

Below are questions for discussion, including the questions from the book and some overall questions for group discussion.

Finding the Why

- **What impact do you want to create in the world?** This could be anything from reducing the amount of plastic in the oceans to decreasing racial bias in policing algorithms to mobilizing money for working-class political candidates to helping individuals to live by their values. You don't need to choose just one thing, but narrowing in on the approaches or issues that resonate most will help you focus.
- **What skills, experiences, and resources can you bring to that work?** Perhaps you are great at website design, played college basketball, or have made a lot of money working in the pharmaceutical industry. Everyone has different skills and resources they can bring to the issues they care about. Articulating what you are particularly good at will help you focus on where you can be most effective.
- **What next steps will best help you achieve that impact?** This is where the intersection of your abilities and the causes you care about helps point the way. Sometimes, this can be direct action like giving more money to nonprofits aligned with your goals. Other times, it can be indirect. If you want to help reduce racial bias in policing algorithms, you might need to get your PhD or work at a big technology company to build up the relevant skill set first.

What is an Impact-driven Career?

- How can you or your organization do more good? It's great if your company donates 1 percent of its profits to nonprofits each year, but how can you help improve that? Increase the giving rate to 2 percent? Give to better causes? Increase employee donations or service commitments?
- How can your organization or school do less harm? Does your organization participate in questionable wage or climate practices? In what ways can you internally help advocate for improving those practices?
- Are you reflecting on what impact you are having on the world beyond your job? Are you asking those working in other sectors for insights into how you could increase your impact? Only thinking about your impact with others in your industry is an easy way to miss out on critical ideas and perspectives.
- What unique opportunities do you have to support other organizations or systems?

The Spectrum of Reform

- Do you resonate with the reformers, transformers, or institutionalists? Which path do you think you'll pursue? What are the most likely challenges you would face?
- If developing your passion is like working on a crossword puzzle, what are the answers you think you have? What are some big unanswered questions?

- Do you find yourself outsourcing your potential impact to the organizations you associate with? If so, how can you shift that? Why is it hard?

Why Change Dies in the Social Sector

- Have you seen other examples of philanthropic efforts being far smaller than they could or should be? On the other hand, are there donations you've seen that are appropriately large?
- If you donate money, which factors influence your decisions most? Which factors should matter most?
- Have you seen the nonprofit starvation cycle in your life or someone else's? What could that organization look like if it had plentiful resources?
- How should we square the evidence dilemma? Rigorous evaluation is critical, but most organizations aren't funded to conduct it. Beyond calling for more evidence-related funding, what can we do in the short term?

How Change Thrives in the Social Sector

- How do nonprofits fit into your personal theory of change? How can you use your time, skills, career, and/or money to better enable nonprofits to enact change?
- Why do you think risk-seeking philanthropy is such a small share of overall giving? How could we shift that balance to increase the appetite for risk in philanthropy?
- How can you incorporate a more trust-based approach into your own giving? Is there feedback you can share with any foundations or donors in your own life?
- <bullets1>Where have you seen innovation in the social sector? How can we define and highlight it beyond a technological context?

Why Change Dies in the Public Sector

- How can we make electoral reform more salient in the face of the other challenges we face?
- How do we support a better image of government without endorsing the unsavory current version?
- How can we break down or override the power of the vetocracy in policy areas we care about?
- Where do you see hope or opportunity within government?

How Change Thrives in the Public Sector

- What are some government success stories we don't pay attention to often enough?
- Are you particularly interested in any areas of government policy?
- In what ways can you help shift who elected officials listen to?
- How can we counter the government doom loop?

Why Change Dies in the Private Sector

- Do you see shareholder primacy and short-term profits as the dominating force in private-sector decision-making? Where are the areas where it isn't true?
- Are there other examples of gaps between company press releases or media coverage and the reality of what is happening on the ground?
- What factors should you look for when determining your own personal investing decisions?

How Change Thrives in the Private Sector

- How do you balance the need for change from inside the private sector with the challenge of accomplishing it?
- If you are involved with or have studied any impact investing funds, which of the six leverage points do they make an impact on? Price, pledge, position, patience, purpose, or perspicacity?
- Could other governmental approaches or solutions help speed a transformation in corporate incentives? What are the opportunities and risks there?
- Where do you see the most promise for impact within the private sector?

Why Change Dies Across Sectors

- How do we balance the risk of "Do Somethingism" with inaction? How do we keep the momentum for a systemic solution going?
- How do you think about balancing individual responsibility for things like recycling with the need for systemic change? What are the trade-offs you consider in your own life?
- Where have you seen the status quo bias in action? How can we overcome it?

How Change Thrives Across Sectors

- When have you worked in tension with existing systems versus in line with them?
- What are some risks of working with systems too often? How do we balance the need to change systems in the long term with recognizing their power in the short term?
- Are there ways you can be better about admitting when things have gone wrong and learn from them?
- How can you better collaborate across siloes? How can we incentivize cross-sector collaboration?

Career Tactics in Social Change

- How are you incorporating career capital into your next steps? What skills, credentials, connections, or reserves are you planning to build or use?

- How are you currently wrestling (or not) with potential credentials? Is there a program you might want to pursue? If so, how will it unlock your career goals?
- What are some myths about building an impactful career that bother you? That still resonate?
- Create a list of role models (who you either know personally or don't know) you'd like to emulate. What is it about them that inspires you? What about their career paths are interesting to you? Do they have qualities you don't want to emulate?

Money in Social Impact

- Which of the five money models resonates with you? What questions are you grappling with when you consider money, your future work, and your personal theory of change?
- Where do you think the low pay in social impact jobs comes from? What are the implications for the sector's effectiveness?
- What resonated from this chapter on money? What did you disagree with?
- What factors beyond money are most important to your own happiness, sustainability, and satisfaction?

Keeping the Fire Alive

- Have you felt the Overwhelm before? How have you overcome it?
- Where do you find community? What sustainability tactics have worked for you? What practices, if any, do you want to try?
- Think through each of the contradictions listed above. Do some feel easier or harder to reconcile? What other contradictions, if any, have emerged while you've read this book?
- How do you think about your own lived experience in relationship to the change you want to make in the world?

End of book discussion questions

- What impact do you want to have in the world?
- After reading this book, are there some new paths that you are considering? Are you skeptical of some common paths that people take?
- How do you determine the difference between true impact and wishful thinking?
- What next steps make sense for you to advance your personal theory of change?