

Jerry White's New Book: Be See Do: The Art of Humane Leadership

How to Remain Human While Trying to Change the World



BIRTH OF REASON AND CIARA BARNES

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When we interviewed Jerry White for Episode 5 of *Birth of Reason*, the conversation quickly became our most-watched video at the time. What stayed with us was not only what he had accomplished, but how he talked about it: without much interest in performing authority or presenting himself as someone with all the answers.

[Watch Ep. 5 with Jerry White](#)

At 20, while studying abroad, Jerry stepped on a landmine and lost his right leg. The experience changed the course of his life. He went on to become a leading advocate in the international movement to ban landmines and traveled to Bosnia with Diana, Princess of Wales, in 1997. That same year, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines received the Nobel Peace Prize, which White shares through his work with the campaign.

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Over the decades, Jerry has helped shape international efforts including the Mine Ban Treaty and the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. What stood out in the conversation was the way Jerry spoke about humanity, responsibility, and the slow work of peace.



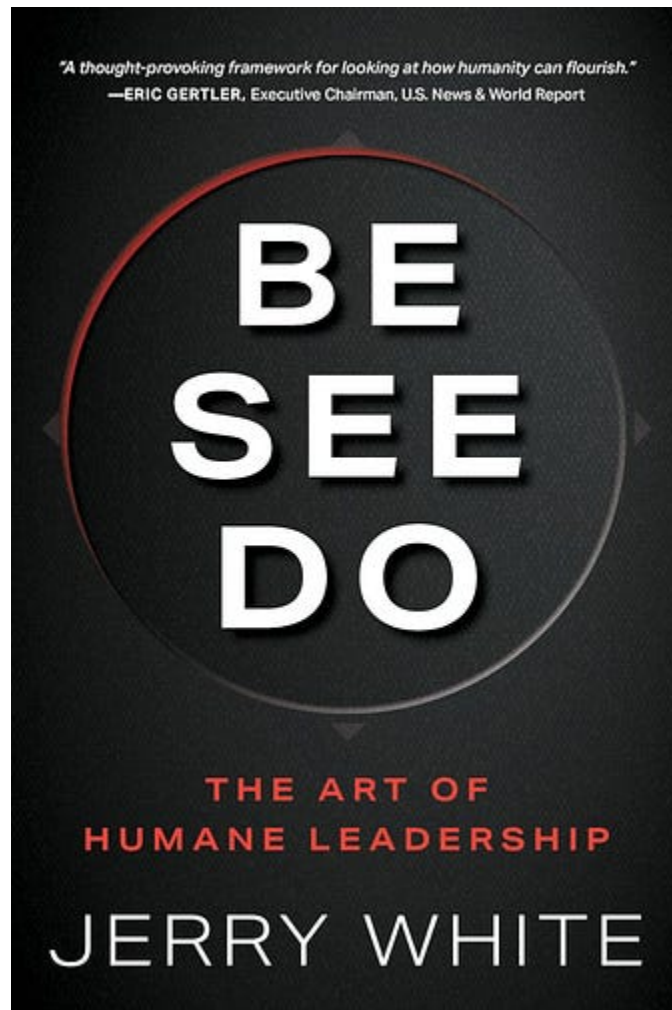
Jerry White (far right), who shares in the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, with Diana, Princess of Wales.

Some of Jerry White's answers to Judi's questions cut right to the heart of it:

"Landmines are weapons of mass destruction in slow motion."

"You never feel satisfied. The work is always there."

His new book, *Be See Do: The Art of Humane Leadership*, expands on that question: how do you stay useful, grounded, and human while trying to change difficult systems?



White describes *Be See Do* as “the most personal and practical expression” of what he has learned over four decades as an activist, survivor, diplomat, professor, and coalition-builder.

At its center is a deceptively difficult question: **how do you remain useful, humane, and grounded when the work itself can be exhausting, divisive, or painfully slow?**

He describes it as “the most personal and practical expression” of what he’s learned over four decades as an activist, survivor, diplomat, professor, and coalition-builder. The book focuses on something simple but complex to hold: how to stay useful, humane, and grounded in difficult times.

During our interview, Jerry spoke about the difference between “vertical faith” and “horizontal faith.” Vertical faith, he explained, is about deepening your own beliefs and values. Horizontal faith is what happens when we learn through relationship with other people.

As Jerry put it:

“It’s not airy-fairy harmony. It’s real relationships—walking the earth together.”

It is also a useful shorthand for the kind of leadership *Be See Do* argues for: conviction without isolation, and values tested through real relationships with other people.

Be See Do arrives at a time when leadership is often measured through visibility, certainty, and control. White offers another model: know what you believe, stay in relationship with other people, and keep doing the work even when the results are slow.

For anyone trying to change something without losing themselves in the process, that may be the more useful definition of leadership.

You can learn more about *Be See Do* at:

beseedo.com

And if Jerry’s message resonates with you, consider supporting the book by reading it, sharing it with someone you love, or leaving an honest review.

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