



L I N Y I H A N

BECOME A
LEADER THAT
PEOPLE FOLLOW

THE FIRST STEPS OF A LEADER



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Chapter 1: What is Leadership About, Anyway?

Leadership is a buzzword used a lot these days.

No doubt, you've encountered the word over and over again in your journey.

You might have not been aware of it before, but...

Note from Author

If you've not been to my site before, it's located at <http://www.leadership-with-you.com> . If you are someone who's a manager, a pastor or a leader of any sort, come join me in the journey to grow to become someone of influence in the community.

..Leadership is probably something that you've been doing for a while now. In fact, leadership is a very natural process. You don't have to be deemed a leader to lead.

In fact, if you took your dog for a walk in the park; **you're already a leader!**

If you asked your kids to duly go to bed at 9pm and they obeyed; **you're a leader!**

John C Maxwell aptly describes leadership in a simple phrase: All leadership is influence.

If you can influence someone in any way, **you're a leader.** It doesn't matter if you tried or not; you could be a leader with both your eyes closed!

But of course, there are varying degrees of leadership.

There are powerful influential leaders who can change history, and on the hand there are poor leaders who can't manage a small team properly.

There are influential leaders like Winston Churchill who inspired Britain to make a stand against the invading Nazis; and then Hitler who made a nation believe that they were the superior race and therefore worthy of invading others.

And then...

..there's your supervisor whom you simply cannot stand; or your boss whom doesn't seem to care about anything else but his own promotion in the company!

What is the difference between them?

What makes one man so influential and another just mediocre?

The study of leadership is precisely for this purpose; how you can become a great man of influence who can change your community, wherever you are.

And this eBook is to help you move toward the goal of becoming that leader that you always envisioned yourself to be.

1.1 What is this eBook about?

This eBook was created for a simple reason;

To help you become a man of influence.

Whether you're a pastor in a church, a manager in a multi-national company, or the leader of a youth group, the same leadership principles apply to you as well.

If you are looking for success in growing your church, improving sales in your company or simply inspiring your youth group, **this eBook is for you**.

This eBook contains original content written by me, coupled with valuable experience that I've gained over the years and I want to share it with you.

I don't claim to be the best leader around, but I believe that we should never despise our experiences and always be ready to share them with the world.

If you have a leadership experience, I really hope that you can share it with me as well. My webmail is at yihan@leadership-with-you.com and you can write in with your story. I would love to hear from you.

In this eBook, I will be talking about becoming a leader that people will follow.

In our world today, there is a lot of talk about a person should **DO** to become a leader; techniques he must adopt, frameworks he can use...

But in this book, I would like to talk about **BECOMING** the leader that matters.

So what is the key difference between doing and being?

Ultimately, what differentiates you in the long run from the rest of the people is

not what you do, but who you are.

For example, you could learn that it is important to praise people, and so you keep it in your mind to praise and encourage your team whenever the situation arises. But of course, eventually you will forget about it as more important things crop up in your agenda.

You become someone who appreciates people. That way, you don't have to keep reminding yourself to praise. You praise naturally. You dish out encouragement freely. You are a thankful person.

You see the difference?

One is about **DOING**, the other is about **BEING**.

I will use the:

- **Leadership Principles**

I will talk about a leadership principle for every chapter and how it ensures your leadership success.

I will keep everything short and sweet.

There will not be long explanations on these principles; because I think you've heard of them in one way or another, but just short, succinct ideas and how you can apply them.

- **Leadership Quotes**

In each chapter, I will use quotes to support the points I am making. Leadership principles are never original because the same principles have been true for thousands of years; so there are really no new principles underlying success in leadership.

What has been said was true then, and will be true today.

- **My Personal Experiences**

I served as the president of a student-run organization, University-YMCA for about 3 years in my university days.

Through these 3 years, I have made many mistakes that I could have avoided, but all of it proved to be invaluable experiences for me.

I am also currently leading an adult group of about 30 people in my church; teaching them spiritual principles and helping them to grow in the Christian faith.

As I lead, I am also learning how to become a better leader.

I hope that the sharing of my personal experiences will greatly benefit you as well.

- **Practical Questions** that you use for reflection

In some of the chapters, I have inserted some questions that you can ask yourself. This is for self-reflection.

One of the most important gifts of any leader is to be self-aware and constantly evaluate and reflect on your actions.

It is this ability that will help you continually grow as a leader. Answer these questions to the best of your ability and take them seriously.

I guarantee that they will benefit you in your journey!

Before I begin talking about the leadership principles, let me tell you about my personal leadership journey and how it has transformed my life...



Chapter 2: My Leadership Journey

My name is Yihan and I live in Singapore. Singapore is a small island state that has prospered greatly in the past 50 years and has become one of the top cities of the world. If you're still not sure where it is, here's a picture from Google Maps...



Credit: Google Maps (Retrieved Feb 2013)

I graduated in one of the top business schools in Singapore, Singapore Management University and obtained two degrees: Business Management and Accountancy.

I have had various experiences in leadership when I was serving in the Singapore Armed Forces, but my real leadership journey began in January 2007.

In late 2006, my peers invited me to serve in the leadership of University-YMCA. As the name suggests, University-YMCA is a subsidiary of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), a Christian organization whose mission is to develop individuals in mind, body and spirit.

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(That's me in the center with the blue shirt)

My leadership journey began as the Vice-President of University-YMCA. Before this, I had never stepped up into a formal leadership position before. However, my peers saw something in me that they believe could move University-YMCA forward: passion.

Although I lacked the experience and the confidence to take up the leadership initially, my peers saw that I was someone who was hungry for greater things.

I was initially very apprehensive about taking up the position, but I chose to take the step of faith and agreed to rise up.

When I first stepped into University-YMCA, the organization was not in a very good shape. This was partly because it was a new organization: systems, processes and standard operating procedures were not in place yet.

Beyond the name, we were really youth group who gathered once a while for meetings and activities. While we were a happy group of people, but I felt we could do more for the community.

In late 2007, I stepped up as President. I wanted to raise this organization to prominence in Singapore Management University.

But more than that, I wanted this organization to change the dominant culture in the University.

Singapore Management University was made up of individuals who were driven, motivated, grade-focused and inward-looking. It's not a bad thing: but it was a University that had a culture of me-myself-and-I.

It was about studying extremely hard to get good grades, and getting a good job. As a result, students continually competed to be the best; but in the process lose sight about caring for the community and serving others who

need their help.

I felt that things had to change, so I took up the president's role with this vision in mind:

To change the mindset of the
Singapore Management University student

I chose my team of Executive Committee members: 10 of them and I shared the vision of changing culture with them and I instilled the passion in them to want to see the same change in school.



(Sharing of the organizational vision)

However, things were not as smooth sailing as I thought it would be. There were several problems that surfaced during the year 2008.

There were Executive Committee members that were more focused on their other responsibilities and they were not committed to seeing this vision come to pass.

It was then that I realized that it wasn't as easy as I thought it would be. I began to realize the work required to change a dominant culture in the community was going to be real hard work.

How could a small group of individuals change a whole community?

Was it even possible?

There were times that I felt extremely discouraged; times that I felt I was fighting this battle alone; many times I wanted to give up.

There were days that I just went down on my knees, cried and prayed for a breakthrough to happen.

Thankfully, things began to pick up again at the end of 2008; my leaders began

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to catch the vision of changing culture once again and they started running with me.

During this period, I also identified several new individuals that could take leadership positions in University-YMCA.

In 2009, the organization began to take off in its level of influence in the community and our activities also increased in number and quality.

My leaders also became more independent as they began running their community outreach programs with little or no assistance from me.

The club began to grow in size as well. From a membership of 80 people in the year 2006, by April 2009 the club has **500 members** in its mailing list and about over **50+ sub-committee members and leaders**.

Through all this time, I gained a lot of experience in leadership. From someone who was afraid to stand up to take a Vice-President's position in 2007, I became a person of influence in the community I was in.

In this book, I will continue to share with you specific experiences that taught me the principles and lessons that I hold in my heart till today.

Once again, I hope this eBook will greatly benefit you in your own leadership journey.



Chapter 3: Vision in Life

I would give all the wealth of the world, and all
the deeds of all the heroes, for one true vision.
-Henry David Thoreau

Having a vision for your life is one of the most important things you can have.

Above everything else, it is in your life vision that you find your purpose; in it you find meaning for everything else...

Your vision is your destiny.

Your vision tells you where you will be tomorrow; it tells you about the people you will meet; the friends you will have; the work you will be doing.

No matter who you are, you have one true vision for their life and that vision excites you. It will give you energy to wake up each day with passion.

However, most people live their life without a vision. Their lives are marked by routine; like a dull existence that never seems to end. They get to work on Monday morning with Monday blues; and thank God that it's Friday at the end of each week...

..and it repeats for years and years. Henry David Thoreau says the mass of men live lives of *quiet* desperation. While everything seems fine on the surface, but deep inside, most men live a life of dreadful, soul-killing routine.

As a leader, the first thing you must have is a vision for your life. You must have an idea where you want to head in your life.

Do you have dreams about that one day when all your vision are fulfilled?

My dreams began when I was very young. At 14 years old, I began to imagine myself sitting at the top of the tallest building in Singapore; drinking a glass of wine; enjoying the serene moment with my loved one.

At 14 years old, I had a vision about where I was going to head in my life.

Then fast forward to university, I had a vision about becoming a top businessman in Singapore who will influence other men to do business ethically and with excellence.

I wanted to become a leader of businessmen, **a leader of leaders.**

You might be thinking:

- *What has this got to do with managing my staff?*
- *What has this got to do with become a great leader?*

..it's **EVERYTHING.**

If you do not know what you want to see in your life; you simply cannot show others what they could have in their lives too.

If you don't know where you're going, how can you tell others about where they should be going? Great leaders all have a vision about the future; and they bring people there.

Alexander the Great envisioned one empire under Heaven that would be prosperous, wealthy and united. He conquered most of the known world in his 30s.

Winston Churchill envisioned a Great Britain that would stand up for good in times of evil; and he played an instrumental part in the surrender of the Axis forces.

Jesus of Nazareth envisioned mankind reconciled to His Heavenly Father through his sacrifice on the cross. He started a movement through his 12 disciples that has only gained momentum till present day.

Steve Jobs of Apple envisioned a Personal Computer in every household. Today, most people hold an iPhone in their hands.

When I took up leadership in University-YMCA, I envisioned an organization that could change the self-serving culture of my university through its influence.

What about you?

3.1 What is YOUR Vision?

Where are you heading in your life?

Where will you be in 10 years' time?

Before you can have a vision for your organization, you must have one of your own. You just can't simply have a vision for an organization without one for your life.

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It could be:

- I want to become a **property guru** in my country.
- I want to become a **top ballerina** and perform in the world stage.
- I want to become a **first class celebrity cook** and teach people all over the world how to make healthy, delicious meals.

What about yours?

If you haven't figured it out, then you should start asking yourself these questions:

What gives me passion? Write down 3 things that you are passionate about.

Have I ever done anything that excited me so much I couldn't sleep? Write down up to one activity that you ever done that kept you up at night.

What irks me? What makes me all mad and burning inside? Pen down something in your life that frustrates you deeply.

All these things give you a clue to your true vision and where you are supposed to be headed in life.

Stop reading and take time to evaluate yourself. Before you can become a leader, you must first know where you should be headed in your own life.

3.2 Getting Away to Seek Your Vision

Another useful method to find your vision is to get away from people.

When we are amongst people, the natural thing for us to do is to conform to people's expectations of us. If that is the case for you, then you need to reevaluate that dream, because it probably doesn't belong to you.

To get past that, you need to withdraw from people. You need to come to a place where it's just you and you alone. It has to be a place where you don't feel like you have to conform to anybody's expectation of you.

It's no surprise that a lot of students in my university have a dream to become a top banker, or a top investor, or trader. Because that is the usual place top students go, they decide that it would become their dream as well.

If you find yourself needing to meet these kinds of expectations, you should take a break and fly off to another country.

Spend time alone. Discover yourself as you discover another culture.

Or even better; go off to the mountains and camp for a few days. Spend these days thinking about what you want to do for the rest of your life. Away from any other human soul, you would be closer to finding out your true self.

If you cannot afford either of those, then just find a time where you can be alone for an extended period of time. It could be at the beach; or just simply at home away from the crowd.

Remember, all great leaders began with a personal vision in their hearts; and they spent their lives making that vision come to pass.

Today, you can have a great vision too.



Chapter 4: The Courage to Stand

Courage is the ladder on which
all the other virtues mount.
– **Clare Booth Luce**

Courage is the foundation of your character.

Without courage, you may have a vision, but you will never pursue it.

Without courage, you may believe in something, but you will never stand up and speak for it.

You need courage to pursue your visions because leaders often have to go against the status quo.

The status quo could be something as mundane as a process that has been used in a company for decades or it could be a culture that has been practiced for years.

Leaders go against the status quo, not because it's the *cool* thing to do; but because they know deeply inside that things should be changed.

They are clear about their visions and to them, it doesn't matter what the world thinks about it.

Often, these visions go against popular belief and they *rock the boat*. That's why leaders often need to have the tenacity to follow through on their visions.

Alexander the Great didn't get his men's support to go all the way west to India, but he went anyway. Although his men were tired and battle-weary, he still believed in the greater vision of one world under him.

Jesus of Nazareth didn't get his disciples' support to give up his life to the angry Pharisees, but he did anyway. He knew that he had to die on the cross for the sins of the world.

You too, need to realize that whatever vision you might have in your life; it is likely to rock the boat; not everyone in your life will be happily agreeing to your vision for your own life.

4.1 My Own Experience with Standing Up

Let me share some of my own experience.

About 3 years ago, I was preparing a presentation about a community service project my group had embarked on. During the discussion, one of the members suggested that we misrepresent the information so that we could score better with our professors.

I kept silent for a while, but then I said, “No. If you’re going to do that, then I won’t present. It’s not right.”

That immediately got a few feathers ruffled. “You’re just being inflexible. We can be flexible about such things.”

A member stood up for me, “No, there’s a difference. This is a matter of principle.”

In a competitive school where grades mattered greatly, there was pressure for us to show that we deserved an A. However, it went against my personal principles and I in turn, faced pressure from my team for wanting to be truthful.

Thankfully, things went my way.

Here’s another experience about a year later:

My group had got back a group assignment from the professor and we had received a low grade; to our horror we realized it was because we had forgotten to submit the answer to a particular question.

One of my group members suggested that we quickly add in the answers and tell the professor that she forgot to mark it.

I stood up and gave a firm no. “No, we will tell her that we forgot to submit in the question and apologize.”

That stopped my members in their tracks. It was awkward for a while, but they decided to do it my way in the end. Once again, thankfully the professor gave us the marks for that question.

These experiences may not seem small; but that’s where courage begins: standing up against our peers when we need to.

I knew that if I started compromising in a sheltered environment like the

university, it was only going to get worse in the business and corporate world where profits and money were involved.

Wherever you are now, start having the courage to stand up for what's right.

4.2 People Won't Approve of You

When you pursue a dream, there will be people who won't approve of your actions.

The sad thing is that it often comes from those closest to you: your friends or family.

Those closest to you often have an expectation of who you should be, and they want you to conform to that image.

When I chose to rise up to Presidency in University-YMCA, not everyone approved of it.

My parents were not happy with me being so involved in school activities. They came from a generation where it was about studying hard, doing well in university and getting a good, reputable paying job in the marketplace. They didn't understand the purpose of taking me taking leadership and giving it so much of my time and effort.

They never encouraged me about taking up leadership in University-YMCA. They preferred that I just do well in my studies.

One of my church leaders was not happy either. This leader wanted me to focus purely on ministry inside the church and didn't like the idea of me being committed elsewhere.

But I chose to go ahead anyway.

In my heart, I felt the call to take up leadership in University-YMCA. I did it, and I never regretted that decision.

Even for a small thing like this, you can expect opposition already. Much less the greater things you want to do in your life.

Whatever you do, remember that you need to rise up above these limiting expectations people have on you. If you want to be someone notable and a leader in your field, expect the pressure and disapproval from those closest to you.

4.3 Where can I Find Courage?

Where did all the great leaders find courage to do what they did?

I can think of three ways you can find courage to live the life that you envisioned yourself to live.

First, read and learn about leaders that have overcome the same area in their lives. Read biographies of great leaders to inspire you and watch movies of courageous leaders to bring out the same passion in you.

Remember, whatever was in those leaders that inspired you, it is in you too. No man has a different substance from another. **Leaders are made, not born.**

I like to watch war movies about war heroes like **Balian in Kingdom of Heaven, Alexander the Great** ...

They always leave me with a taste for adventure and keep me fired up for my own battles.

Next, keep yourself in the company of people who are encouraging and enabling. Most people are not as encouraging as we want them to be; most people don't really think you'll be anything great in your life.

You have to find friends that do.

I know it isn't easy. It just isn't easy to walk out there and tell someone, *"You there. You'll be my friend and ally that believes in me. Let's take this life journey together."*

But you have to be intentional about it. Go join a leadership seminar; join a progressive forward looking church. Do something to meet new people that are enabling.

Note from Author

If you have a desire to find a community of people that are committed to growth, why not take the first step and join my mailing list at <http://www.leadership-with-you.com/monthly-newsletter> , if you haven't already done so.

I too, want to see change in this world and I would like to have continued interaction with you so that we can grow together!

I have friends in University-YMCA who believe in the same vision, and people in my church who are constantly encouraging and edifying. Most importantly, they are people who believe in dreams.

They believe that everyone has a calling in life; and a great destiny that awaits them.

Thirdly; this is somewhere where I cannot lead you, but it is probably the most powerful source of courage: your faith.

I'll share about an illustration of faith-based courage from the Bible:

The early disciples of Jesus believed in Him so much that they were willing to go all the way to their deaths to preach the Gospel.

All the disciples of Jesus had suffered gruesome deaths while preaching the Gospel. According to history, the disciple Peter was crucified upside down and the disciple John was lowered into a pot of boiling oil.

This was the great faith of the early church. The disciples held on to their beliefs to their deaths.

Your faith tells you that there are things in life more important than life itself. Values like integrity, truth and love are upheld greater than life itself because a greater reward is promised to those who uphold them.

My faith tells me that my God is with me; that He is always behind me. It gives me courage to stand up for what's right; and for what's true.

It gave me courage to speak my mind in those situations; and the courage to step out to take leadership in University-YMCA.

You need to find your courage, for it is your ticket to living out your true vision.



Chapter 5: Integrity in Leadership

You are already of consequence in the world
if you are known as a man of strict integrity.
– Grenville Klesier

Integrity is a word spoken much in today's world, but sadly, not practiced as much. In our world today, we see lapses in integrity over and over again.

Enron was an energy company based in Houston. It employed over 22,000 employees and was named the most innovative company for six consecutive years by **Fortune Magazine**.

However, in the span of 24 days, this company with claimed revenues of over US\$100 billion was declared bankrupt.

What happened?

The lack of integrity in the leadership of **Enron** caused one of the greatest corporations in the US to fall like a house of cards. The accounting scandal in **Enron** had enabled it to misrepresent its revenues, hide its losses in subsidiary organizations, but it was not too long that they were found out.

You think that someone has learnt a lesson... not.

7 years later in 2008, the same greed and lack of integrity caused financial juggernaut Lehmann Brothers to declare themselves, sending catastrophic ripples throughout the financial world. The investment bankers never learnt from what happened in **Enron** and while the times were different, the problem was the same.

The problem was integrity.

5.1 Integrity is a Foundation

Like courage, becoming a man with integrity is another foundation you have to have in order to become a leader of influence.

Integrity is a quality you build your life upon. In the Bible, Jesus compares two foundations that men build their lives upon, either on rock or on sand.

The house that was built upon the rock survived a terrible storm, but the one built upon sand, when it experienced the storm, crumbled and fell to the

ground.

When you build your corporation upon strict integrity, you build a way for the corporation to be a lasting success, like a house upon solid rock.

When you build your life upon strict integrity, you can expect to become a person of great significance and influence.

And more so in today's world...

With all the events happening in the world today, people are truly crying out for an authentic, genuine leader who has a heart not for their own interest, but for the greater interest of the community. People are taking to the streets because they know their leaders to be corrupt men who speak one thing and do another.

On the other hand, if you choose to build your life upon lies and half-truths; you are in fact, building a house upon sand.

Many years down the road, you'll witness the falling apart of your life like a house of cards.

Imagine this:

In order to get away with your secret affair, you lie to your wife that you're just hanging out with the guys at the pub. One day, your good friend Ken (whom you were supposed to be out with) calls home to ask where you were. Your wife answers the phone.

When you get home, your wife checks with you and you quickly make up another story about being held up at work at the last minute.

Next thing you know, your wife walks into your office one day wanting to deliver dinner to you because you were working late; and finds out you were not in office at all.

Once again, she demands an explanation and you cook up another story in the spur of the moment. All the while, there is a greater suspicion and mistrust in the relationship.

All this will continue happening until the day the truth comes out, one day the truth becomes evident that you are having an affair; and your life falls apart like a stack of cards.

Your wife is hurt; she wants a divorce; she claims custody and compensation

from the court.

Your family is shamed because of what you have done. You are looked down upon by your peers for betraying the wife who loved you so much.

This is very much like the case when you choose to build your life on anything less than strict integrity. If it's anything less than the truth, like a stack of cards, it will not be able to stand the test of time.

5.2 Integrity begins TODAY

Integrity begins with the smallest things in your life.

It can be about:

- keeping a promise to your kids about returning home at 7pm and spending quality time with them.
- returning a loan to a friend in the agreed upon time.
- being on time for your appointments with your colleagues, friends and your bosses.

When you choose to make promises you cannot keep; when you borrow money but do not return it; you are building your life upon sand.

If you cannot display integrity in your everyday life; you simply can't be trusted with greater things. Responsibility and leadership is given to those who can be trusted.

Ask yourself:

Do people around you consider you to be a person of integrity? Are you trustworthy? Why or why not?

Do you keep your promises? Give one occasion where you kept a promise even though it was hard to keep.

5.3 Practical Steps you can take

5.3.1 Start being on time on your appointments

The simplest thing you can begin doing is to start being on time for your meetings, casual or formal.

It doesn't matter if it's an important board meeting with the directors of your company or if it's meeting up with your old friends from university.

A man of integrity behaves in a single manner, no matter the circumstances. It doesn't matter if it's important people or just old friends; he treats them the same.

Pastor Yonggi Cho, founder of the world's largest church says he always reaches his meetings 15 minutes before the scheduled time.

This is a man managing the largest congregation in the world! With almost a million members, you would expect him to be giving the same excuse as most people; "There are just too many things; sorry guys I'm late for this meeting."

And people would understand. Yet, he keeps to the highest standards of punctuality by being early all the time.

This is indeed a man of integrity in action.

One of my friends made a simple quote, "*If you're early, you're on time. If you're on time, then you're late!*"

Start being on time for your meetings and take this small first step towards a life of integrity.

5.3.2 Don't make promises you can't keep

If you don't know how to say "No", then its time to change.

I have had my experiences with people who agreed not because they were passionately interested or committed to the cause, but because they simply didn't know how to say "No".

If you're the type of person that promises a lot and performs very little, it's time to evaluate and reflect before you give your word.

The truth is this; if you make a commitment that you cannot keep, you aren't

doing the person a favor anyway. In fact, you're allowing another person to act and behave trusting the fact you were going to fulfill your promise. You're setting up them up for disappointment!

An example:

Your friend asks you if you are able to help out in a particular event she is organizing. Although you already have a busy schedule, you agree anyway because he is a great friend of yours and you don't want to reject him.

She asks you to be in charge of logistics for the event.

But on the day of the event, because you have other prior commitments, you inform her that you cannot help out for the event anymore. She panics and frantically searches for another person who can help her.

In the end, you friend becomes disappointed and extremely upset with you. Your relationship is strained and the trust between you is lost.

The better thing is this: If you don't confidently believe that you can keep a promise, don't give your word.

You are really doing the person a favor.

5.3.3 Be strict with yourself

One of the best things you can do to become a person of integrity is to be brutally honest with yourself. There's a saying that goes, "Be strict with yourself, and lenient with others."

Constantly challenge yourself to a higher standard.

Most people are strict with others and lenient with themselves. They have high expectations of others' but are lax with their own standards. They give excuses for their bad attitude and behavior.

In order to become a person of integrity, you have to learn to be your harshest critic. Be brutal with yourself, but show grace to others.

You will become a person known for strict integrity.



Chapter 6: Self-Discipline

Talent without discipline is like an octopus on roller skates.
There's plenty of movement, but you never know if it's
going to be forward, backwards, or sideways.

- **H. Jackson Brown, Jr.**

Talent exists in abundance in our world today; there are a lot of talented artists, musicians, athletes, businesspeople in our world. Sadly, the potential for most talent is unrealized.

Calvin Coolidge, the 30th President of the United States, says that **unrewarded genius** is almost a proverb.

The truth is, all of us have a talent or an innate skill that we excel far above others.

It could be:

- mathematical ability, analytical skills
- singing, composing songs and poems
- running, sprinting, swimming

and so on...

However, having talent is one thing; but having the self-discipline to follow through is another thing altogether.

If you read the stories of great leaders and great achievers in any generation, you'll realize one thing: it's always about self-discipline.

It's always disciplined effort that takes you all the way to the end. Yes, talent can bring you to the top, but its character that keeps you there!

If you've run a marathon before, you'll have a good understanding about what I mean. Marathon runners all tell me one thing: after about 30 km, it's all mental strength. Your physical facilities are all shut down and it's only your mind and self-discipline that keeps you going.

It doesn't matter if you were able to run faster than your peers in a short 5 kilometres run; when it comes to a certain point in the marathon, **it all boils down to your mental determination.**

Life is like the same, we can all start off and get ahead from all our peers with

purely our talent, but in the long run, it is the one with the self-discipline that will be able to push ahead from the competition.

Being able to focus all your energies on one single purpose for a prolonged period of time is your ticket to reaching your goals, be it personal or organizational.

But why is self-discipline so hard?

6.1 Three hindrances to your goals

We need self-discipline to deal with three main things that will ultimately obstruct us from reaching our goals: distraction, discouragement and bitterness.

6.1.1 Distraction

Distraction can come in many forms.

They can come in the form of addictions, friends or even successes.

You can be addicted to the TV, video games and so on; and these things take time away from you achieving your goal. Now, there's Facebook, Twitter and Youtube, considered to be the greatest time wasters in the world.

You might think that it's really okay to spend 2-3 hours a day on either, but 2-3 hours a day means that you would have wasted over **700 hours** in a year!

Those 700 hours could have been used to build a business; gain a skill and change the world even!

If you have are constantly addicted to something, you need to exercise your self-discipline to change your lifestyle.

If you multiply those 700 hours by 35 years (that's 24,500 hours!), you'd realize that a simple change in habit can transform your life already.

Friends can be another source of distraction. While it may sound cruel, but there are some friends that you simply have to move away from if you want to see a change in your life.

These are the friends who may not have a passionate goal in their lives, and they spend their days aimlessly drinking, partying and talking about the latest gossip.

While I'm not asking to start disliking them or shun them, but you must start having self-discipline with whom you give your time to.

When I start running University-YMCA and Leadership with You, I realized that my time became much more limited for recreation and hanging out with friends. Many of the friends I used to hang out with for supper still asked me out, but I started rejecting them.

It is not because I don't like them; I like them and I wish to spend some time with them. But it is just that time has become so precious to me that I need to prioritize my activities.

As a result, many of these old friends slowly drifted away. I made many new friends in University-YMCA; great people with similar goals and values in their life.

The first category of friends is what I would call, **Friends of Circumstance**. The second category of friends is what I would call, **Friends of Destiny**.

I met the first group of friends as a result of a circumstance (i.e. I was in the same class as them); I met the second group of friends as a result of my purpose. They were the people you met in your journey to your life goals.

You got to have the discipline to spend more time with the Friends of Destiny, and less time with Friends of Circumstance.

Lastly, successes can also be the biggest distraction to your ultimate goals. The saying goes, "Good is the enemy of Great."

The fact that you can do something well doesn't necessarily mean that it is your life calling.

I can do Mathematics extremely well; I usually score distinctions in the subject without trying very hard. But the truth is, I hate doing it! I find it extremely pointless to calculate numbers that have no application on my life at all. (It's just my personal opinion; mathematicians don't get offended!)

But there are people who feel the same way; but decide that they will settle with it because it will make them a decent salary with a Mathematics degree of some sort.

Hence, these people spend their life trying to master something that they don't really care about so that they can just... get by.

Anybody can do a several things well, but the question is, what do you **REALLY** want to do?

Don't let your small successes distract you from your ultimate goals in life.

Don't let the good things you can do stop you from doing great things.

6.1.2 Discouragement

In our journey to our dreams, there are many times when we will feel discouraged.

- “What if I spend so much time on building my business, but it doesn't make a profit?”
- “What if everything I do is going to waste?”
- “Should I just drop all these and go for the safer option?”

In your journey, you will constantly face such inner voices that will put discouragement and fear into your heart.

Instead of finding faith, courage and passion to pursue your vision, you often find fear and discouragement in your journey.

You'll find that it is harder than what you thought it would be.

You begin to believe that it's easier to give up than to keep moving on. But don't...

Just keep pushing.

In the bestseller Good to Great, **Jim Collins** talks about the concept of the pinwheel...

Here it goes:

Picture a huge, heavy flywheel – a massive metal disk mounted horizontally on an axle, about 30 feet in diameter, 2 feet thick, and weighing about 5,000 pounds. Now imagine your task is to get the flywheel rotating on the axle as fast and long as possible.

Pushing with great effort, you get the flywheel to inch forward, moving almost imperceptibly at first. You keep pushing and, after two or three hours of

persistent effort, you get the flywheel to complete one entire turn.

You keep pushing, and the flywheel begins to move a bit faster, and with continued great effort, you move it around a second rotation. You keep pushing in a consistent direction. Three turns... four ... five ... six... the flywheel builds up speed... seven... eight... you keep pushing... nine...ten... it builds momentum... eleven... twelve... moving faster with each turn... twenty... thirty... fifty... a hundred.

Then at some point – breakthrough! The momentum of the thing kicks in your favour...the huge heavy disk flies forward, with almost unstoppable momentum. (Good to Great, Jim Collins)

Jim Collins used this illustration to explain the value of continued persistence. At first, you wouldn't be able to see much reward for your effort, but you just have to keep pushing until the point of breakthrough, that's when there is momentum working in your favor!

When I was feeling discouraged about building Leadership with You, this paragraph from his book encourages me.

I just keep telling myself, “Yihan, just keep pushing; just push a little more,” whenever I feel like giving up.

I don't proclaim I have great success yet with this website, I have goals for this site that I have yet to achieve, but I believe that if I keep pushing a little day by day, **one day I'll get there!**

And so will you.

Whatever you're facing now, **just keep pushing!**

6.1.3 Bitterness

Bitterness is one big distraction for you from your goals.

They are first caused by offences by people around you; especially those close to you.

The truth is that, no matter how great a leader you are; how much you know; how many people you know, you will be offended at some point or another.

Where there is interaction with people, there are always opportunities for conflict and offences.

Offences will come. You can't control that. Your job is not to find a way to avoid offences, but to find a way to interpret these offences. If you're not careful and hold on to offences, your heart turns bitter.

It is bitterness that often causes your life to take a turn for the worse.

Instead of spending time pursuing your vision, you instead spend time trying to plot a way to get back at the person who offended you.

An example: someone copyrights your training material and he manages to get away from it somehow. You get mad, because you feel that you have not been done justice.

You spend months and more trying to find another way to get back at the person who copyrighted your material. You think about ways you can bring down his business. You bring a few more lawsuits against him to sue him.

Instead of moving on and writing more valuable content for your clients, you were distracted by an offence and in the end, your other competitors catch up with you and send you out of business.

The secret to dealing with offences is simple: **Let it go.**

Just let it go. Forgive and forget.

Stephen Covey once said, " You cannot control what happens to you, but you can control how you react to it."

He explains it beautifully in his book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* with an illustration:

You are having breakfast with your family. Your daughter knocks over a cup of coffee onto your business shirt.

You had no control over what just happened, but what happens next will be determined by how you react.

Scenario 1: You curse. You harshly scold your daughter for knocking the cup over. She breaks down in tears. After scolding her, you turn to your wife and you criticize her for placing the cup too close to the edge of the table. A short verbal battle follows.

You storm upstairs and change your shirt. Back downstairs, you find your daughter was too busy crying to finish breakfast and getting ready to go to school. She misses the bus.

You rush to the car and drive your daughter to school. Because you are late, you drive at 40 miles per hour in a 30mph speed limit zone. After a 15 minute delay and throwing the \$60.00 traffic fine away, you arrive at school. Your daughter runs into the school without saying goodbye.

After arriving at the office 20 minutes late, you realize you forgot your briefcase. Your day has started terrible. As it continues, it seems to get worse and worse. You look forward to coming home.

But when you come home, you find a small wedge in your relationship with your wife and daughter.

Scenario 2: Coffee splashes over you. Your daughter is about to cry. You gently say: *"It's okay, honey, you just need to be more careful next time."*

Grabbing a towel you go upstairs and change your shirt.

You grab your briefcase, and you come back down in time to look through the window and see your child getting on the bus. She turns and waves.

You arrive 5 minutes early and cheerfully greet the staff.
(7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen R Covey)

People do sometimes intentionally or unintentionally, do unfavorable things to you. It is not what they do to you that will determine your destiny; it is how you react to them.

Don't hold on to the things that might offend you. As the Holy Bible tell us, don't let bitterness take root in your heart.

Have the self-discipline to control your reaction to them.

And keep your eyes on the prize.

6.2 Cultivating Self-Discipline

Self-Discipline is not something we can choose to gain overnight; it's something we cultivate over time.

Like integrity, we need to learn to have self-discipline in the smallest things

before we can expect great things to happen in our lives.

Some suggestions I have to cultivate self-discipline:

6.2.1 Create a daily To-Do List for yourself

Create a daily To-Do List and set out to achieve them. It doesn't have to be a lot of things; you can always start with one or two major activities you intend to achieve for the day and then move on to 5 or 6.

I use Post-It Notes for my daily To-Do List. At the beginning of the day, I'll write out the things I want to do today, and I'll cancel them out one by one during the day as I achieve them.

There are days, of course, that I fail to complete everything on the To-Do List; it is often because of bad estimate of the time required for an activity. But sometimes, it could be because of distractions during the day that caused me to deviate from my planned activities.

But no need to feel bad, just take a mental note and try again tomorrow!
The important thing is to keep doing it!

6.2.2 Practice waking up early every day.

Successful people start their days early.

They wake up at as early as 5 am every day and start their day off with prayer, reflection, and exercise. If you consider an average person who wakes up at 7am every day, a successful person has an extra 2 hours a day! Once again, that equates over 700 hours in a year!

It is great to wake up early in the morning, when everyone else is still asleep and the sun has not risen yet.

The serenity of the morning gives you the time to mediate, reflect and consider your day ahead.

It might just be 2 hours, but it's a very precious 2 hours because of the time spent reflecting.

If you wake up at 8am, the first thing you do is get your tooth brushed, get to the breakfast table, read the papers a little, and rush off to work. There's no time spent reflecting or preparing your heart for the day.

Start cultivating this discipline of waking up early; you'll find that your life will change tremendously in the long run.

6.2.3 Fast

Fasting is a great way to break your addictions to focus on what's important in your life.

Fasting can be from any form of pleasure; from food, TV, movies, the internet and so on.

Fasting is very powerful because by fasting, you allow your spirit to triumph over your body.

When you fast, you give your body this message, "I am not subject to _____ (your form of pleasure)". You give yourself the power to break out of it.

There was a time when I got introduced to Texas Hold'em Poker. I was so intrigued by the game and its dynamics that I really got hooked on it; to a point that I would think about it even in my sleep.

I just spent the next few weeks playing Poker over Facebook. I thought the game to be extremely engaging intellectually. And I still think it is.

However, I recognized that Poker was taking away my time from the other things I had to do; it took my focus from building Leadership With You, University-YMCA affairs as well as my time for prayer.

It was one night that I really felt frustrated that I just immediately declared a **21-day Fast** from Poker for myself. I marked it down on my calendar and went off to sleep.

Note from Author

Why did I choose 21 days?

Because studies have shown that it takes 21 days to create a habit, and 21 days to break one. By setting that time, I'm able to also allow my mind to break the linkages that has equated Poker to pleasure and excitement.

At that moment, I felt a complete sense of freedom even as I set that restriction on myself. I showed myself I could have power over my addictions.

Become a Leader that People Follow

Through the 21 days, I didn't touch Poker a single bit. There were the temptations, when my own brother was playing it on his computer.

However, I finished the 21 days victoriously and showed myself that I could have conquered my own body and mind should I need to. It was a powerful exercise for me.

After that 21 days, I realized most of the excitement of playing Poker left me, and I still do play it now, but only when I'm bored. The power of this addiction was lost on me because **I made a decision to fast.**

Now do you have any source of pleasure that you recognize is taking too much of your time?

Declare a 21-Day Fast! And be true to yourself.

Don't cheat yourself.

You'll only end up cheating yourself out of a life of victory and success.

Having personal self-discipline is the first step you take toward organizational self-discipline.

As you're able to conquer your own flesh, you'll be able to teach your followers the means to do so as well; and you can build a team of excellence.



Chapter 7: Developing a Lifestyle of Learning

Great leaders are great readers.
But not every great reader
is a great leader.

- **Margaret Thatcher**

When the student is ready,
the teacher will come.

- **Anonymous**

Learning must be a lifelong commitment for you.

As a leader, your journey to grow never ends. There's never a point where you can safely say that you have arrived.

You will never be perfect in this lifetime, but you must always continually strive for growth and improvement.

The saw, after being used for a period of time, becomes dull. It then takes extra effort than before to cut down a tree. To solve that problem, the saw must be sharpened so that it can once again be effective in cutting down trees.

This principle applies to our life too. By constantly growing in our level of ability, skill and character, we are equipped to handle life's challenges better. If we only work and do not learn in the process, we become dull and become unable to handle new challenges that come our way.

As a leader, you become more effective in solving issues in the organization when you commit yourself to constant growth. According to John Maxwell's Law of the Lid in the book the 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership, the size of any organization grows with its leader.

If the leader is growing, then the organization will grow with it. If growth is stunted in the organization, it usually means that the leader has not been growing personally in his life.

This is because as the leader grows, he learns to solve bigger problems, find better solutions and in that process, build an organization that adds more value to the community and hence grows.

If you want to be a leader who will make a lasting impact in your community, then continual growth is a must for you.

Before we talk about all the ways you can grow as a leader, first we must come to the root; what is your attitude towards learning?

7.1 Your Attitude towards Learning

What is your attitude towards learning?

In a survey by Harvard Business Review, it was shown that only 10% of the population has what's called the "the learning mindset". These are the people who seek out and enjoy learning.

Wow.

Only 10% of people in this world are actually committed to learning something beyond what their job scope requires.

Are you in this 10% category? If you've come to my website <http://www.leadership-with-you.com>, you're most probably in the 10% category.

What happened to the other 90%? The other 90% of the population will not look to improve their skills unless they have to as part of their job requirement.

Because of their lack of initiative in growing and a lukewarm attitude towards learning, these 90% of people will never become people of significance in their lives.

They had a choice to become somebody in this lifetime; someone who will make a lasting impact in their community; someone with a deep, meaningful and fulfilling life; but with their attitude towards learning, they sentence themselves to a life of mediocrity and routine.

But with this 10% category of people, you can expect to see great things coming out of them; they will rise upon their peers because of their commitment to become better than yesterday.

They will become the CEOs, the entrepreneurs, the pastors, the leaders of tomorrow.

Having a great attitude towards learning means that you stay open to opportunities that help you to grow.

As the saying goes, when the student is ready, the teacher will appear.

Your teacher can appear in various forms; he doesn't have to be a person...
..an event, a book, a movie can teach you a lesson.

Sometimes an event could happen that causes you re-evaluate your life goals.

A book could remind you that you need to spend more time with your family.

A movie will remind you that there are greater things in life to achieve
than just material wealth.

In fact, the lessons are out there every day. When you live your life, you need
to have an attitude of openness to pick out these lessons from your
environment.

These silent lessons evade those whose hearts are closed toward learning but
they are available to the keen learners who are searching out the secrets of life.

These lessons are simply too subtle for the average person uncommitted to
growth to pick up.

Ralph Waldo Emerson says; “Bad times have a scientific value. These are
occasions a good learner would not miss.”

Bad times are in fact the best teachers for your life; your successes will not
cause you to stop what you're doing and evaluate your life; your failures will.

..stay open!

So then the question to you today is that: Are you the type of person that picks
out these lessons from everyday life?

Besides staying open to learning opportunities in your everyday life, you must
also be intentional in your growth. Here are some ways you can grow:

7.2 Things you can practically do to grow

7.2.1 Read Books

Books are the most common source to acquire knowledge. Reading is a great
habit to acquire.

Through reading, you will gain so much understanding and wisdom through the
eyes of someone more experienced than you.

Besides reading the contemporary books on leadership, management, self-improvement and all that; I do suggest that you pick up a biography of a great leader and read it once in a while.

Sometimes the stories of these leaders leave great clues about what really leads to greatness, beyond all the hype that we hear today from the 'gurus'.

Yes, some books on management and leadership are good, but there are fundamental principles in this world that will lead you to success if you adhere to it; and biographies often provide the clues for you.

7.2.2 Watch Seminars/ DVDs/ Tapes

Similar to books, seminars, DVDs and tapes are a great option for you to learn from as well. If you find that you learn better visually, I would suggest that you sign up for seminars or purchase DVDs that coach you in the area of your expertise.

Most of us learn better visually too and we can pick up more information when we watch instead of read or listen. While a seminar might often be costly, remember that no investment in your education ever goes to waste.

If you're an auditory learner, then maybe buying tapes would be better for you.

With iTunes offering so many podcasts on self-improvement on their site, it's a waste for you not to download them **FOR FREE!**

7.2.3 Watch Movies

Movies are an unconventional way that I learn about life, leadership and more. Many good movies have great lessons in them; and the superb thing about movies is that: they're telling a story! And we all love stories, don't we?

Once in a while, I head down to the nearby DVD rental store to rent some movies. Besides giving me a time to relax, movies teach me important lessons about life.

Stories are wonderful because they speak directly to your heart and touch you deeply. They are unlike theories which speak only to your head.

For example, instead of telling you that your family is extremely important in your life, movies manage to weave these themes beautifully and seamlessly into the storyline and pass you the same message by heart.

If you're an avid movie lover, you know what I mean.

Of course, you'll have to be good at filtering out most of the lousy, pointless movies they show on TV nowadays. The thing is, most movies are crap. They appeal to sex and teach people wrong values to live by.

You have to discerning and pick out great movies that teach you life lessons as you enjoy them!

Note from Author

In Leadership With You, I understand the need for you to sieve out these resources and I have specifically created two sections in the website for you.

In <http://www.leadership-with-you.com/leadership-books.html> , I have suggestions for books you can read to further improve yourself and your leadership ability. It's important that you find the right books to read with all the hype out there nowadays.

In <http://www.leadership-with-you.com/leadership-movies.html>, I have shared with my visitors about the movies I watched and I have recommended those that I feel have a leadership lesson to teach. You can rent or purchase these movies too and share them with your team!

7.2.4 Find a Mentor

Among the ways to learn, a mentor will possibly be the best.

If you are someone with a mentor in your life, you're the blessed few amongst the many.

Mentors are powerful because they can speak to your life in specific situations.

Besides just guiding you in a certain discipline, mentors often go beyond it to encompass the all aspects of your life as well.

In the movie Coach Carter, the basketball coach Ken mentored his team not just in the area of basketball, but taught them how to live life beyond basketball and managed to get half his basketball team into university (they would have otherwise gone to the streets as gangsters).

Lesson Learnt from the Movie: Leadership is never confined in a single arena.

You cannot be a truly great leader in your organization if you're messing everything else in your life up: your family, finances, spiritual life and so on.

Become a Leader that People Follow

It all comes together as one. Your life is one.

And mentors are the best in aiding you to piece it all together. They've been through it and now they can help you achieve the same as well.

If you're an individual with a mentor, you're blessed. Treasure him/her well and press into your mentor's life. Don't drift away, but keep finding time to be with this mentor.

If you don't have a mentor, don't fret. I myself have lived most of my leadership journey without a formal mentor and a lot of the things I have learnt have been through books, movies and observing other leaders from a distance.

However, keep looking out for one and don't be afraid to ask someone to be your mentor. Good leaders are willing to invest their time in someone who is willing to learn.



Chapter 8: Leadership by Example

“A leader leads by example,
whether he intends to or not.”
- **Anonymous**

There's so much leadership literature in the libraries today; if you take a scan at the library; you'll realize there are so many books on the topic of leadership.

You might even think to yourself: *must I read so many books to understand what it truly means to be a leader?*

Thankfully, **the answer is NO.**

Do you think the great leaders of the past had all these literature to refer to when they were making decisions?

No they didn't.

Did they have the resource, frameworks and methods available to most of us today?

Nope.

But they were great leaders.

They shaped history.

They changed the destinies of men.

Becoming a great leader does not lie in understanding literature about leadership, or frameworks, methods and so on.

Becoming a great leader is often about first conquering yourself. It's about leading by example.

As you learn to conquer yourself, you learn to overcome your circumstances and you guide the way for other men to do the same.

8.1 How does leadership by example work?

Leadership by Example is a simple process: **LEARN, DO and TEACH.**

The first step to leading anyone in any area is to **LEARN** it yourself.

For example, if you want to teach your followers about effective management skills; then you must first **LEARN** effective management.

What are the books you can learn from? What are the experts in your field already that you can draw from? Is there anyone who can help you achieve your goal of becoming an effective manager?

Go seek out resources and material that will aid you; read up all about it so that you can get a rough idea about how it is to be done.

Next, **DO** it.

The **DOING** process helps you to understand the obstacles and challenges when it comes to managing people.

If you had failed to effectively do it, what caused it? If you were successful, what did you do?

And this is a very important step in the process of leadership by example. Most people just want to **LEARN** and **TEACH**. They read up their books and start spewing their knowledge like they're already an expert.

I don't know if you've met such a person before; I have.

To have someone without the practical knowledge to preach to me can be quite an annoying experience!

It is the same if you're a leader. If you haven't already achieved it yourself, don't go and preach about it to your followers.

You will definitely lose respect.

For example, once I preached to my team about being on time for meetings. I go on a little more about it than usual and talked about the value of being on time. I told the people who arrived late that in future, they would be subject to a \$2 fine for every 5 minutes they were late.

However guess what?

Once, I was late for my own meeting.

By being late for my own meeting, I disqualified myself to preach about being on time. After that incident, I didn't preach about being on time anymore for a few months.

However, during this period, I made sure that I wasn't late for any meetings.

I wanted to qualify myself to preach about being on time again so that I could set an excellent standard for the team.

There are a lot of managers, leaders out there today who like to do otherwise.

It's really convenient to demand of your followers a standard that you haven't even achieved yourself; for one thing, you don't even have to get out of your comfort zone.

You can just remain where you are and expect the team to change for the better

But it doesn't work.

In the process of doing that, you lose everything that qualifies you to be a leader to your team.

That's what has happened to a lot of managers in organizations with its unhappy employees: leaders who don't lead by example.

Therefore, go out and **DO** it.

And of course, the last step is **TEACH**.

TEACHING is the simple part; for once you have learnt the ropes, you can easily impart the same skills or ability to your followers.

You can tell them about the obstacles, challenges that they will face, because you have faced it yourself. And most of all, you can **TEACH** them about how to overcome it!

Of course, do remember to take them step-by-step along the way. Teaching requires patience because while there are fast learners, there are also slow learners. Be patient with your team and give them time to learn.

They won't get it the first time, and neither did you.

Have patience.

Whatever it is, once your team observes a particular characteristic in your life; be it coming on time for meetings; good budgeting of finances; dressing impeccably to work, they will see it as a standard to rise up to.

And eventually, coupled with your teaching, they will rise up to the standard you have set.

Remember the process of leadership by example: **LEARN**, **DO** and **TEACH**.

8.2 A Great Illustration of Leadership by Example

One great illustration I can think of as I am writing this chapter is the story of Jesus and his disciples in the Bible:

Jesus was an amazing example of perfect leadership by example. When he first recruited his 12 disciples, he went around with them 24/7 and he showed them how miracles were supposed to be performed.

He went around healing the sick, raising the dead and faced off with the religious leaders of that time. In one incident, illustrated in the book of Luke:

Then a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying.

When he arrived at the house of Jairus, he did not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John and James, and the child's father and mother. Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. "Stop wailing," Jesus said. "She is not dead but asleep."

They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But he took her by the hand and said, **"My child, get up!"** Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat.

(Luke 8:41-42,51-55, New International Version) (*emphasis mine*)

And after Jesus' resurrection, his disciples went around doing the same works that Jesus did. They went around the region preaching, healing and performing other miracles like Jesus did.

This incident is recorded in the book Acts:

In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor. ³⁷About that time

she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!"

Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "**Tabitha, get up.**" She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive.

(Acts 9:36-41, New International Version)(*emphasis mine*)

The disciple Peter learnt from Jesus and **did exactly what He did!**

This is a great illustration. Even when Jesus was not by the disciples' side anymore, the disciples modeled Him exactly as how He had done it.

As a leader, this is what you want to strive for; by becoming such a strong influence in your follower's lives; they model their lives after yours and become as successful as you are; and if not, better!

This is a mark of a true leader, not that he has followers; but that he raised leaders.



Chapter 9: True Leadership

Above all the talk we hear, I believe leadership is just one simple thing:

**To become fearlessly true to yourself and
not being afraid of what people think.**

Miriam Williamson wrote a beautiful quote in her book *A Return to Love*:

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?

Actually, who are you *not* to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do.

We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

Becoming a leader is simply that: learning to release the light that is in you. In our community today, there's just so much pressure for you to become just another person who conforms.

..to be just another person in the street.

But if you want to become a leader, it's simply this: release yourself from the fear of people's opinions and thoughts about you and become **fearlessly true to your heart.**

Think about some great leaders you know; you'd realized this: they are fearless.

They are true to their hearts; true to their cause even unto death sometimes.

They know that there are things in life more important than life itself.

Yes, it takes courage to be true to your heart. It takes courage to accept that maybe, just maybe; you aren't supposed to be working in that office everyday, maybe you are called to dance, to teach, to sing, to preach, and so much more.

9.1 My Experience with Finding My Heart

I once had an inkling that I was supposed to write to empower people. But my first thought was that writing doesn't make me a lot of money.

Maybe I'll try something else. Maybe I'll do business. Business makes more money.

But despite all the protests, I knew that my heart was telling me this:

I must write.

Note from Author

And beginning to write was probably the best thing that happened to me. To start off my writing ministry, I started the website:

<http://www.leadership-with-you.com> which was a website about something I was passionate about: empowering the next generation of people to be servant leaders who will impact our communities.

It was when I seriously decided to do writing full time that I began to feel alive.

I began to enjoy doing what I did every day.

I didn't wake up with dread. I woke up each day with a desire to build my website by writing; with a desire to finish this book beautifully.

Some of my readers have praised my writing; and my peers were inspired by my writing and they encouraged me to continue writing.

9.2 Principles, Frameworks and Methods support your journey to leadership. They are NOT the way to great leadership.

It was then that I also realized that if we choose what kind of leader we want to be based on other people's standards; yes, we can be good leaders; we can learn how to become a better leader by reading more books, applying principles in our lives, disciplining ourselves to be more productive.

Yes, through that we can become good leaders.

But we will never be great.

But we will never be truly influential leaders that will impact a whole community.

Principles, methods and frameworks support, they don't drive your leadership.

They aid someone who has found their calling and are living out their passion but they will never be a substitute for a man without passion.

You can never be a great leader just by applying principles methods and frameworks.

This is the point I was trying to make about **BECOMING** instead of **DOING**. The world today believes that by applying the Top 5 Rules to Great Leadership, or the 7 Ways to Becoming a Person of Influence, one can become a leader of significance.

But if it were that simple, why haven't you become one?

Don't you already suspect that something is missing?

The truth is, the key to your leadership potential is neither in these frameworks nor principles, much as they are important.

The true key to leadership lies in your fearlessly discovering your true self, and living that life out.

Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.

Do you believe that you can be powerful beyond measure? Do you believe that one man can change the world?

Do you believe that YOU can change the world?

When you find your center; when you find the calling in your life; that's when you begin to shine; that's when you begin to influence in not just small ways; but in proportions you might have never imagined.

"All leadership is influence."
- John Maxwell

That's when true leadership begins.

9.3 So what is YOUR passion?

I had asked the question in the first chapter; but I ask it again because it is so important to your life. You WILL become a leader that people follow when you understand this:

What is your passion? What causes your heart to burn?

..and ask yourself this: Are you living out that deep passion of yours in your life today? Or is your life simply a drag that you just wish you could get it over and done with?

“This is so irritating. Why can’t there be just a framework or a method for me?”

Sure. They’re all over in the bookstores, seminars and workshops. If only becoming a good leader is what you want, then your answer lies there. But if you want to become a leader that will change the world; that will make a mark in this earth because you stepped on it; if you want to become a leader that leaves a legacy,...

Then fearlessly find your heart.

This is true leadership.



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