the tools to build those conditions themselves. Second only to working directly with Kris, this is one of the most valuable leadership resources available."
— George Andrews, Associate Dean of Degree Programs, Rice University

"I've seen firsthand how Kris Lonsway helps leaders across many of our member firms become more self-aware, intentional, and effective while building healthier, stronger organizations.

Mindful Leadership captures the same wisdom, authenticity, and practical guidance Kris brings to every engagement. It is an invaluable resource for leaders who want to strengthen their teams and organizations. I wholeheartedly recommend it. "
— **Keith Granet, Granet and Associates; Founder, Leaders of Design**

"Whether serving alongside Kris on community-driven projects, sharing best practices for healthy living, or partnering on the tennis court, I've seen firsthand her ability to work effectively with different partners, be thoughtful and strategic in tackling challenges, and focus on what matters most. *Mindful Leadership* captures those same qualities, offering readers practical guidance they can apply right away."
— Ngozi Ogbunamiri Ezike, MD, CEO, Sinai Chicago, Former Director of Public Health for the State of Illinois

"Kris Lonsway brings something rare to leadership development: the credibility of someone who has lived what she teaches. Serving with her on the OptWell board, I've seen her lead with the same intention, curiosity, and genuine care for others she encourages throughout *Mindful Leadership*. Authentic and filled with actionable frameworks, this is a resource leaders will return to throughout their leadership journeys."
— Dr. Brian Waterman, Superintendent, Lyons Township High School District 204

CONNECT

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