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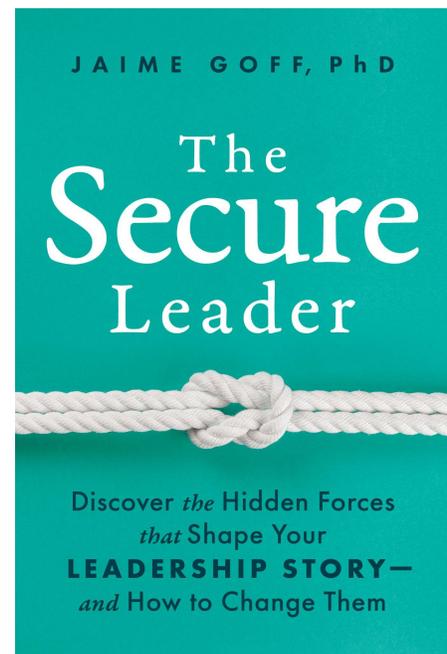
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

New book helping leaders embrace authenticity, purpose and inner clarity at work

DALLAS, Texas– The world has changed. Has your leadership?

Since 2020, global events have reshaped our expectations of work and leadership. Today’s workforce seeks more than just a paycheck; they crave meaning, purpose, connection, and belonging. Traditional leadership models no longer suffice.

In “The Secure Leader” (Amplify Publishing, Sept. 9, 2025), Dr. Jaime Goff, a respected expert in psychology, human relationships, and leadership development, offers a groundbreaking path forward. She argues that true leadership begins not with mastering techniques, but with understanding who you are and why you lead.



Embark on a transformative journey of self-discovery and learn how to: deconstruct your story, identify key themes, reauthor your narrative, and more. “The Secure Leader” is your essential guide to navigating this new era of leadership. Embrace the opportunity to lead with authenticity, purpose, and resilience. Become the leader you’re destined to be, for today and for the future.

“The Secure Leader: Discover the Hidden Forces that Shape Your Leadership Story and How to Change Them”

Dr. Jaime Goff | Sept. 9, 2025 | Amplify Publishing | Nonfiction / Business and
Leadership



Hardcover | 979-8-89138-431-6 | \$28

About the Author

Dr. Jaime Goff is the founder of The Empathic Leader, LLC, where she specializes in helping leaders unlock their full potential through executive coaching, insightful workshops, and thought-provoking keynotes. With her unique blend of expertise in psychology and leadership development, Jaime helps individuals and teams navigate their toughest challenges, build resilience, and achieve transformative growth.



In addition to her coaching and speaking, Jaime serves as the Director of Leadership Development for an international healthcare system, where she designs and leads innovative programs that inspire leaders to thrive. Her career began in higher education as a professor of Couple and Family Therapy and later as an academic dean.

Dr. Goff's thought leadership has been featured in academic journals and industry magazines. She shares her insights regularly on her blog and LinkedIn, where she engages a thriving community. A seasoned speaker, Jaime has delivered presentations and workshops at more than 30 professional conferences.

Jaime holds a PhD in Couple and Family Therapy from Michigan State University and a graduate certificate in executive coaching from Southern Methodist University. She is an ICF-certified coach and holds the SHRM-CP designation. With over 25 years of experience as a psychotherapist, professor, and executive coach, she is passionate about helping leaders craft empowering stories that help them become more secure.

When she's not empowering others, you'll find Jaime hiking with her husband, Eric; spending time with her dog Ursa and her cat Amos; painting; or building Lego sets.

Find out more about them <https://drjaimegoff.com/>.

Follow Dr. Jaime Goff on social media:

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In an interview, Dr. Jaime Goff can discuss:

- **How discovering her own avoidant attachment style transformed her approach to leadership** – Through personal reflection and feedback, Jaime recognized how her deep independence and discomfort with vulnerability were limiting her effectiveness as a leader – and how doing the work to become more secure changed everything.
- **How each attachment style maps to specific leadership patterns** – Avoidant, anxious, and secure attachment styles play out in the workplace as micromanaging, approval-seeking, or transformational leadership, often without leaders realizing the origins of their behaviors.
- **How attachment theory reveals the emotional blueprint behind leadership behaviors** – Developed by psychologist John Bowlby, attachment theory shows how our early life experiences and internal scripts shape our core beliefs about trust, connection, and self-worth – beliefs that follow us into every relationship, including those at work.
- **Why understanding your leadership story is the first step to real change** – Many leadership behaviors stem from unconscious emotional patterns. Until leaders identify and deconstruct these early influences, they'll continue to repeat old scripts, even when they want to lead differently.
- **Examples of leadership styles in pop culture** – Popular characters like Michael Scott (“The Office”) and Miranda Priestly (“The Devil Wears Prada”) offer instantly recognizable portraits of anxious and avoidant leadership.
- **Why leadership is about who you are, not just what you do** – At its core, leadership isn't performative; it's deeply personal. Inner security, self-awareness, and emotional clarity drive the outer behaviors that inspire trust and build thriving teams.
- **The overlooked power of mindfulness and self-compassion in effective leadership** – Mindfulness builds emotional awareness and presence, while self-compassion helps leaders stay resilient, grounded, and less reactive, yet these skills are often missing from traditional leadership models.
- **How to incorporate emotional intelligence practices into leadership without adding more to your to-do list** – Mindfulness and self-compassion don't require extra time; they can be woven into daily moments, like taking a breath before a meeting or mentally resetting during transitions, even in high-stress environments like healthcare.
- **How the next generation of leaders is uniquely ready for emotionally intelligent leadership** – Shaped by disruption and remote work, younger leaders are prioritizing psychological safety, authenticity, and purpose, values that align deeply with attachment-informed leadership.



An Interview with Dr. Jaime Goff

What is attachment theory, and how did you come to see its relevance in leadership?

Developed by psychologist John Bowlby, the basic premise of attachment theory is that human beings are hardwired for and survive through connection. The foundational attachment relationship exists between an infant and their primary caregivers, who serve as a secure base from which the infant can safely explore the world. When there are signs of threat, infants engage in attachment-seeking behaviors to activate the protectiveness of their caregivers, who then serve as a safe haven where the infant finds comfort and has their needs met.

These early interactions lead to the development of an “internal working model” about whether or not others can be trusted and whether we are worthy of others’ attention and love. These internal working models are persistent throughout our lives and impact how we show up in every relationship – with romantic partners, with friends, with our own children, and with our work colleagues.

Based on my experience with attachment theory, I began to make observations about how leadership behaviors often aligned with the three primary attachment styles. As a result, I began digging deeper into the research on attachment theory and discovered that there are definite links between leadership behavior and the attachment style of the leader.

While writing "The Secure Leader," what did you discover about your own leadership journey?

I first learned about attachment theory in graduate school, and I realized I had a primarily avoidant attachment style based on my early life experiences. I’ve always had difficulty connecting with and identifying my own emotional experience, and when I’m under stress, I withdraw from others and go silent. I also developed the belief that no one was as capable or reliable as me, so it’s rare that I ask for help.



When I first became a leader, I noticed some of these same behaviors in my interactions with my team and colleagues. I was fiercely independent, to the point I had a really hard time allowing my administrative assistant to actually do her job. Through conversations with some wise mentors, I realized this style of leadership would not serve me well or be sustainable, so I had to start doing the work to become more secure – to change the insecure-avoidant attachment story that was guiding my life.

How do early life experiences shape our leadership behaviors as adults?

Our early life experiences lead to the development of three primary attachment styles – insecure-anxious, insecure-avoidant, and secure. Each of these styles shows up differently in our leadership behaviors.

Leaders with an insecure-anxious style likely experienced inconsistent emotional responsiveness, vacillating from excessive affection to harsh, critical, or withholding behavior from caregivers. In adulthood, this shows up as being driven by needs for belonging, reassurance, and approval. When they become leaders, these individuals tend to swing between transactional and laissez-faire leadership. On the transactional side, they reward their teams when they make the leader look good but punish them harshly for mistakes that could make the leader look bad. Due to their lack of confidence to make decisions, they can often swing toward laissez-faire leadership, allowing their teams to take full responsibility and giving little direction or feedback.

Adults who operate from an insecure-avoidant style likely experienced distant, even indifferent, caregivers who were not emotionally available. These experiences can stunt emotional awareness and the ability to create healthy interdependence in relationships. Instead, they often become overly responsible and independent. When they become leaders, they continue to focus on their own high performance and prefer to work alone. They tend to vacillate between command-and-control and laissez-faire leadership styles. They lean into the command-and-control style when their team is critical to their success. This is because they don't trust the team, and as a result, they micromanage their work. If the team is seen as a nuisance or barrier, the leader will shift into a laissez-faire style, where they ignore the needs of their team members, failing to provide direction and being unconcerned about growing and developing their team.



Those with a secure attachment style likely grew up in environments that were “good enough” with adequately accessible, responsive, and engaged caregivers. As children, they learned that if they were hungry, tired, or afraid, they could count on someone meeting their needs and providing comfort. Studies have shown that leaders with a secure attachment style are most closely aligned with a transformational leadership style – available to their followers, giving, encouraging, and empowering. And their teams flourish as a result.

You encourage leaders to deconstruct their leadership story before jumping into solutions. Why is that foundational step so important?

Deconstructing your leadership story is foundational because sustainable change doesn’t happen at the surface. It happens at the source. Many leaders operate from patterns shaped by early experiences, assumptions, and even unresolved fears that live beneath their conscious awareness. If they jump straight into solutions without understanding these internal drivers, they risk recycling the very patterns they’re trying to outgrow.

Research in neuroscience, psychology, and adult development shows that when we reflect on our past, how it shapes our values, behaviors, and blind spots, we build the self-awareness necessary to change from the inside out. This isn’t about dwelling on the past or blaming our parents. It’s about understanding the stories behind our leadership style, which can help us rewrite a new leadership story that is more authentic, intentional, and sustainable.

In your book, you use Michael Scott from "The Office" and Miranda Priestly from "The Devil Wears Prada" to illustrate insecure leadership styles. Why do these personas resonate, and what can real-life leaders learn from them?

I wanted to use examples from popular media that people might be familiar with so they could immediately understand how attachment styles show up in leadership. Both Michael and Miranda represent the most extreme version of their attachment styles.

With Michael, we see a leader who wants nothing more than to be liked. His emotional neediness and dependence on others to determine his worth undermines his potential and his ability to be successful in both his career and his personal life. Although we laugh at Michael’s antics on “The Office,” most of us would be frustrated with him as a leader.



He shows us how an insecure-anxious attachment style can hold us back if we're unaware of it and aren't working to rewrite that story.

Miranda is on the opposite side of the attachment-style continuum, representing the insecure-avoidant style. In the opening scene of "The Devil Wears Prada," we immediately see this attachment style on display. Her employees live in fear of her criticism and micromanaging. The contempt she feels for them is obvious through her eye-rolling and name-calling. It's clear she believes no one she works with is competent enough to merit her appreciation or trust. There may have been a time in the past when this type of leadership was tolerated, but in today's workplace, these leaders create toxic cultures and drive employees away.

You place a strong emphasis on mindfulness and self-compassion. Why are these skills particularly vital in leadership, and why are they so often missing from traditional leadership models?

These two skills are critical for leaders because they provide the inner stability that empower leaders to respond intentionally rather than react. Specifically, mindfulness helps leaders become more self-aware, emotionally regulated, and attuned to others. This improves focus and clarity under stress; reduces impulsive reactivity; and improves personal effectiveness. Leaders who practice mindfulness are less likely to be hijacked by emotion or ego and more likely to act with wisdom and perspective.

Self-compassion strengthens resilience and protects leaders from burnout and imposter syndrome. Studies show that self-compassion is linked to greater emotional resilience, more motivation, and lower levels of anxiety and perfectionism. Without self-compassion, we're more likely to default to self-criticism, which erodes confidence and narrows our capacity to lead through uncertainty or failure.

I think these are often missing in traditional leadership development because they aren't quick fixes. You start to experience immediate benefits when implementing these skills, but the long-term results come with consistent practice. Additionally, these aren't practices you can "see" from the outside.



In a fast-paced workplace, how can leaders realistically integrate these practices without feeling like they're adding another task to their overflowing plate?

It's a misconception that these practices take a lot of time. In fact, once you begin practicing them, you can start using them in the flow of work. Most of my work has been in healthcare with nurses and physicians. There are very few professions that are more stressful and more high stakes. But even in this environment, mindfulness and self-compassion can be integrated into the flow of clinical practice.

A few examples are:

- Taking one deep, cleansing breath before seeing your next patient and saying to yourself, "I'm here."
- Using the 20-30 seconds spent washing your hands after each patient interaction to notice your breath and silently repeat a grounding phrase such as, "May I meet this moment with clarity."
- Using shift changes or patient handoffs as a cue to reset by naming what you're leaving behind and what you're stepping into.
- Modeling self-compassion, especially as a leader, by saying, "I missed that too. I'm giving myself some grace today."

What's one misconception about leadership that you hope this book puts to rest?

I don't know that it's necessarily a misconception, but I hope people will realize that leadership goes so much deeper than the behaviors you observe on the outside. Who you are as a leader drives what you do as a leader.

How do you think the next generation of leaders, especially those shaped by remote work and pandemic-era changes, will engage with your ideas?

The next generation of leaders is coming of age in a world shaped by disruption, disconnection, and accelerated change. Remote work, pandemic-era instability, and increasing mental health challenges are all shaping how they think about leadership. The younger workforce is no longer satisfied with performative confidence or hierarchical control. They crave psychological safety, authenticity, and purpose.

This makes them uniquely primed to engage with the ideas in my work - especially around deconstructing their leadership stories, building self-awareness, and leading from inner



security. This generation understands that leadership isn't just about driving results but also about presence, emotional intelligence, connection, and resilience. They're more open to practices like mindfulness and self-compassion because they've seen firsthand the cost of ignoring wellbeing.

Secure leaders create safe, collaborative spaces where others can thrive. For those who didn't grow up with a secure foundation, is it truly possible to become a secure leader later in life? What are the key mindset shifts needed to begin that transformation?

Yes! It is absolutely possible to “earn security” later in life, even if you didn't grow up in an optimal environment. Otherwise, what would be the point of writing this book?

First of all, it's important to remember that our brain's neuroplasticity supports change. We have the ability to rewire (or rewrite) emotional patterns and relational responses through practices that increase mindfulness, emotional regulation, and self-reflection.

Safe relationships also help us heal insecure attachment. If we have secure relationships with partners, friends, mentors, therapists, or coaches, we can repair attachment injuries over time. When we're consistently seen and supported in healthy relationships, this creates new neural pathways in our brains. These emotionally corrective experiences can help us gradually overwrite earlier scripts of unworthiness, abandonment, or mistrust.

Finally, people don't need to erase their past to grow. They need to reframe their stories with honesty and self-compassion. Research shows that people who can articulate a coherent, emotionally honest story about their past, even if it was painful, are more likely to lead with integrity and security. This narrative integration is a major predictor of emotional resilience and secure functioning in adulthood.



Testimonials

“As a recovering insecure-avoidant leader, *The Secure Leader* put words around why I behaved the way I did – and why I saw leadership the way I did. Dr. Goff explains how emotional disconnection can feel like a strength, but really, it’s a freeze response rooted in early survival. This book helped me connect the dots between my past and my leadership style – and offered a more grounded, connected path forward. I wish I had read this book earlier in my career.”

— *Crystal Kohanke, MS, SHRM-CP, ACC, SVP & Chief People Officer, Arkansas Children’s Hospital*

“Most of us in leadership have worked tirelessly to get to where we are, putting in long hours, earning advanced degrees, collecting certifications, and mastering our craft. We’ve done the work. And yet, despite all that effort, many of us are unknowingly sabotaging not just our own performance but also the potential of those we lead. *The Secure Leader* is the missing piece in the leadership puzzle. It reveals how our past, long before our first promotion, shapes our ability to lead. This book is a must read for any leader ready to confront what’s beneath the surface and do the hard but transformative work of rewriting their leadership story. The impact won’t just change you. It will ripple out to everyone you influence.”

— *Amy Cunningham, CEPA, Partner & Managing Director, Republic Capital Group*

“Finally, a leadership book that addresses the root cause of leadership challenges: the leader’s inner narrative. *The Secure Leader* is not just a book; it’s a profound self-discovery process. Dr. Goff’s expertise in human relationships shines through, providing actionable strategies to rewrite your leadership story and lead with purpose.”

—*Michael Stallard, Author of Connection Culture and Fired Up or Burned Out*

“*The Secure Leader* is more than just a leadership book—it’s a guide to understanding yourself at a deeper level and unlocking your full potential. Dr. Jaime Goff provides a thoughtful, research-backed approach to leadership that goes beyond tactics and into the heart of what makes great leaders: emotional security, self-awareness, and meaningful connection. This book challenged me to reflect on my own leadership story and gave me the tools to rewrite it for the better. A must-read for anyone committed to personal and professional growth!”

— *Ahmad Sharif, MD, MPH, SCPM, Chief Medical Information Officer, CHRISTUS Health*