Wake Up Silicon Valley

From Prison to Paradise

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Chitra Lele

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Foreword

From the renowned and versatile young author and management consultant, Chitra Lele, comes a highly thought-provoking academic and reference book, *Wake Up Silicon Valley: From Prison to Paradise*. This book blends Chitra's spiritual insights and experiences with the positive side of technology in order to provide a comprehensive user's manual for personal as well as collective transformation. This user's manual provides a doable roadmap where the best of both the worlds can be achieved**:** spirituality and technology.

Chitra, through her own corporate anecdotes and spiritual 'aha' moments, shares some really valuable nuggets of the inner spark whereby the inner spark of the Silicon Valley and the silicon chip can work in unison for the greater good of the world. As Chitra rightly puts it, the way the Silicon Valley goes, so goes the world. Therefore, any positive trend towards spiritual progress that originates in the Silicon Valley will eventually spread out its wings across all points on the world compass.

Chitra discusses the finer nuances of mindful awareness, grounding, collective buy-in, compassion and service, energy-sharing dynamics, and several other deeper aspects that are needed to be developed and nurtured to introduce spiritual workplaces in the Silicon Valley and elsewhere in the world too. She further elucidates the various dimensions of self-driven teams, collaborative team culture and an activated inner leader

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element needed to introduce and sustain spiritual discipline in the Silicon Valley environment. Chitra provides practical advice on how to transform the Silicon Valley hyper-connected, cut-throat workplace into a workplace that offers a smorgasbord of spiritual insights and deep learnings. This practical advice is universal in tone—it can be applied to any other industry too.

People in the Silicon Valley and from all walks of life are constantly battling with a plethora of insecurities, fears and syndromes, and don't know where these are from or what causes them to suffer so much. By the time you finish this book that is filled with byte-sized nuggets, you will know where these originate from and how to handle them.

The teachings and learnings in this book show that the possibility of transforming this world into paradise is possible by connecting to the inner-net that is within one's heart, and once each one of us manages to maintain this constant connection, our outer chaos and noise are bound to diminish. Chitra presses the fact that there has never been a greater need to slow down, tune out from the external digital distractions and plug into the internal technology of truth and light. Healing the self and opening the heart hub is a must for transcending all the barriers of controls, agendas and beliefs. Chitra also provides excellent tools for overcoming workplace problems of office politics, cubicle chaos and cut-throat competition.

Chitra deals with how Transformative technologies can transform the inner as well as outer lives of people in the Silicon Valley as well as in the world. She shares some eye-opening aspects as to how tech adventurers and mind explorers can work together in order to come up with transformative technologies, tools and apps that not only help employees in the Silicon Valley and also

the rest of the world to tap into higher states of consciousness, but also help to change the global landscape by helping people to break free from destructive thought patterns (of fear, anger, competition, jealousy, etc.).

Whether you work in the Silicon Valley or elsewhere, if you understand and apply what you read, your work life will never be the same—all dimensions of your life will change for the better. Chitra has designed an error-free spiritual source code that can install the script of caring and sharing, of seeking the highest truth and ultimate joy, of giving love and wisdom, on your life's operating system. The source code for igniting the inner spark is open to one and all, and all thanks to Chitra and her book.

Wake Up Silicon Valley—it is time to break the chains of the carnal cage and soar high into the skies of prime paradise!

Mike Rana,
Group Captain (Retd.) (Indian Air Force),
Software Consultant and Author of '*A Citizen's Manifesto–A Ray of Hope*'
and '*A Wonderful World–Dreams and Reality*'

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Perpetual thanks goes to God for being my mentor. I thank the Higher Essence for opening me up to new depths of bliss and helping me to discover new aspects of my inner-self.

Special thanks to my exceptional Publishers, Akhand Publishing House, for their valuable support and services provided throughout the entire book process. It was a great experience working with this talented team of professionals.

I tender my genuine gratitude to Mike Rana Sir, a reputed Indian author and software consultant, who has evinced keen interest in my book and has written a scholarly Foreword for the same.

A very special gratitude goes out to all my colleagues in my management consultancy who helped me to validate my learnings and insights in their everyday work life flow. It is because of their support that I am able to share tried and tested tips and methods for spiritual progress in a hyper-connected tech world with you all.

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I wish to thank all fellow-seekers, both in the online communities and in the real world, for their constructive comments and frank feedback, which helped me to improve my work and share a more doable roadmap for personal as well as collective transformation.

I am also grateful to my family of readers who have supported me along the way. I have poured my heart and soul out into these pages and hope that they touch your heart and soul too.

I beg forgiveness of all those who have been with me over the course of the years and whose names I have failed to mention. Your encouragement and support is deeply appreciated by me.

Chitra Lele

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Preface

Can technology and spirituality go hand in hand in the Silicon Valley or even elsewhere in the world? Yes, but we are far away from this merger. The epicenter of the Silicon Valley is all about money and more money; here technology is considered the primary vehicle for bringing about changes in all spheres of life. But for this merger to happen successfully, we need to delve deeper into the technology of spirituality, in other words the science behind spirituality, and this is possible through my academic book, *Wake Up Silicon Valley: From Prison to Paradise.* This book is your "operational manual" and "user's guide" for transforming yourself into an enlightened engineer who will help fellow travelers to unlock their own operations manual and user's guide.

No one ever said life is easy. I have been to the mountaintops of technology and looked at the waters of luxury. I have spent time admiring the rising sun of progress and striking butterflies of positive change. And I have also spent time in the abyss of despair and the chasm of void with questions like "Why me?" or "Why am I here?" It wasn't until I finally was able to look past the Silicon Valley and bring my attention to what was going on in the inner valleys of my existence, the world within, that I was finally able to understand and appreciate the value of the lessons in life's valleys. I am a young management consultant, earning reasonable amount of money, and traveling the world over for my work, but does this really fulfill my soul mission. No!

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Many people have been suppressed from realizing their spiritual side due to cut-throat competition and peer pressure in the Silicon Valley workplace and elsewhere too.

Many technology giants in the Silicon Valley are pledging billions of dollars for addressing world issues and it is a good sign, but true spiritual awakening is not only about investing money for resolving world problems, but it entails also investing in spiritual capital in uplifting the condition of the world community. Now that is what I call a 'Spiritual Start-Up in the Silicon Valley' and once it is done in the Silicon Valley, it is bound to be imitated across the global landscape.

Nearly 350 years ago, inventor, philosopher and mathematician, Blaise Pascal, after whom a ground-breaking computer programming language was named, said there was a "God-shaped hole in the heart of every man." Is it really possible to break free from our high-speed, high-demand complex lives and fill this hole in our hearts? Yes! Indeed! And my book will show you how to achieve this.

Technology is continually feeding change—every morning that we wake up, the world has changed again. Yes this change poses both challenges and opportunities to spiritual growth. Through my book, we will focus on how to minimize the challenges and increase the opportunities for empowering spiritual growth and spiritual living.

Several small things—like using the silent mode on the smartphone in order to acquire inner silence and calmness, or one can also share uplifting images with a motivating message one has captured using a digital camera with others on social media, or one can still be active on social media websites through personal and

meaningful conversations with friends instead of being a part of the crazy environment of comments and likes—are needed to bring about a conscious use of technology, which in turn helps to calibrate the digital desires and digital distractions. This goes to show that technology can have a positive side too, which is as subtle as the spiritual side. We must thank the Higher Essence for giving us this positive side of technology and we must use this side in an honorable way to connect to our spiritual side. The Higher Essence has bestowed on me the inner vision to see and utilize this subtle side of technology and has empowered me to use this side to share my knowledge and learnings with you all.

The digital divide is not about who have ready access to technology and those who do not, but rather about those who can overcome the constant digital distractions and those who cannot. Technology changes every single day, but the spiritual anchor in our heart stays the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. This inner flowing equity of spiritual reserves is something that we need to tap into in order to encode the deeper meaning of our existence successfully.

When our ears and eyes live in the virtual reality, the time for spirituality is thin. Through this book, I have attempted to provide a doable roadmap with signposts at each and every turn to guide our ears and eyes towards the real destination**:** the spiritual paradise.

Chitra Lele

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Part 1:
A New Spirituality for a New Culture

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1. Spirituality in the Silicon Valley

It is great to learn that we as a tech-driven culture have come a long way, right from the days of the abacus to the current age of wearable technology. Technology startups are mushrooming all around us. What about spiritual startups in an ever-increasing competitive world where everyone is out to cut each other's throats! I am not talking about spiritual startups in terms of religion, rituals, faith, institutions or faith, but something concrete and transformative that provides a platform where one can strike a balance between inner and outer lives. We live in a world where we are virtually linked to every other individual on this planet, yet not really connected in the true sense.

I don't live in the Silicon Valley anymore as I moved out of it to chart out my own path sometime back. I am well aware of what is wrong out there after working in the Valley. At the end of it all, where does our inner spark stand in all this ho-hum drudgeries? We need to get out of the technology matrix and look at the bigger picture. The outer life deals with materialistic pleasures and pains, work, society and family, whereas the inner life is to become one with oneself, and to connect with each other on a deeper level. And this is where a judicious use of technology and information can prove to be valuable.

Currently, technology as a tool of transformation is mostly affecting aspects of the outer, materialistic world. But there is hope, as there are a good number of digital seekers including myself who want to be able to help fellow travelers to be able to strike a balance between

when to depend on technology and information, and when to rely on inner knowledge and intuition.

In order to bring about this spiritual transformation and to experience this fundamental feeling, one needs to undergo some sort of severe crisis and only then the spiritual search begins. It happens to all of us. It happened to me as well!

There are many corporate counselors and congregations in the Silicon Valley. Do they really cater to the spiritual needs of their patrons? No, not really. These are religion-based or faith-based structures, and do not really offer what is really needed to build the spiritual muscle.

There are several stereotypes in the Silicon Valley and a predominant stereotype is one of an over-inflated sense of self-importance. These are the ones who feel that only they can heal and save the world. Well this is partly true and partly false. They can heal and save the planet but not alone—this has to be a collective effort—everyone is equally important in this process. Such stereotypes need to have periods of calm reflection and think about where they fit in the grand scheme of things. This book has a lot of nuggets of information and experiences that will help the Silicon Valley to overcome these stereotypes.

Spotlight Tip
We as a collective consciousness need to awaken from the collective faulty programming we are under, and work together towards providing solutions in the best interests of humanity using both technology and our inner compass.

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