



Schachter Monthly

By Ephraim Schachter • Apr 07, 2026

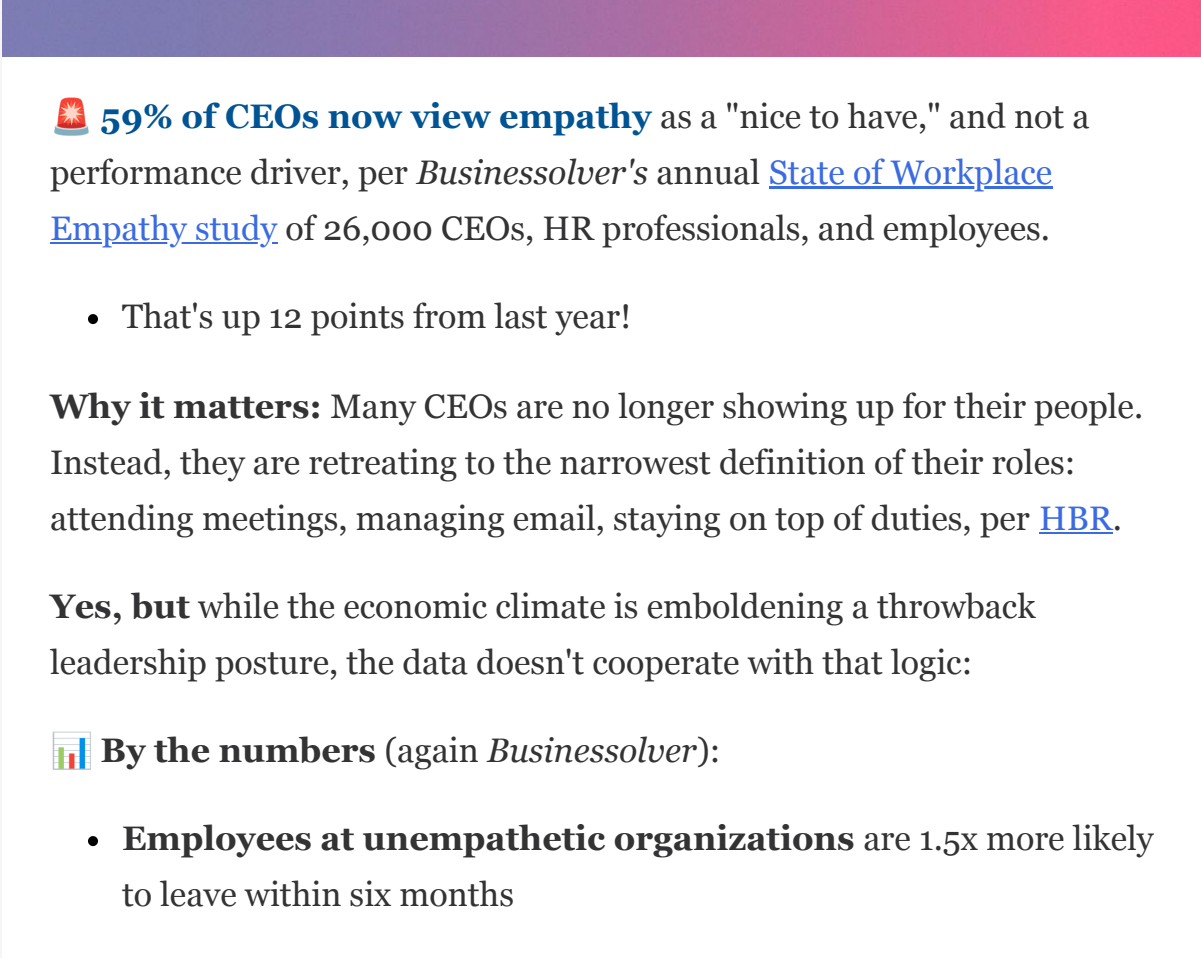
Smart Brevity® count: 5 mins...1269 words

🌸 **April is here.** Let's get to work.

🏆 **Let's be great leaders!** Here are some straightforward insights and actionable tools & tips.

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1 big thing: A backtrack on empathy might cost you



📊 **59% of CEOs now view empathy** as a "nice to have," and not a performance driver, per *Businessolver's* annual [State of Workplace Empathy study](#) of 26,000 CEOs, HR professionals, and employees.

- That's up 12 points from last year!

Why it matters: Many CEOs are no longer showing up for their people. Instead, they are retreating to the narrowest definition of their roles: attending meetings, managing email, staying on top of duties, per [HBR](#).

Yes, but while the economic climate is emboldening a throwback leadership posture, the data doesn't cooperate with that logic:

📊 **By the numbers** (again *Businessolver*):

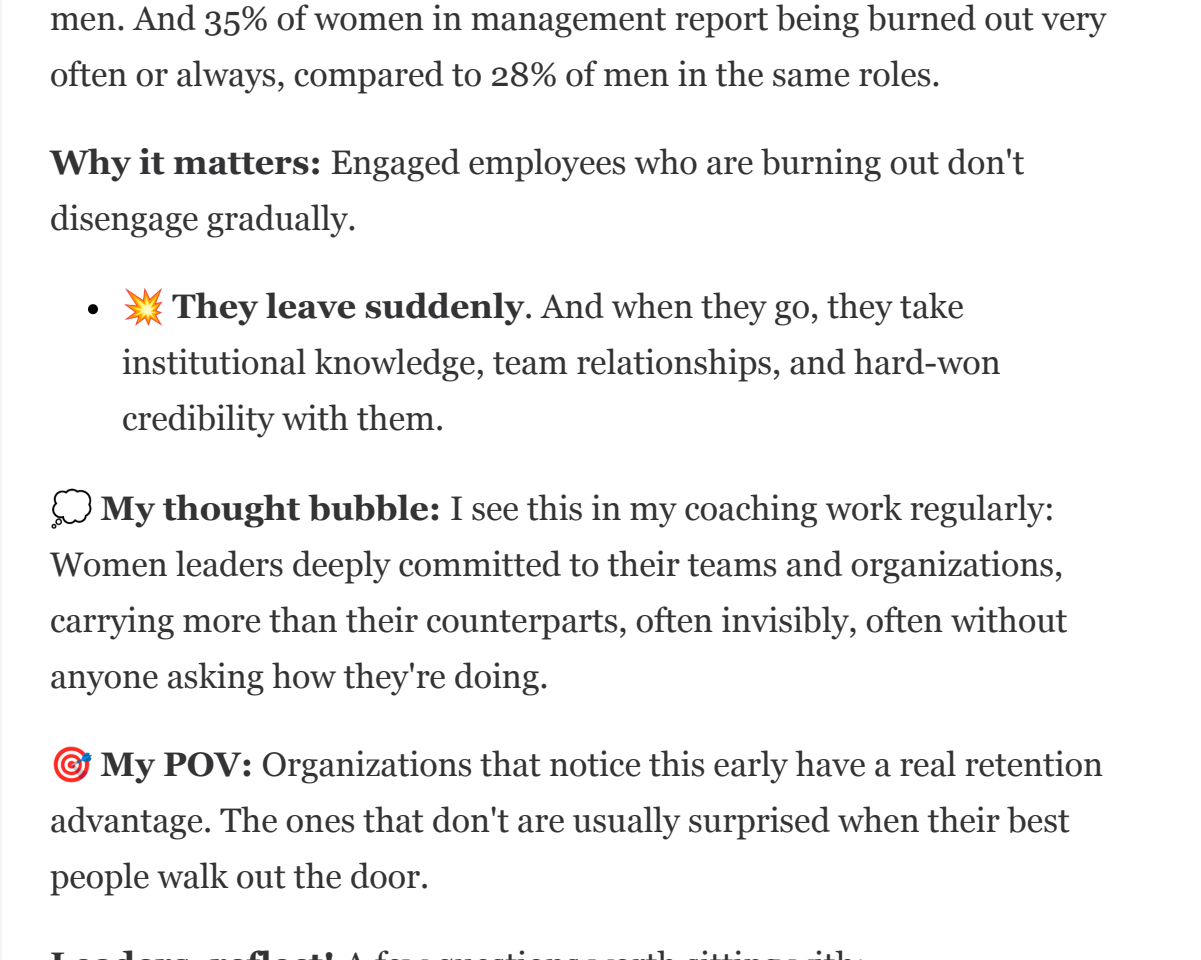
- **Employees at unempathetic organizations** are 1.5x more likely to leave within six months
- **Those organizations** face 3x higher workplace toxicity
- **Annual attrition cost:** an estimated \$180 billion

🎯 **My POV:** Empathy isn't softness. It's signal processing.

- **Leaders who understand** what their people are experiencing make better decisions, retain better talent, and build more resilient organizations.
- **Perfect example:** When employees find their leaders empathetic, they are more likely to speak up about small errors before they become catastrophic failures.
- **In an AI-frenzied environment,** your humanity is your competitive advantage. AI can optimize but it can't inspire.

The bottom line: The exit from empathy isn't a leadership upgrade. It's a \$180 billion liability.

2. The new burnout risk for women managers



Women managers are simultaneously the most engaged and the most burned out group in your organization, per [new Gallup data](#).

📊 **By the numbers:** 34% of women are engaged at work versus 28% of men. And 35% of women in management report being burned out very often or always, compared to 28% of men in the same roles.

Why it matters: Engaged employees who are burning out don't disengage gradually.

- 🌟 **They leave suddenly.** And when they go, they take institutional knowledge, team relationships, and hard-won credibility with them.

💬 **My thought bubble:** I see this in my coaching work regularly: Women leaders deeply committed to their teams and organizations, carrying more than their counterparts, often invisibly, often without anyone asking how they're doing.

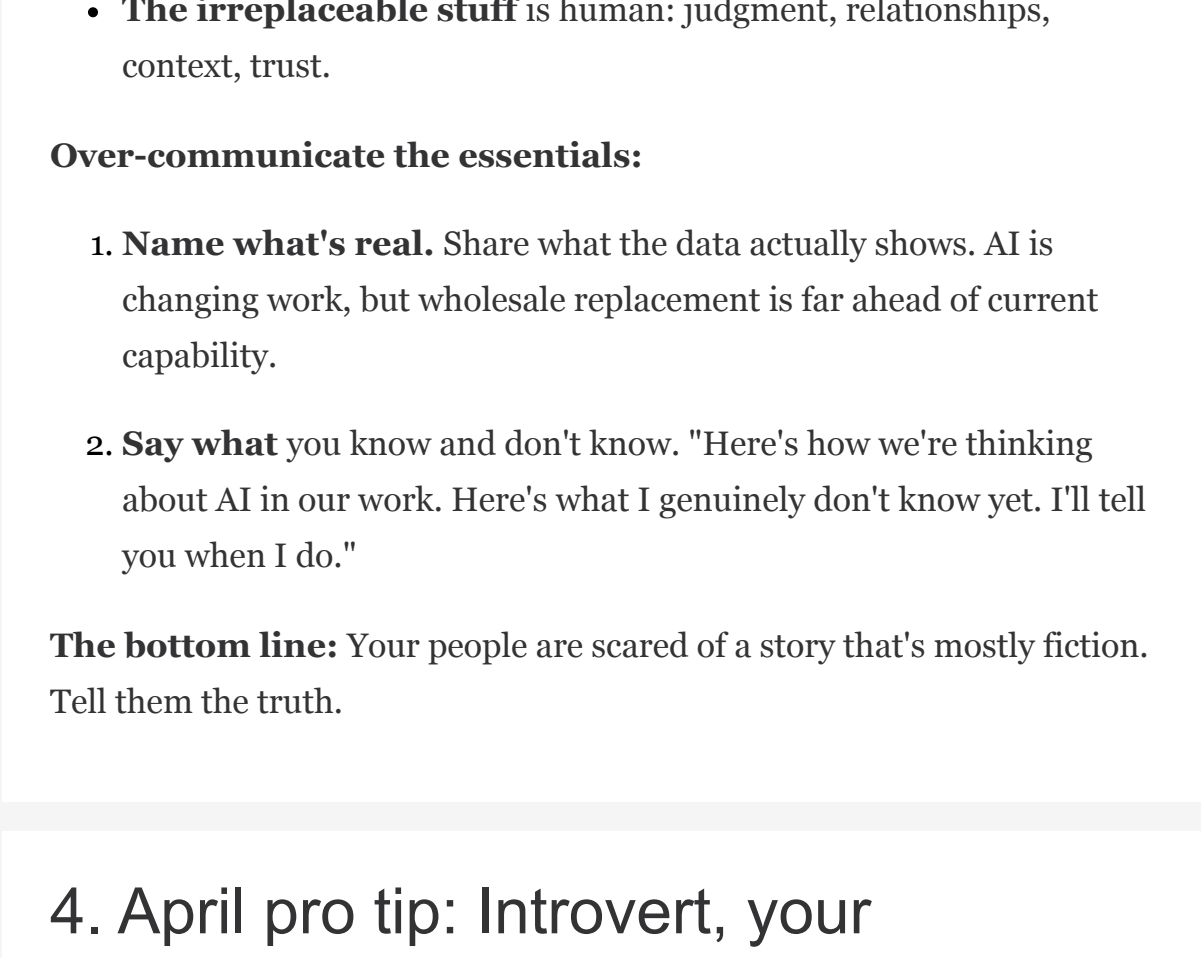
🎯 **My POV:** Organizations that notice this early have a real retention advantage. The ones that don't are usually surprised when their best people walk out the door.

Leaders, reflect! A few questions worth sitting with:

- Are you mistaking their engagement for sustainability?
- When did you last ask, and actually mean, "how are you doing?"

The bottom line: Your most engaged women managers may be your most at-risk talent. Don't wait for the exit interview to find out.

3. Come clean on AI washing



📰 **Your team has read the headlines** citing AI in layoff announcements at a record pace. What they may not know is that most of it isn't true.

Here's the gap: Only 9% of hiring managers say AI has replaced any roles while nearly 60% say they use it as an excuse because it sounds better than admitting financial pressure, per [Built In](#).

Why it matters: Your people deserve to know that. When employees believe AI is eliminating jobs indiscriminately, two things happen:

1. They disengage from the work in front of them.
2. They resist the AI tools you actually need them to adopt.

🎯 **My POV:** Both outcomes hurt your organization, and both are preventable with honest leadership.

👉 **Help your team answer to self-empower:**

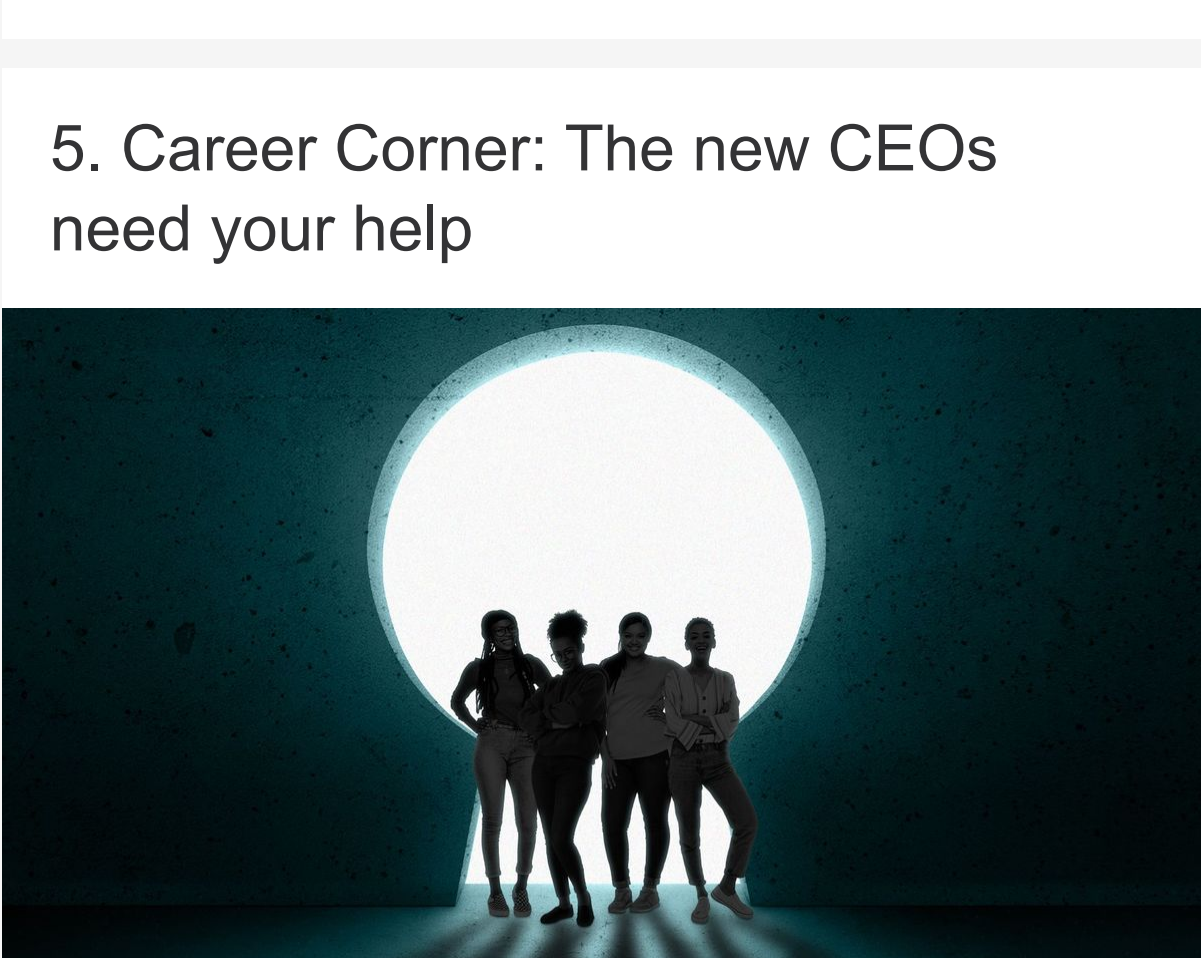
- **The right question** isn't "will AI take my job?" It's "which of my contributions will continue to matter, and how do I make them visible?"
- **The irreplaceable stuff** is human: judgment, relationships, context, trust.

Over-communicate the essentials:

1. **Name what's real.** Share what the data actually shows. AI is changing work, but wholesale replacement is far ahead of current capability.
2. **Say what** you know and don't know. "Here's how we're thinking about AI in our work. Here's what I genuinely don't know yet. I'll tell you when I do."

The bottom line: Your people are scared of a story that's mostly fiction. Tell them the truth.

4. April pro tip: Introvert, your ambivalence is showing



Many introverts dread the performative aspects of leadership and it shows up in how you carry yourself in high-stakes meetings and engage when the room is watching, per [research](#) published in *Personality and Individual Differences*.

- The researchers call this "forecasted negative affect."

Why it matters: Despite that you may be drawn to many aspects of leadership (e.g., making a meaningful impact and achieving your professional potential), you might be inadvertently self-selecting out.

- **The execs making** promotion decisions read those signals and surmise that you don't want authority.
- **Worse:** the extrovert next to you may be less capable but considerably less conflicted, is sending a very different message.

🔍 **Zoom out:** Consider what introverts have to offer:

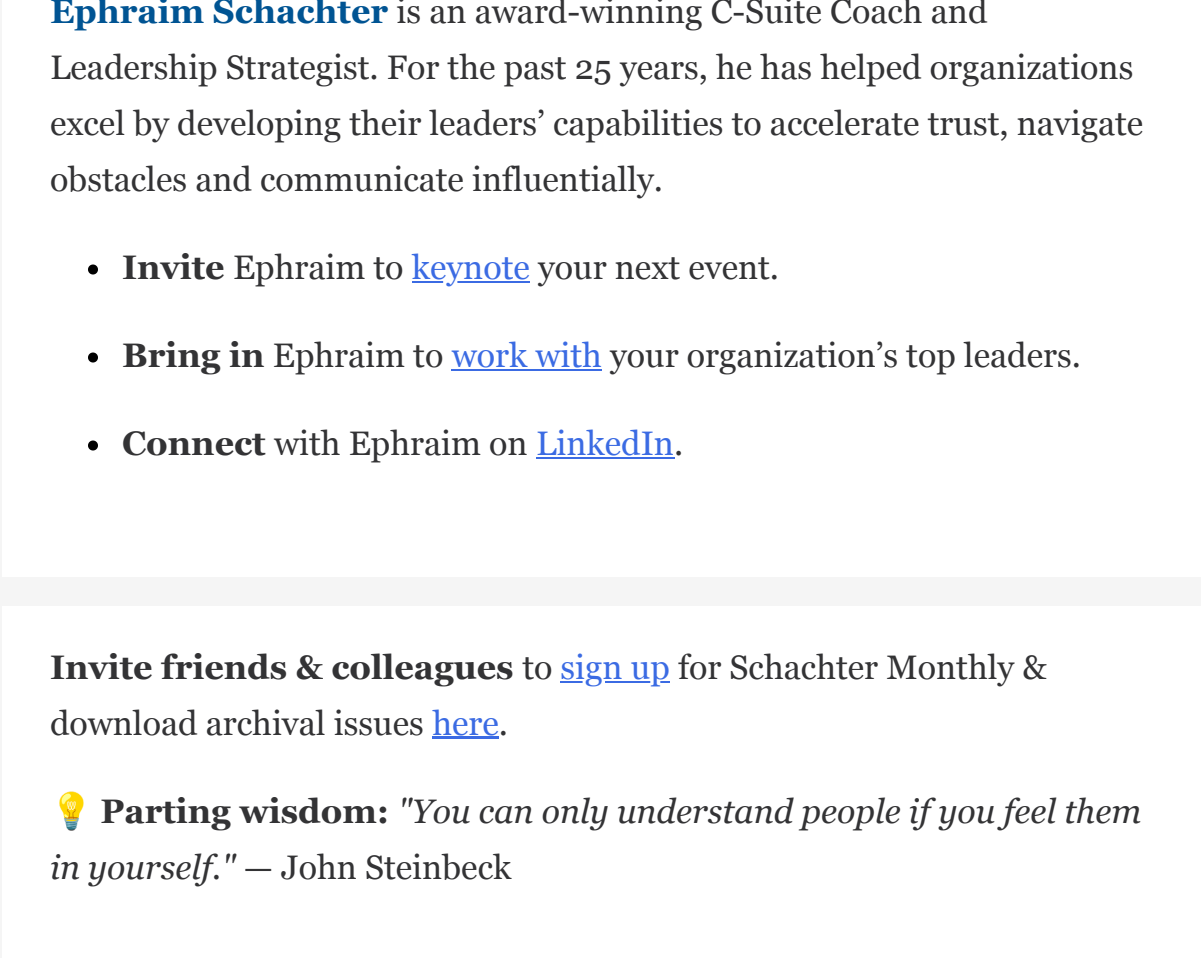
1. **Introverted leaders** actually outperform extroverts when their teams are proactive, per [Grant, Gino & Hofmann](#).
- **Data directly links** introvert traits like self-awareness, reflection, careful listening to stronger organizational financial performance, per [Korn Ferry](#).

👉 **Get out of your own way** if you want to stay viable:

1. **Separate ambivalence from action.** You don't have to love the spotlight to step into it. You just have to stop signaling that you'd rather not be there.
2. **Let your track record speak,** but make sure it's audible. Introverts often do excellent work quietly. Excellent quiet work does not get promoted. Find ways to make your contributions visible without performing.

The bottom line: The research says you'd make a great leader. The question is whether you're letting anyone see it.

5. Career Corner: The new CEOs need your help



📰 **Record CEO turnover** is reshaping the leadership landscape, not just at the top. When the CEO chair changes, the chairs below it shift too.

The new CEOs are younger and less experienced and will need help navigating AI's rapid rise, shifting trade norms, and an uncertain economic and geopolitical landscape, per [WSJ](#).

Why it matters: This creates openings for people who are visible, positioned, and ready.

💬 **My thought bubble:** I've watched clients get passed over for roles they were clearly ready for, only to land something better six months later when the board changed or a new organization decided to bet on someone with their profile.

Timing matters enormously in executive careers. The timing is unusually fluid.

🎯 **My POV:** Three things worth doing if you think you're in a window:

1. **Get visible with the right people.** Strategically, not performatively. Who are the boards, search firms, and leaders who should know your name?
2. **Sharpen your narrative.** When a door opens fast, you need to say clearly: here's what I've built, here's where I'm going. In six minutes, not six weeks.
3. **Don't wait for the posting.** Most executive roles are filled through conversation, not application.

The bottom line: Leadership is reshuffling at a pace not seen in over a decade. Don't miss the window by staying quiet.

6. 👉 Go deeper

Ephraim Schachter is an award-winning C-Suite Coach and Leadership Strategist. For the past 25 years, he has helped organizations excel by developing their leaders' capabilities to accelerate trust, navigate obstacles and communicate influentially.

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💡 **Parting wisdom:** "You can only understand people if you feel them in yourself." — John Steinbeck

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