



SURRENDER *to* LEAD

SHIFT to Surrender Workbook

Surrendered leadership is not about giving up. It is about letting go of the illusion of control so you can focus your energy where it can be most impactful and create the conditions for extraordinary results.

This workbook is designed to help you apply the SHIFT model to your own leadership journey. Each section includes reflections and exercises that connect directly to the habits of surrendered leaders.

Why Do This?

Information alone doesn't create transformation. If it did, reading leadership books would be enough to change how we lead. But real change happens when we move beyond knowledge into experience—because experiences shape beliefs, beliefs drive actions, and actions get results.

By working through this workbook, you are having an experience that will shift how you see yourself, your team, and your role as a leader. This isn't homework; it's practice. And every reflection, every exercise, is a chance to take one step closer to the leader you're meant to be.



Start with the Surrendered Leader Assessment

Before diving in, take a few minutes to complete the Surrendered Leader Assessment.

The assessment measures where you naturally lean into surrender and where control still sneaks in. It's built around the five elements of SHIFT, so your results will show you exactly which areas to focus on as you work through this material.

Take the Assessment

surrendertolead.com/assessment

If you've already completed the assessment, keep your results handy. You will use them throughout this workbook. If you haven't yet, don't worry. You can still move forward, and you'll get even more value when you return to this workbook after taking it.

How to Use This Workbook

1. Take the assessment:

Start by completing the surrendered leader assessment. This gives you a baseline for where you are on the Surrendered leader spectrum today.

2. Follow the SHIFT framework:

Each section of this workbook corresponds to a dimension of surrender, with reflection prompts and exercises.

3. Practice, not perfection:

The goal is not to “score high,” but to shift the way you experience leadership—one small step at a time.

Here’s what you’ll find as you move through the pages ahead:

- Reflection prompts to help you notice patterns in how you lead.
- Exercises to translate ideas into lived experiences.
- Space to journal your own insights and commitments.

This workbook is designed to help you SHIFT the way you lead so your energy is spent where it matters most—on what only you can control: the experiences you create for others.

The Surrendered Leader Assessment

Before you dive into the SHIFT model, start by understanding your own leadership patterns. The Surrendered Leader Assessment is designed to help you see where you naturally lean into surrender and where control still shows up.

It measures five key dimensions of surrendered leadership:

- S - Stop Fighting Reality**
- H - Have Faith**
- I - Identify What's Yours**
- F - Free Yourself from Fear**
- T - Take the Next Right Action**

Together, these five areas form the SHIFT model.

Answer all 15 questions honestly. Your results will give you a snapshot of your current approach to surrender and control.

Mark your overall score on the Surrendered Leader spectrum:



How did you feel when you saw it? Encouraged, surprised, challenged, relieved?

Why?

When you reflect on your score, does it align with how others might describe your leadership style?

Why or why not?

Think of a leader you've worked with who was closer to the Command and Control side.

Name:

How did they lead?

How did you and others experience them?

What beliefs did you develop about them?

What results did it produce?

Now think of a leader you've worked with who embodied the Surrendered Leader side.

Name:

How did they lead?

How did you and others experience them?

What beliefs did you develop about them?

What results did it produce?



Looking at your own score, which direction do you want to move toward?

Why?

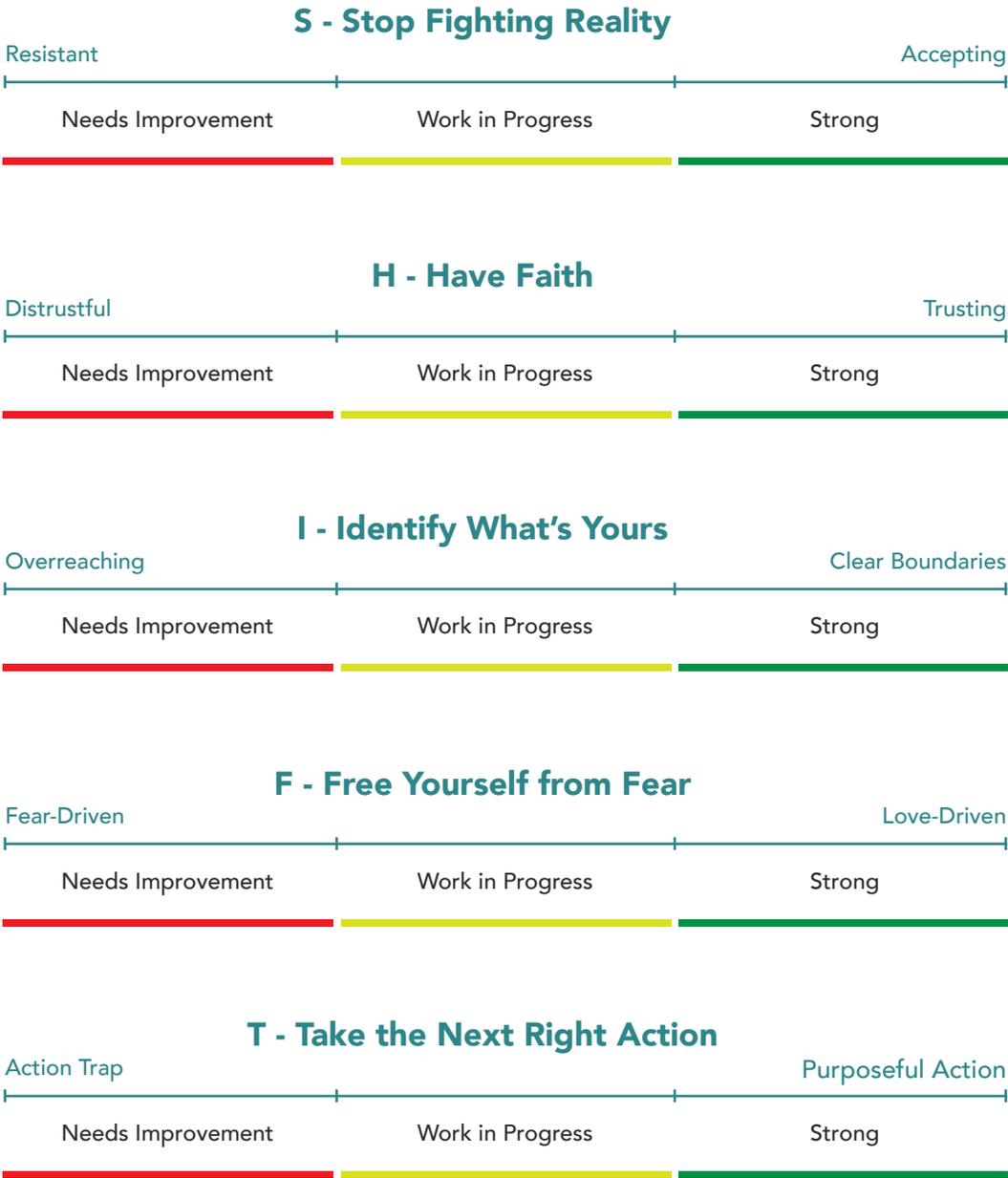
What would it take for you to take one step closer to the surrendered side?



SHIFT Dimensions

Before you dive into the SHIFT model, start by understanding your own leadership patterns. The Surrendered Leader Assessment is designed to help you see where you naturally lean into surrender and where control still shows up.

Now, break your assessment into its five dimensions. For each one, mark where you land:



Which SHIFT dimension scored highest for you?

Which SHIFT dimension scored lowest for you?

Deeper Reflection on Your Dimensions

Where do you feel most confident as a surrendered leader?

How does this strength show up in your day-to-day leadership?

Where do you see the greatest opportunity for growth?

How does this struggle show up—in your stress levels, team culture, or results?

Which dimension do you want to focus on first as you work through this workbook?

Why?

Your SHIFT Snapshot

Complete each sentence:

S: One way I tend to resist reality is...

H: One way I struggle to have faith is...

I: One way I overreach or misplace ownership is...

F: One way fear shows up in my leadership is...

T: One way I slip into overdoing (the Action Trap) is...

Section One:

S - Stop Fighting Reality

The first dimension of surrendered leadership is about acceptance. When we fight reality—wishing things were different, replaying what should have happened, or clinging to control of people, places, or things—we drain our energy. When we stop fighting, we free ourselves to see clearly, respond wisely, and move forward.

Look back at your assessment. How did you score on the “Stop Fighting Reality” dimension? Mark your score.



Experience: The “Should” Tally

For one day, keep a running tally of every time you think or say the word should.

Example:

“The meeting should’ve gone differently.” “They should know better.”

“We should be further along.”

At the end of the day, review your tallies. How many tallies did you gather in one day?

What are your shoulds usually about? What does it feel like to live in the place of should?

Belief Reflection Prompts

Where in your leadership do you find yourself most often saying, "It shouldn't be this way"?
On a scale from 1-10 rate your tendency to engage in this kind of resistance
(1 being no tendency, and 10 being a high tendency.)

1. Other People

"They should be more responsible, prepared, engaged, capable, like me..."

2. Objectives/Results

*"This project should've been done by now...
We should already have results..."*

3. External Circumstances

*"The economy shouldn't be this volatile...
That competitor shouldn't be doing as well as they are..."*

4. Internal Dynamics

*"The other department should make this priority more important...
The objectives given to me aren't realistic..."*

5. Processes & Systems

*"This process should be smoother... The system shouldn't break down...
The workflow should be more efficient..."*

6. Time & Timing

*"This should take less time... The timing should've been better...
We should be further along by now..."*

7. Communication

*"They should have looped me in... They should explain themselves better...
People should listen more carefully..."*

8. Resources

*"We should have more budget... More headcount... Better tools...
Different technology..."*

9. Culture & Morale

*"People should care more... The culture should be stronger...
The team should be more positive..."*

What does it feel like in your body when you're resisting reality—tight, anxious, restless?

What does it feel like when you accept it?

Action Prompt

Choose one current obstacle or setback. Write two short paragraphs:

1. *The “What should have happened” version — Describe it through the lens of resistance.*

2. *The “What is happening” version — Describe the exact same situation through the lens of acceptance.*

Compare the two.

Which one gives you more clarity, energy, and agency?

What realities do you find most difficult to accept?

Result: The Freedom of Acceptance

When you stop fighting reality, the result is not resignation—it's freedom. You free up the energy you've been burning on resistance and redirect it toward clarity, creativity, and influence. Instead of reacting from frustration, you respond from wisdom.

Reflection:

1. What happened to your sense of agency when you wrote the "what is happening" version of your obstacle?

2. How might your team experience you differently if you consistently led from acceptance rather than resistance?

3. What new options opened up once you stopped clinging to how things should be?

Practice:

Complete this sentence in your journal:

Because I stopped fighting reality and accepted what is, I was able to...

Final note: Acceptance doesn't mean agreement or approval. It simply means you stop fighting what already is. When you stop fighting reality, you free up energy to lead, not from frustration, but from clarity.

Section Two:

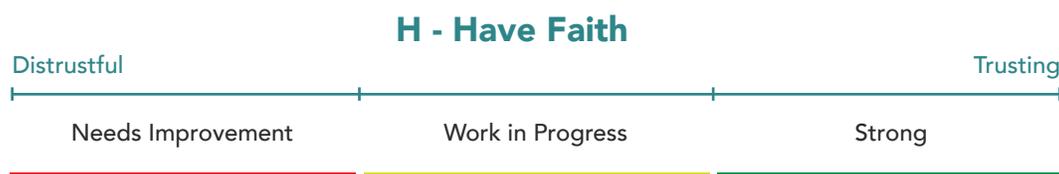
H – Have Faith

The second dimension of surrendered leadership is about trust. Faith is not blind optimism—it’s a choice to release the illusion of control and lean into something larger than yourself. Surrendered leaders recognize they are not the sole source of outcomes. They have faith in their people, their process, and/or the bigger picture.

When you stop believing that everything rests on you, you create space for others to step up, for unexpected solutions to emerge, and for possibilities you could never plan for to unfold.

Look back at your assessment. How did you score on the “Have Faith” dimension?

Mark your score.



Experience: What Is the Source of All Good?

Find a quiet place and set a timer for 3 minutes. Close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and ask yourself:

What is the source of all good in my work and my life?

- For some, it may be a higher power or spiritual foundation.
- For others, it may be trust in their team, the process, or the natural unfolding of events.
- Some may discover they aren’t sure yet—and that’s part of the practice.

When the timer ends, write down your answer. If more than one source comes to mind, write them all. Then reflect: How might leaning into this source change how you approach uncertainty or pressure at work?

Belief Reflection Prompts

What beliefs do you currently hold about trust? Do you see it as risky, earned, or natural?

Where do you cling to the belief that outcomes rest only on you?

If you fully believed you were not alone in creating results, how would your leadership change?

How does identifying the source of all good reshape the way you see your role?

Action Prompt: Trust Transfer

Identify one responsibility you are currently holding too tightly. Ask yourself:

Who on my team could take ownership of this?

What support would they need from me to succeed?

What belief do I need to release in order to let go?

Write down one small handoff you can make this week as a practice in building faith.



Result: The Space of Trust

When you practice faith, the result is space—space for others to rise, for solutions to emerge, and for outcomes you could never have orchestrated on your own. By loosening your grip, you multiply possibility.

Reflection:

What did you discover when you named the source of all good for yourself?

How did it feel to hand off even a small responsibility to someone else?

How might your team experience you differently if you consistently showed trust in them?

Practice:

Complete this sentence in your journal:

Because I chose to have faith instead of control, the space that opened up was...

Section Three:

I – Identify What’s Yours

The third dimension of surrendered leadership is about accountability. Leaders who overreach try to control what isn’t theirs, while leaders who underreach avoid owning what is. Both lead to frustration. The surrendered path is clarity: identifying what is truly yours to own and stepping into it fully.

This connects directly to the Accountability Gap Framework from the book:

- See It → What is going on?
- Own It → What about that can I control?
- Solve It → What else could I try?
- Do It → What am I going to do, by when?

Look back at your assessment. How did you score on the “Identify What’s Yours” dimension? Mark your score.



Experience: Above the Line in Action

Think of a recent situation where things didn’t go as planned. Write down your first, unfiltered reaction.

Notice: Did it sound like Below the Line thinking—blaming, excusing, or waiting on others?

Now, shift Above the Line by walking through the Accountability Gap questions step by step:

See It → What is going on? (State the reality clearly, without blame or spin)

Own It → What about that can I control? (Focus only on what is truly yours)

Solve It → What else could I try? (Brainstorm options fully within your control)

Do It → What am I going to do, by when? (Commit to one concrete step)

Compare your first reaction with your Above the Line answers. How does your sense of ownership shift when you walk the full accountability path?

Belief Reflection Prompts

Where in your leadership do you most often slip Below the Line?

What beliefs keep you stuck there (e.g., “This isn’t my fault, so it’s not my problem” or “I need to carry it all myself”)?

How does identifying what is truly yours reinforce clarity and accountability for your team?

Action Prompt: Release and Reclaim

1. Write one statement of release for something you've been carrying that isn't yours:
"This is not mine to carry. I release it."

2. Write one statement of ownership for something you've been avoiding:
"This is mine to own, and I commit to it."

3. Apply the Accountability Gap Framework to that situation:

What's going on?

What about that can I control?

What else could I try?

What am I going to do, by when?

Result: The Clarity of Ownership

When you identify what is truly yours, you escape the blame game and step into clarity. You stop wasting energy on what you can't control and instead channel your effort into solutions and action. That clarity strengthens accountability in you and inspires it in others.

Reflection:

How did your perspective shift after applying See It–Own It–Solve It–Do It?

What did you release that wasn't truly yours?

What did you commit to that is?

Practice:

Complete this sentence in your journal:

Because I chose to apply the Accountability Framework, I now see that my next step is...

Final note: Ownership doesn't mean doing everything. It means refusing the blame game, seeing reality clearly, and taking responsibility for what is yours. When you model this shift, your team learns to do the same.

Section Four:

F – Free Yourself from Fear

The fourth dimension of surrendered leadership is about shifting from fear to love. Fear drives control—it keeps us playing small, protecting ourselves, and avoiding risk. Love expands possibilities. It allows us to see others clearly, will their good, and lead from a place of courage.

When you free yourself from fear, you stop asking, “What might go wrong for me?” and start asking, “What could be good for us?”

Look back at your assessment. How did you score on the “Free Yourself from Fear” dimension? Mark your score.



Experience: Fear Inventory

Take five minutes to write down the fears that most often show up in your leadership.

Examples:

- Fear of failure
- Fear of looking foolish
- Fear of letting others down
- Fear of losing control
- Fear of not being enough

Circle the one fear that shows up most often for you.

Now ask yourself:

What would it look like to respond to this situation from love instead of fear?

Belief Reflection Prompts

Where do you notice fear driving your choices at work?

What beliefs does fear whisper to you (e.g., *"If I don't hold on tightly, it will all fall apart"*)?

What belief rooted in love could you replace it with (e.g., *"If I release control, others have space to grow"*)?

How would leading from love instead of fear reshape your team's experience of you?

Result: The Courage of Love

When you free yourself from fear, the result is courage—not recklessness, but the steady willingness to act for the good of others even when outcomes are uncertain. Love broadens your vision, deepens your relationships, and creates safety for your team to risk, grow, and innovate.

Reflection:

How did your “Love Story” change the options you saw?

What shifted in your body or mindset when you imagined responding from love instead of fear?

How might your team experience you differently if love—not fear—was more foundational to your leadership?

What role does having faith play in sustaining love when fear tries to take over?

Practice:

Complete these sentences in your journal:

Because I chose to have faith instead of control, the space that opened up was...

To keep leading from love, I will place my faith in...

1. Is this simply activity—a task that checks a box, keeps me moving, or makes me feel in control?
2. Or is this purposeful action—something that creates an experience that shapes beliefs, builds clarity, strengthens alignment, or reinforces accountability?

Mark each task as either Activity or Experience-Creating.

Now, choose one task you marked as “just activity.” Ask: How could I reframe or redesign this so that it becomes an experience that shapes beliefs?

Example: Before your next meeting, instead of asking “what’s on the agenda?” Which is the action trap. Instead, ask yourself “what belief do I want to create in this meeting?”

Notice how different it feels when your focus shifts from getting things done to creating experiences that shape beliefs.

Belief Reflection Prompts

Where do you see yourself slipping into the Action Trap (checking boxes instead of creating meaning)?

What beliefs drive you there (e.g., *"If I'm busy, I'm valuable"* or *"Movement equals progress"*)?

What beliefs would help you recognize the difference between activity and purposeful action?

How does asking, "Does this action create an experience that shapes beliefs?" Change the way you prioritize?

Action Prompt: The Next Right Step

Think of one meaningful outcome you're working toward. Ask yourself:

What is the bigger purpose behind this outcome?

What action would not only move it forward, but also create an experience that shapes beliefs (yours or your team's)?

What is the smallest, most aligned step I can take toward that purpose today?

Write your answer, then commit to that single step. Not five steps. Not a full plan. Just the next right one.

Result: The Freedom of Purposeful Action

When you resist the Action Trap and choose purposeful action, the result is focus. Instead of scattering your energy across endless tasks, you channel it into experiences that shape beliefs, build clarity, and strengthen alignment. This creates momentum rooted in meaning, not exhaustion.

Reflection:

What did you notice when you distinguished between activity and experience-creating action?

How did it feel to design a task so that it shaped beliefs instead of just moving work forward?

How might your team experience you differently if you consistently modeled purposeful action over frenetic activity?

Practice:

Complete these sentences in your journal:

Because I chose purposeful action that created belief-shaping experiences, I was able to...

Final Note: Surrender doesn't mean doing nothing. It means doing the right things, at the right time, for the right reasons. When you let go of the Action Trap and choose purposeful action, you multiply impact without multiplying stress. Purposeful action creates experiences that shift beliefs—and those beliefs drive actions and get results.

The SHIFT model is about progress not perfection. Each small step creates experiences that shift beliefs. Those beliefs shape actions, and those actions produce results. This is the surrendered leader's path creating experiences which create clarity, alignment and accountability by letting go.

Spend 30 minutes with our subject-matter expert senior partners to discuss and address your organization's challenges through specific culture recommendations to change the entire trajectory of your organization.

Speak With an Expert

surrendertolead.com/consultation