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TITLE INFORMATION

BELONGING AND HEALING

Creating Awesomeness For Yourself and Others

Dave A. Cornelius

JCWALK Ministries (248 pp.)

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BOOK REVIEW

An organizational coach explores how prioritizing inclusion and addressing the effects of trauma can improve one's workplace.

Cornelius has worked with startups and Fortune 500 companies such as General Motors and Citigroup, focusing on agility methodology, design thinking, and other growth-oriented business practices. He begins by positing that effects of the Covid-19 pandemic provided managers and employees with a valuable pause to “co-create a vision of belonging and...find healing for the trauma experienced throughout our lives.” He believes these two concepts are crucial to how humans solidify their identities and “prerequisites” for effective diversity, equity, and inclusion policies in the workplace. Each concept gets its own book section. In “Belonging,” Cornelius argues that workplaces that foster a sense of belonging allow employees to thrive, backing his view with references to studies and specific tools to gauge employees' emotions and increase feelings of acceptance. In “Healing,” he discusses how processing trauma and drawing on a foundation of support can help someone heal and flourish. A lengthy epilogue comprises transcripts from Cornelius' podcast, *KnowShare with Dr. Dave*. These conversations with counselor Tracy Treacy and coach Nobantu Mpotulo explore such topics as how to use the South African Xhosa concept of Ubuntu to make workplaces less siloed, and how one's personal identities affect one's work experience; all three conversants draw on their own experiences as people of color. Cornelius deftly blends hard evidence with instinctive insight; he provides a step-by-step strategy for managers to give workers a sense of belonging, for example, while also sharing personal anecdotes about overcoming hardships. The podcast transcripts further bring the book's abstractions into the real world via Mpotulo and Treacy's viewpoints. The fact that these conversations make up roughly three-quarters of the book, however, may be somewhat jarring to readers expecting a conventional management manual. There are also some strange jumps, as when Cornelius relates the story of a high school sports injury and immediately follows it with a section on forgiving perpetrators of trauma.

A proposal for more empathetic work environments that starts off sharply but later loses its way.

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