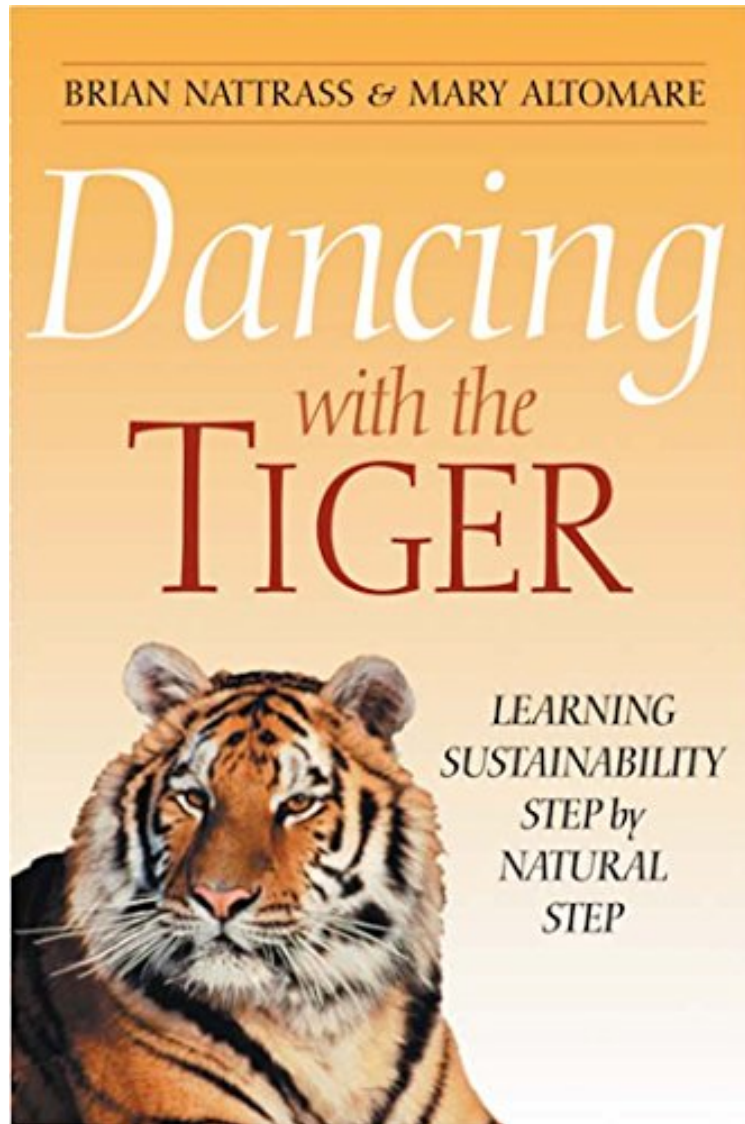


[Read now] Dancing with the Tiger: Learning Sustainability Step by Natural Step (Conscientious Commerce)

## Dancing with the Tiger: Learning Sustainability Step by Natural Step (Conscientious Commerce)

*Brian Nattrass, Mary Altomare*  
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**Brian Nattrass, Mary Altomare : Dancing with the Tiger: Learning Sustainability Step by Natural Step (Conscientious Commerce)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dancing with the Tiger: Learning Sustainability Step by Natural Step (Conscientious Commerce):

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Inspiring book for sustainability advocatesBy Michael R. MaserI'm more optimistic about the future, and inspired, after reading Dancing with the Tiger, which profiles sustainability measures introduced by - get ready for it - Nike, Starbucks, Whistler and CH2M Hill, a worldwide

engineering company. Dancing follows on the heels of *The Natural Step for Business* (NSP, 1997) in which Natrass and Altomare profiled The Natural Step, a Swedish-rooted initiative to improve corporate environmental and social practices. In that first book, I was titillated to learn about the efforts of companies like Ikea to improve working conditions and reduce the scale of their environmental footprint. Nonetheless, I remained deeply skeptical that other corps, and suits in general, were even remotely interested in grokking social and environmental problems and lining up on the solution side of the equation. Well, kudos to Natrass and Altomare (and *New Society*) for titillating me again. In the first three chapters Dancing provides a current, comprehensive overview of environmental degradation while illuminating the beguiling, complex nature of so many environmental problems. One reason we are befuddled by sustainability problems, the authors say, is because the problems are generally systematic and characterized by uncertainty. In order to overcome problems, we must think systematically and evolve beyond conventional scientific thinking. Natrass and Altomare assert that we must also develop a new vocabulary and story-culture linked to sustainability to supplant the warrior-take-all mentality that presently guides much of our thoughts, actions and business. This leads into the remainder of the book, with subsequent chapters profiling the corporate actions on behalf of sustainability taken by Nike, Starbucks, the municipality of Whistler and CH2M Hill Engineering. It is in this section where I found the biggest surprises. For example, I have longed linked Nike with all-too-common practices of environmental and social exploitation in service of corporate profits. Some of Nike's exploitative practices were revealed years ago, but clearly, the company has made efforts to evolve in more progressive directions. From cutting energy emissions to reducing pollution to helping improve educational opportunities for foreign workers, Nike is evolving, driven in large part because many of the suits, including CEO Phil Knight, instituted policies following the tenets of the Natural Step. Ditto for Starbucks, CH2M Hill Engineering (with more than 9,500 staff worldwide) and the municipality of Whistler. That's right, Whistler. Evidently, if you can look beyond the SUV-choked parking lots, the groomed hotel ashtrays and some of the most garish displays of conspicuous consumption seen since the decline of the Roman Empire, something remarkable is going on at Whistler. In fact, Whistler now ranks as one of the most environmentally sustainable municipalities on earth. Naturally, embracing sustainability didn't happen by accident here but falls out of the Whistler Environmental Strategy, crafted several years ago. Like the other examples, the WES was inspired by The Natural Step, and now guides municipal legislation. Addressing pollution reduction, landscape design, water use, environmental conservation, bear management and other issues, Whistler municipal practices are increasingly recognized as among the most progressive worldwide. Common to the examples cited by Natrass and Altomare were "ordinary people doing the extraordinary", visionary leaders and staff who persevered in service of sustainability and a core set of principles. The authors refer to them as "evolutionary pioneers, the forerunners who are exploring and drawing the maps of previously uncharted territory, making it easier for others to follow with more certainty." These people have the courage to look beyond the fear of disrupting corporate culture and strike out in a direction not commonly found in the world of business suits and bottom-line profits. This book makes a welcome and significant contribution to nudging the corporate world in the direction of a more sustainable world. I recommend buying a copy as a gift for the corporate executive or municipal planner of your choice. - Michael Maser; Gibsons BC Canada- END -2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Required Reading

By MC`Dancing with the Tiger' is a useful and well-written contribution to the growing body of literature that attempts to answer the question so many of us are asking today - what can I do about creating a sustainable world? A world in which we give back to life instead of just taking. This book is particularly helpful for those people within organizations who want to change consciousness from what Paul Hawken has called the 'take-make-waste' culture, to a self-regenerating and life-affirming way of being. The authors compare this process to 'dancing with a tiger', hence the title. The tiger takes many forms, for example the intensely competitive business environment many companies find themselves in. They give case studies of companies they have worked with as 'sustainability consultants', including Nike and Starbucks. It is encouraging to see the distance these multinational corporations have gone in their efforts...a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step, and steps are being taken on the long journey to real sustainability. They emphasize the complexity and interconnectedness of the challenge, and at the same time give credit to the many people within organizations who are passionately committed to creating a better world. Brian Natrass and Mary Altomare's work is a helpful and informative counterbalance to the often critical reviews of corporate behavior. Their work is based on 'The Natural Step' framework, an enlightened and straightforward approach that any organization can use in their efforts to align their purpose and mission with sustainability. It is inspiring to read quotes from employees and executives who have participated in this process within their organizations. I highly recommend this book to thoughtful readers who want to discover how to take responsibility for healing the planet. 11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Detailed case studies

By Bill Godfrey This successor to *The Natural Step for Business* is essentially a set of four extended case studies, preceded and followed by statements of principles derived from The Natural Step framework and case study experience. Your reaction to it will depend on your appetite for case studies - mine is not great. The wider exposition of principles is mainly a restatement - and sometimes an elaboration - of principles that can be found elsewhere, including on the Internet sites of The Natural Step. Those who are working directly with the framework as consultants or part of an internal team will pick up useful ideas and tips. The general reader would do better to start

with the authors' first book or with Karl-Henrik Robegrave's *The Natural Step Story: Seeding A Quiet Revolution*.

Sustainability consultants to Fortune 500 companies examine the real business impacts of the Natural Step framework.

About the Author Brian Nattrass: lawyer, CEO, Chairman of Earth Day International, and author of a book on corporate finance. Mary Altomare: academic administrator at Yale and Duke universities, and consultant with the World Bank and US AID. Both are now practice leaders for The Natural Step in North America.