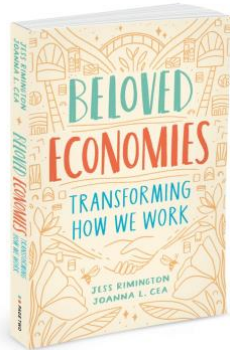


# 'CliffsNotes' Book Club Recap

DO YOU LOVE BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP, NEUROSCIENCE, AND BUSINESS, BUT NOT HAVE TIME TO READ ALL THE BOOKS?

Join the '**CliffsNotes' club**—where there's no pressure to pre-read the book, no membership required, no cost, and lots of discussion in just 90 minutes. Each month, you will hear a **summary of highlights** from a recently-published business book. This discussion summary is intended to provide a recap of the conversation at Book Club, rather than serve as a thorough book summary. We'll keep you "in the know" on the latest and greatest concepts and models. **Register here** for upcoming events.



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## Beloved Economies: Transforming How We Work

By Jess Rimington, Joanna L. Cea

### Discussion Highlights

Presented by Laura Mendelow

#### What is an Economy?

- Dr. Valerie Luzadis – "...an **economy** is simply a shared set of decisions created by people to manage the collective resources available.... '**Economics**'... 'is a way of considering how we provide for ourselves...and how we organize ourselves to sustain life and enhance its quality.'" (p 64)
- "We make economies real by behaving according to our belief that they exist." (p 65)
- Current economy, in its lovelessness, leaves communities carved out from extraction in search of financial profits, while compelling us to work in ways that make it harder for most of us to have time, energy, or resources to be together in ways that make life good. (p 31)

#### What is a Beloved Economy?

- Dr. Virgil Wood – pastor, educator and working in economic justice for more than 7 decades
  - o "Who says we can't have and don't deserve a beloved economy?"
  - o Coined the term in 1975 at a Southern Christian Leadership conference where he and other civil rights leaders focused on the "unfinished work" of economic transformation. (p 31)
- "An economy that no longer drains us, leaving us starving for power, agency and connection.... each person matters and it centers on what makes life good.... Where our business practices express love like prayers in recognition of what it takes for life to thrive. Where we all feel like we belong. Where we bring into being an economy that feels like love." (p 37)
- Enoch Elwell – "What is it that we all long for as people? At the end of the day, it's to be loved and to have significance." (p 283)

- Goal of this book is to help transform the way we work. Introduce concrete ways that people have successfully broken out of the mold from “business as usual” to a “Beloved Economy” workplace.

### Terminology and Key Concepts

- **Business as Usual** = “Ways of work oriented toward the maximization of monetary profit and growth at all costs and which shut down or narrow information that offers differing goals or strategies.” (p 12)
- **Workers & Capitalists**
  - The people who are working the hours, creating the things are “**workers**” (p 6)
  - The people who front the capital (money or other assets) are the **Capitalists**.
  - Our present economy orients work toward the **consolidation of financial wealth into the hands of a few**, time and again, creating an ever-widening chasm between the lives of those few and the live of most (p 19)
- **Wealth**
  - Business as usual defines wealth as financial wealth.
  - Other forms of wealth that contribute to our well-being are occupational (enjoyment from our work), social (personal relationships), community, physical and spiritual (sense of purpose and connection greater to oneself). (p 20)
- **Extraction**
  - The core of what isn’t working about work today.
  - “Extraction is the action of taking something, usually with effort or force, and not returning it. It’s a one-way flow of resources.” (p 21)
  - What is taken is not adequately replenished, repaired or made whole again – be it the labor of people or the trees of a forest. (p 22)
- **‘Right to Design’**
  - Ability for any person (regardless of status, level, race, intelligence, age, expertise, socio-economic class, etc.) to engage in redesigning a new future
  - Inclusive approach to innovation and design where everyone’s voice is heard. The broader, the better.
- **Breakout Innovators or Actors**
  - People whose ideas are bold re-imaginings that support what makes life good (goes beyond tweaking current systems).
  - Ideas achieve widespread adoption (people not only access the innovation but take the initiative to make it better or expand it).
  - The process awakens a deep sense of agency to innovate (sparks lasting shifts).

### How did this loveless economy evolve?

- 15<sup>th</sup> century – Changes disrupted feudalism → Elites scrambled to keep wealth
  - Settler-colonists
  - Enclosure
  - Plantation economy
- Normalized individual control over what should be collective spaces
- In the US
  - Plantation economy in the South → Developed plantations, a system in which enslaved persons grew cash crops like tobacco, sugar, and eventually cotton, “for the enrichment of enslavers.” (p 277). In the north → Creation of large-scale textile factories
  - NYC and **Wall Street**

- Reinforced belief that everything operates best when controlled by a few
- “Many present-day tactics... have roots that trace directly back to large-scale plantations of the US South, were developed by those responsible for enslaving people, and are linked to the brutality of forced labor.”  
source: *Accounting for Slavery: Masters and Management* by Caitlin Rosenthal
- “Although techniques have changed over time, much of business as usual still requires- and thereby replicates – approaches that seek to dehumanize...ways of working that implicitly consider certain people, beings and places as separate and less consequential – as other.” ( p 51)
- “Many things celebrated... such as exponential financial returns... are only possible with ways of work that increasingly cast human and nonhuman life as *other*. This way of treating people, and life at large, can even get disguised as a kind of cool, collected rationalism – or “professionalism.” (p 52)

## The Seven Principles

1. Share Decision-Making Power
  - Customized decision-making protocols
  - Full and accessible information-sharing
  - Shared Leadership, shared responsibility, and shared rewards
2. Prioritize Relationships
  - Building a culture of care
  - Welcoming brave conversations
  - Cultivating a relational worldview
3. Reckon with History
  - Prioritizing repair
  - Proactively creating time and space for history
  - Embracing team history
4. Seek Difference
  - Inviting multiple perspectives on diversity
  - Creating conditions that support safety and bravery
  - Using varied channels for contribution
5. Source from Multiple ways of Knowing
  - Proactively welcoming multiple ways of knowing
  - Building team capacity for greater awareness
6. Trust There is Time
  - Honoring people's time constraints and real urgency
  - Pointing out that varied approaches to time exist
  - Prioritizing the fundamentals
7. Prototype Early and Often
  - Testing basic assumptions before beginning
  - Working together to synthesize learnings and decide next steps
  - Replacing perfectionism with a culture of learning

**About the Book Club** In this monthly club, a presenter shares highlights from a book related to leadership, business, neuroscience, or coaching. Membership is not required, and there's no obligation to pre-read the book. This discussion summary is intended to provide a recap of the conversation at Book Club, rather than serve as a thorough book summary. [Register here](#) for upcoming events. For the full set of discussion summaries, [click here](#).