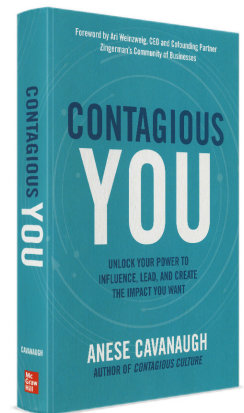


# Contagious You

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

by **Anese Cavanaugh**



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## THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

Everyone in an organization is a leader—for good or for bad—and leaders have tremendous power to influence those who follow their example. In *Contagious You*, author Anese Cavanaugh shows that the quality of our leadership is based upon our intentions, energy, and presence. By emphasizing authorship, self-care, and response-ability (not responsibility) as leadership skills and cultural amplifiers, Cavanaugh shows you how to walk the path of more effective leadership while navigating the roadblocks in your way.

Whether these roadblocks are working with negative co-workers with secret agendas and unrealistic expectations or just the general “busyness” of life, *Contagious You* will take you on a journey to create more space, more courageous leadership, and stronger collaboration to influence others and create the impact you desire.

The common denominator is you. No matter what level you’re on, your intentions, energy, and presence impact your ability to do anything within your life. *Contagious You* is an invitation to unlock your own power. So show up, lead, and intentionally become the change you wish to see.

## IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- What it means to be contagious and how to amplify your own energetic state to create positive impact.
- Why self-care is an essential leadership skill.
- How great leaders enable and encourage positive and contagious energy.

## Part I—Contagious You: Claim Your Power

### You Are Contagious. Own It.

Have you noticed you have the ability to influence other people's outlooks, decisions, and moods—not necessarily through the words you say but through your presence and the intentions behind your words? Or that you can change the mood of a room by the energy you bring into it (for good or bad)? Or that you can be in a meeting that feels great and productive but you have one negative person in there—and before you know it, the whole meeting sucks?

Most of us can relate to these scenes in our lives. Why? Because we are human. And we're contagious. Our intentions, energy, presence, and state of being are all contagious.

We put energy out there; we take energy on. This happens at work, at home, at the coffee shop, on the train, and everywhere else we go. Whatever we put out there and whatever we take on affects our ability to influence, lead, and create the impact we want.

So the real question becomes, what kind of contagious do you want to be? What do you want to put out there? What do you want to take on? And in service of what?

### So, What Is Contagious?

Simply put, contagious means something, a disease or an emotion, feeling, or attitude that can be spread from one person to another by direct or indirect contact that is likely to spread and affect others. For good or bad.

Great news; this is all your choice. And whatever you decide will be contagious.

At the root of your contagiousness are your intentions, energy, and presence, and your *Intentional Energetic Presence*® (your IEP). You control all of these things. They're yours; nobody can do them for you; no one can take them away. Make any of them better, and you level-up your ability to create influence.

Leadership and culture are something that we *be*, not that we *do*. The being, which is our intentions, energy, and presence, is like food coloring in water—you can't separate the being from the doing. It infuses and colors everything. It's contagious. The doing is important, absolutely—but the being is what people respond to and are inspired or repelled by.

If we lead intentionally with the being and doing working

together well, we're more likely to have a positive impact.

It is easier to put culture out there—to hold culture as something to be done or something that everyone else is responsible for. Holding culture as internal—something that you are and that you are accountable for—can be confronting. It requires you to be present and aware. It requires connection with others. It requires vulnerability.

And it requires self-reflection and accountability, posing the questions, “How am I showing up to create the experience I'm having? How am I contributing to my situation? What help might I need?”

This is a tremendous gift and superpower, and like any good superpower it comes with opportunity and also great responsibility.

### More Credibility, Success, and Influence Is Within You. Get It.

If you want it, go for it. The only question is, are you willing to do the work? And an even more important question that will fuel your work is *why*? What is the desire that will make this all worth it?

There is a bigger reason, a bigger “why,” for doing what we do than just doing what we do. If there isn't, our goals and intentions can fall apart fast. If our why is strong enough and the thing we want is important enough—we will do it. The more connected we are to our why, the more sustainable our leadership becomes. Especially when it gets hard to do the work. So what do you want and why?

If you are having a hard time connecting with this idea or accessing what you want, start small—start with “a cup of coffee,” or “a day off,” or “a new pencil.” Then work your way up: to have a better relationship, to run a 5K, to be a better parent, to get a promotion, to impact 10,000 people next month, and so on. You'll come up with a list. When you have all the “wants” out in front of you, go back and circle the top five to focus on for now.

### The “Want It/Love It Up” Five-Step

Now that you know what you want, we can go deeper to lock it in and bring it closer to reality. Do the five-step.

- **See it.** Envision yourself doing it or being it, see the result of it, and see the people around you benefiting from it.
- **Want it.** Connect with the feeling of having this thing.

# The Portal of Purpose results from clarity of intention, powerful proclamation, true presence, commitment to service, and openness to magic.

Feel where success lives in your body, the energy of having it, the feeling of connection and aliveness that comes with it, the importance of it. Really feel this. Feel it? Great, now turn the want dial up. Want it more. Breathe. Good.

- **Know it.** What will this do for you? What will it give you? What will you be able to do because of this? Who will you become? Now, tap into what will happen if you don't create this. What's the cost? Feel that. Now come back to what's possible when you've created it. Stay there.
- **Decide it.** Once you see it, want it, and know it—it's time to decide to create it. No kidding. Make the full-body decision to make it so. It's on you to lead.
- **Love it.** Now all you have to do is love it up, partner with it, stay conscious in it, and get ready to do the work.

## Desire, Intention, Impact. Clarify It.

Let's talk about how to create intention and open the "Portal of Purpose" so you can unlock the next level of your ability to lead, influence, and create the impact you want.

The Five Steps to Intentional Impact Framework supports crafting intentional impact, in its simplest form, to create tangible and intangible results in any conversation, project, relationship, or experience.

- 1. Outcome.** What is the outcome you want to create? This should be tangible and something you can see or touch. You would not have created this outcome without the meeting, conversation, project, and so on.
- 2. Impact.** What is the emotional impact you want to have? How do you want people to feel? How do you want to feel? You will create an emotional and energetic experience with your presence and actions either way. Being intentional about it is highly useful.
- 3. Show up.** How will you have to show up to create the outcome(s) and emotional impact you desire? What will your presence be? Your quality of listening? Your body language? Your attire? Anything that impacts how you show up goes here.

- 4. Believe.** What will you want and need to believe in order to show up that way? Make this authentic. If you're having a hard time finding something useful and real to believe, go deeper. What's the truest thing you can believe to help you show up well and be congruent?
- 5. Actions.** What actions will you need to take to make it all so? What will you actually have to do? Before, during, after?

You will find that magic happens when you are clear on what you want, have a strong why, put these five steps together, and do the work. You need all five steps. Don't skip or take any of them for granted.

## The Portal of Purpose and the Power of Intention and Proclamation

These steps strengthen your intention and make it real, which is core to opening the Portal of Purpose for even more powerful and exuberant impact. The intentions we set create a portal for our reality. The Portal of Purpose results from clarity of intention, powerful proclamation, true presence, commitment to service, and openness to magic.

The portal opens up when your IEP is clear, when you listen, when you're in service of, when you come from love, when you honor your intuition, and when you're willing to say "yes" to really scary stuff because your soul demands it. The portal opens up when you're willing to be on your edge and to devote to service and creating an impact that is bigger than you.

Stories abound in which an intention is set, a proclamation is made, the purpose is strong, and magic unfolds—stories of serendipitous meetings; people attracting the right business partners, employees, agents, clients, or spouses; colleagues landing serendipitous speaking gigs and book deals; even money or clients "showing up" at the perfect time—all accessed in the Portal of Purpose.

The portal can only be accessed if we are taking excellent care of ourselves, owning our impact, holding the intention of service, and listening. Add in magic, proclamations, and true presence (which requires great IEP)—the possibilities are limitless.

## Part II—Contagious Presence: Unlock and Nourish Your Superpowers

### Design Your Intentional Presence. Be It.

Every interaction we have has a “vibrational energetic” impact. The difference in being successful (or not) in any engagement can be as simple as the impact our vibe creates. We can invite responsiveness—or resistance. We can create inspiration—or obligation. We can evoke doom and gloom—or light up a room. We can inspire authenticity—or fakery. We can open a conversation up—or shut it right down. All with our energetic presence.

The most important work leaders can do is strengthen our IEP. The more we tend to this proactively, the stronger it becomes and the easier it is to command our energetic presence at will. This ultimately allows us to respond and lead in the most appropriate, helpful, and effective ways possible. This is leadership.

### The IEP Method®

As your Intentional Energetic Presence, your IEP is how you show up in the world (for yourself and for others). It is also your intentions—what you want to have happen; your energy—the energy and stamina you have to do so and the energy you bring to the table; and your presence—how you show up, how present you are, and what you bring to the now.

There are three parts of the IEP Method:

**Reboot your presence.** This is your ability to reboot your presence in the moment and shift state, no matter what. You check your presence and the energy you’re bringing into a room or conversation. If it’s not what you want it to be or what will best serve what you’re there to do, you reboot. You breathe. Intend. Shift. Show up. And go.

### Build a strong, energetic foundation and field.

Building your energetic field is the biggest component of the methodology. Our first intention is to build your energetic field so you can come fully to your life, feel solid, clear, and energized, and have the capacity and range for even more.

Our second intention is to build your field so well that when others step into it, especially the people who may be more challenging to work with, you can better serve, navigate, and lead them with clarity, grace, and effect—without burning yourself out, getting sucked into their stuff, or giving yourself away. The stronger the field, the easier it is to hold these two intentions. It also becomes easier to reboot, shift

state, and create intentional impact.

**Create intentional impact.** Part of this involves the Five Steps to Intentional Impact, noted above. The better you are at rebooting (part 1) and the stronger your energetic foundation and field (part 2), the easier it is to create intentional impact (part 3). The three parts of the method all work together.

### Strengthen Your Immunity: Self-Care, Self-Kind, Self-Full. Nourish It.

Two desires—lead well and take care—are often held as mutually exclusive and working against each other, when really they need each other. One cannot survive without the other. Impact needs self-care for power and sustainability. Self-care needs impact for power and inspiration.

Self-care is not a “thing” you do; it is something you “be.” It’s a mindset that can inform every decision we make. When we “be” self-care, it doesn’t matter if we have three weeks for vacation off the grid, two minutes of silence, or no time at all and only a moment of presence with ourselves and a kind thought we can choose—we can access self-care immediately.

The illusion of what “self-care” is often deters people from participating in it. Self-care happens “in the cracks.” It doesn’t have to mean eight hours of sleep each night, two hours a day in the gym, a nutritionist, a personal trainer, decadent vacations, and a massage therapist following us around.

Self-care is being kind to yourself, taking care of yourself, and being your own best friend and advocate. It happens when you’ve had a hard day or moment and, instead of armoring up and forcing your way through, you admit it—and let yourself have a minute.

It happens when you opt out of a toxic conversation or relationship. It happens when instead of being unkind to yourself and beating yourself up for that last “fail” or “dumb thing you just said,” you offer yourself grace and even an acknowledgment for being brave. It happens when you ask for what *you* need. It happens when we give ourselves a moment to breathe, get present, and connect with our intention.

We can build our resiliency and immunity proactively and reactively. The more we’re exposed to negative contagions and react or respond well (by holding our space, taking care of ourselves, bouncing back, and continually learning from it), the more we are able to build our resiliency and immunity reactively. On the flip side, we can build it proactively

via self-care, intention, and using the strategies discussed here. Think of it like eating your vegetables, taking your vitamins, and choosing your thoughts—doing these things builds your immunity and resiliency.

### The Mindset of Building Your Immunity (Being)

The following are eight incredibly helpful principles for shifting mindset, building immunity, and strengthening IEP. Own and embody any of these, and you shift the field:

- My presence is my impact. How I show up matters.
- Showing up for myself first is vital to be able to show up for others.
- My relationship with myself is the most important relationship I have. (This includes any spiritual beliefs I hold and my relationship with a higher power.)
- The combination of trust, credibility, and leadership is an inside-out job.
- The clarity of my intention equals the power and quality of my impact (and the ease of doing anything).
- I matter. I have my own space. (I am “response-able” for holding and nourishing it.)
- I create my experience. I author my story. I lead me.
- Presence, not perfection.

Which feel most important to you? Whether you are a top-level executive or entry-level administrator, teacher or principal, wine-maker or grape picker . . . these principles strengthen the essential you and build your field. Choose one, embody it for a day, keep rebooting back to it, and see what opens up.

### The Seven Ps of Personal Burnout and Transforming “Bad” Things Into “Good.” Do It.

There’s a reason for the saying “It’s lonely at the top.” Leadership can be lonely. The further up the ladder we go, the more opportunities and responsibilities we have, the more people look to us for guidance, and the more expectations we have imposed on us or by us.

Additionally, as we grow in leadership, we may surpass friends, colleagues, team members, and even bosses we’ve worked with and are now responsible for leading. Our interests and priorities can change, creating shifts in relationship dynamics that can be disconnecting and jarring. We may worry what our peers think, what this growth and disconnect means, or that we simply no longer fit in.

The following seven Ps of burnout invite us to tend to our personal nourishment and burnout prevention more rigorously:

#### Lack of connection to presence and the pause.

Presence is about being present in the moment, to our lives, in our bodies, and to our current reality. The pause is about taking a time-out (between projects, meetings, wins, fails, and even thoughts) to regroup, reboot, rethink, reassess, and go. People are not going to let you pause (not because they’re evil but because they’re managing their own stuff), so you have to create presence and the pause for yourself. It is a choice.

Presence is about being present in the moment, to our lives, in our bodies, and to our current reality.

**Lack of connection to purpose and the portal.** It’s essential that we stay connected to why we’re doing what we’re doing to create impact (for the sake of what and for whom?), and also that our “why” grows with us. When we’re connected with purpose, service, and the humans we impact, our mission becomes clearer and stronger. From here, we’re not alone but, rather, in the portal of purpose together.

**Lack of connection to people.** Not feeling seen or cared for, not seeing or caring for others, being separate and inferior or superior to others, or forgetting we’re in relationship with the people we are with, creates separation and resistance, disconnects us from love, and violates a core human need to be a part of tribe. We have to “see” each other. Our humanity frees us.

**Lack of connection to pleasure and pain.** Accessing pleasure—playing, acknowledging delight, appreciating the moment, celebrating wins and failures, and taking time outs for fun—is essential for regeneration. Accessing pain and authentic emotion is just as important. In order to have our full range of experience, more of our authentic selves, and clean energetic hygiene—permission for pain and true emotion is vital.

**Lack of personal power.** With a lack of personal power or accountability, energy gets heavy and mucky and tends

to spiral, creating more of the same. Owning our power is contagious. Holding clear boundaries and taking accountability clears energy and empowers and supports others in doing the same as well.

**Lack of partnership with oneself.** The most important relationship we'll ever have is the one with ourselves. When you are present to your needs, honor your internal agreements with yourself, and trust you have your own back, you are stronger for everything else.

**An overabundance of pleasing others at the compromise of oneself.** Do not compromise your well-being or beliefs to please others. Do be in service of, support, or even help others—but let go of pleasing.

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## Part III—Contagious Relating: Build, Heal, and Optimize Your Relationships

### Other People's Problems, Projections, and Expectations. Rise Above Them.

Other people's problems, projections, and (contagious) expectations (OPPPE) are things we deal with every day—on both the sending and receiving end. They are easy to get hooked into and one of the greatest causes of resentment, confusion, exhaustion, blame, judgment, and lost time and energy. We're often so close to them, we don't realize they're happening. Yet with awareness, we can start to discern what's ours, what's not, and what energy we choose to expend appropriately.

**HELP: A Formula for Navigating the "Problem P" of OPPPE.** The next time someone comes at you with the first P in OPPPE, asks you for support or to "have a chat," or anything in this domain that feels "off" or heavy, HELP:

**Hold/Honor.** Don't respond instantly to everything. Take a pause. Ask yourself, "Can I serve best in this moment? Am I in the right space to contribute?" Hold the energetic state and boundary of service and intention.

**Engage/Enroll.** When you do respond, ask the other person to be specific. What's the topic? How much time would he or she like? How can you be most helpful? And what are some potential times to talk so you can both be present? Getting clear here allows you (and the person) to plan and to be more fully present and in the right headspace to contribute.

**Love/Lean in.** When you do talk, give the person 100 percent of your presence and care—100 percent. Contribute as best you can. Love the heck out of the person. Be generous. Be there.

**Plan/Parameters.** Be clear about the conversation and your role. Is it something you are qualified for and the best person to support him or her in? If yes, great. If not (because it needs specific expertise from another team member, professional, or even a therapist), communicate that.

**Other People's Projections.** We project our experiences, feelings, thoughts, and judgments—good and bad—on each other all the time consciously and more often unconsciously. Projection is energy and a form of communication through presence and a way of being that is usually communicated nonverbally. Projection is the mechanism of a contagion, either positive or negative.

The trick is not to never do it but, rather, to be conscious of it, to catch it, to breathe, to be responsible for it, to get curious, and to get into right relationship with ourselves and others as quickly and consciously as possible. This is a practice—it is a leadership muscle.

To project is human. To have awareness and to be responsible for what we put out there in service of other humans is leadership.

**Other People's (Contagious) Expectations.** We have expectations of how people should show up for us, how they should perform, what they should hold as important, and what they should do for us. We have assumptions about what people agree to, how they feel about us (or anything), how busy they are, what's going on in their lives, and why they did something. Both expectations and assumptions are a form of projection.

Neither work out so great. Trying to live up to someone else's expectations and assumptions sets the tone for burn-out, takes us out of presence, and diminishes trust and credibility on both sides.

So how do we navigate expectations and assumptions (those of others and our own)? We stay present and clear. We stay tuned in. We remember we all have unconscious expectations and assumptions; so then we stay in our lane, show up in a way that is true for us, check ourselves, and name our expectations and assumptions as clearly, cleanly, and proactively as possible.

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## Part IV—Contagious Leadership: Inspire and Grow Others

### Bring People With You. Enroll and Serve Them.

Masterful leadership inspires, enables, and creates more positively contagious leaders, who inspire, enable, and cre-

The intention of service can help us focus on what matters most, get out of our own way, and unleash the most potent version of ourselves in service of others.

ate more positively contagious leaders, and on and on and on—all in service of creating positive impact.

So how do you grow other leaders? How do you inspire, enable, and enroll them not only in being more positively contagious, purpose-driven leaders but in paying it forward?

Consider the following five core components of creating other leaders.

**#1. The Powerful Intention of Service.** If you're on purpose, driven, and feeling in flow, it's probably not just because your leadership is directing you to be or because you're supposed to for your job. It's something way bigger than yourself or your desire for comfort. Underneath it all is likely the intention of service. The intention of service can help us focus on what matters most, get out of our own way, and unleash the most potent version of ourselves in service of others. From here, our leadership is no longer about surviving or looking good or being right or careful—it's about people. Any conversation, feedback, or act of leadership when tied to the intention of service becomes easier, clearer, and more compelling to whomever you're doing it for.

**#2. Don't Empower Them: Hold a Big Container and Set Them Up to Win.** One of your greatest duties as a leader is to hold space for the people you lead. The container is the energetic space you hold for someone to grow, do the best work in, and show up as powerfully as possible. The size of the container we hold for another can impact who that person becomes. If we don't believe in someone and hold a small container, he or she will likely sense it—and show up accordingly. If we believe in the person and hold a large container, he or she will sense that too—and show up accordingly.

**#3. Give Productive Feedback.** To lead well, you must get good at feedback. This includes giving it and receiving it. Make sure the feedback is in service of your person, clean, clear, and specific. See the humans you are giving the feedback to—they are just like you with hopes, dreams, fears, heart, and a desire to do well. Love them. Remember that their growth (and your honesty) is more important than your comfort.

**#4. Enroll, Recognize, Honor, Value, Trust, and See the Humans You Lead.** Remember that you are leading human beings. You must see them, their values and their value. You are “response-able” to them, not responsible for them. You may be their boss or their mentor, but you are not responsible for their success. They are. You are “response-able” to lead them, to be direct and clear, to help them navigate their path, and to help them learn, fall down, get up, and become the best leader they can be.

**#5. Let Them Lead.** Your job as leader is not to be followed. It's to create, nourish, and grow other leaders. One of the ultimate forms of contagiousness is contagious leadership. In order to do this you will need to take care of a few things: your ego (i.e., your pride), your congruency, your growth, your mentorship, and your presence, purpose, and play.

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## Part V—Contagious Impact: Be a Force for Good in the World

### Create a (Positively) Contagious Culture. Live It.

Now we move into impact. If you're living Parts 1 through 4, impact is easy. It's happening. But is it sustainable? Is it real? And how do a bunch of contagious yous do it all together?

Organizations that have been integrating this work during the past few years were interviewed about where they are now, how they have applied this work, how it has grown, and what works. Best-practice beliefs and mindsets emerged in the following five areas:

- Simple awareness, being present, knowing we're contagious, “seeing” people, acknowledging and honoring them, and taking a pause were part of the magic sauce that got them started and made this work real.
- Taking care of themselves really did make them better for others.
- Being a positively contagious culture didn't just stay at work—it followed people home, impacting their

marriages, kids, families, and other aspects of their personal lives.

- Little things mean a lot. It's often not a huge overhaul or initiative that's needed. Sometimes it's simply owning (and shifting) presence, connecting with intention, being kind, and/or choosing to integrate one idea at a time that makes the most real and sustainable changes.
- It's a journey. Creating or changing culture takes intention, time, and practice. You've got to do the work, and the work starts with you.

Vivayic, a learning services company with the purpose of "building others' capacity to do good in the world," has been integrating the IEP Model over the past three years. All new employees are introduced to IEP during the two-week onboarding process, and they attend a two-day live IEP event as quickly as possible. Components of the IEP Method are written into Vivayic competency models and creative operating procedures so that IEP will be part of ongoing processes, growth, and development conversations.

Emily Kueker and Carrie Derner, two of the owners, reflected on what they've learned to build a positively contagious culture for their team of 30-plus employees all working virtually.

"Creating awareness about the contagious nature of energy has been essential in giving us a common language to address the presence each of us brings into conversations," shares Emily. "We know we've been successful in establishing the IEP Method when a teammate volunteers, 'I need to reboot,' during a meeting."

The company has excellent employee engagement scores, which has led to extraordinary client engagement.

The company recorded a Net Promoter Score of 82 in its most recent survey. This has led to Vivayic earning a spot on the Inc 5000 list for fastest-growing private companies four years in a row.

Our best bet for leadership is us. It's being the change we want to see. It's leading ourselves so we can lead others. It's getting command of our state, thinking, and well-being. It's loving ourselves and each other so much that we can't help but show up and lead better. It's having a mindset that we are in service of others. It's being clear and rooted in our intention.

Choose what you want to be contagious for, and get out there and lead.

## IF YOU LIKED THIS SUMMARY, YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE:

- *Contagious Culture: Show Up, Set the Tone, and Intentionally Create an Organization That Thrives* by Anese Cavanaugh
- *The Power of Presence: Unlock Your Potential to Influence and Engage Others* by Kristi Hedges



Anese Cavanaugh is an award-winning speaker, teacher, advisor, and thinking partner to some of today's most innovative organizations and business leaders around the world. She 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. In addition to creating and teaching the IEP Method® (Intentional Energetic Presence®), she speaks on leadership, showing up, being positively contagious, nourishing our relationship with ourselves, and creating a healthy culture.

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