

Leading Leadership Development in Universities:

A Personal Story

(published Journal of Management Inquiry, Dec. 2001)

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Today's universities face a multitude of challenges: leading institutional renewal; attracting and retaining top quality faculty, staff, and students; embracing learning technologies; meeting increasing demands from the public, funding agencies, employers, students and university employees; and seeking new and alternate sources of funds and financial models. This new organizational environment requires leaders who thrive on the challenge of change, who foster environments of innovation, who encourage trust and learning, and who can lead themselves, their constituents, and their units, departments and universities successfully into the future. Research from the Conference Boards of the United States and Canada reports that leadership is the number one competency that business and organizations seek to develop in their people (Hackett, 1997 and McIntyre, 1997 respectively). These groups see leadership is in short supply, and are interested in developing leaders throughout the business or organization, not just at senior levels (Conger, 1999:1; Kouzes and Posner, 1995:xx; Conference Board of Canada, 1999:3).

In the last decade we've witnessed a shift in emphasis from management development to leadership development. Management focuses on structuring goals, tasks and roles, whereas leadership focuses on influencing direction and change, developing quality relations, and bringing out the best in oneself and others (Conger, 1999:4; Kotter, 1999: 53). Effective leaders develop both managerial and leadership behaviors and qualities. Many management development programs today include a much greater emphasis on the leadership component and many have renamed their programs to leadership development to communicate and reflect this emphasis. An investment in the development of leaders is an investment in individual and organizational growth and renewal. As Kouzes and Posner suggest, "the most significant contributions leaders make are... to the long term development of people and institutions who adapt, prosper and grow" ((1995:xxv). Yet leadership development is an underutilized strategy at most universities. To meet the current challenges in higher education, dynamic leadership is needed throughout the university among - Faculty, Staff, Deans, Provosts, and Chancellors, Vice Presidents, Presidents and students. Academic leadership development could build leadership capacities deep within the organization, by paying greater attention to people and process and more consciously practicing the principles of effective leadership.

I'd like to offer as an example a leadership development program for Department Chairs we've developed at the University of Saskatchewan. In addition, I'll describe some lessons that I've learned about myself and my own leadership in the process. This article will describe the two main components of leadership development – the inner work of intense personal development and the outer work of leadership in action. I will use myself as the main character in a personal story of my own self-development as the leader of leadership development for University Department Chairs (called "Heads" in Canada). I choose storytelling as my method, for as Howard Gardner has stated “the artful creation and articulation of stories constitutes a fundamental part of the leader’s vocation. Stories speak to both parts of the human mind- its reason and emotion. It is stories of identity – narratives that help individual think about and feel who they are, where they come from and where they are headed...” that is one of the most powerful

leadership tools (1993: 43). The context for the story will be provided by first describing the Department Head Leadership Development Program (DHLDP) and four key lessons I learned in its evolution.

For me, leadership is a personal commitment to make a difference in the lives of other leaders and their constituents. Leadership involves inspiration, motivation, aspiration, relationship building, and creative change. Leadership development requires a process of intense introspection, and of "finding your own voice" by determining who and what you are you are (Kouzes and Posner, 1999:146). As Jay Conger has explained "Because credibility and authenticity lie at the heart of leadership, determining one's own guiding beliefs and assumptions lie at the heart of becoming a good leader" (1999:28). We have to be able to lead ourselves first before we can effectively lead others. When leaders do this inner work, their authenticity and genuineness show in their actions. As a leader of leadership development I felt a special responsibility to take to heart and model these principles. My leadership development began when I took on the challenge of providing leadership development for Chairs. My own self-directed leadership development program is woven into my experience and has greatly influenced the design and delivery of the DHLDP.

Leadership in Action - The Department Head Leadership Development Program

In the winter of 1993, I was a newly recruited faculty member hired to lead a start-up - operation, Business and Management Programs, Extension Division, at the University of Saskatchewan. Shortly after my arrival, the Vice President Academic (VPA) approached me to collaborate with his office in designing and delivering a development program for the 85 Academic Department Chairs. These "middle managers" were recognized as key leaders within the University. Up to this point Chairs received only an annual orientation and a few Chairs were sent to national administrator development programs. We set out to design and deliver a comprehensive, systematic, and planned approach to Chair development by following adult learning principles, drawing upon best practices in management and leadership development, and making creative use of university resources. Serving individual, departmental and institutional goals, the Program currently offers learning events throughout the year, including an annual half-day orientation for new Chairs, an annual session on collegial processes, and several skill development workshops such as "Managing Conflict" or "Managing Performance in your Department." There are several Deans' and Department Chairs' forums and dialogue sessions with the President and individual Vice Presidents on strategic issues such as "Enriching the Student Experience" or "Recruiting and Retaining Faculty." Finally, we have held a four-day leadership retreat four times in the past five years. Over the past seven years, the DHLDP has evolved along with my own evolution as a leader of leadership development. I offer four key lessons from my experience that I hope will guide others seeking to develop a similar program or strengthen an existing one: 1) follow a process-driven model of individual and organizational development in designing and delivering your leadership development program; 2) ensure the development and delivery are driven by primary stakeholders; 3) use a leadership competency model as a framework for learning leadership; and 4) provide leadership development retreats.

1) Adopting a Process-driven Model of Individual and Organizational Development

A process-driven model of individual and organizational development is important to ensure your program will not run the risk of a quick-fix solution but rather will be enduring, stronger, and appropriate to your institution. I adapted a model from the Center for Creative Leadership that includes seven components.

Model of Individual and Organizational Development¹

- Determining program purposes
- Developing buy-in and champions
- Determining competencies to develop
- Obtaining feedback on behaviors
- Orienting managers
- Designing development strategies
- Evaluating and committing to continuous improvement

This model is an essential tool for designing, delivering, and strengthening a comprehensive leadership development program. Because leadership development is a process, not a one-time event, each step is critical. We learned just how much time it takes and how vital it is to build buy-in and readiness. At first we tried to do so by conducting two learning needs assessments, creating a DHLDP Advisory Committee, and cultivating the VPA as the champion of the Program. I now realize we should have spent more time orienting managers, in our case the Deans, to encourage and support their Chairs in attending programs and in coaching their day-to-day leadership development. We have now included a Dean on our Advisory Committee. Last year, the Deans had their own leadership retreat, and participated in a 360-degree feedback process that has strengthened both their own leadership and their support of the leadership development. Precisely because our model is process driven, it is self-correcting. Actively involved communicating, planning, evaluating, and committing to continuous improvement, the stakeholders drive the program, identifying necessary changes, and the program evolves as they do.

2) Obtaining Primary Stakeholder Involvement

A second important lesson is to identify your primary stakeholders – in our case Chairs (as learners), Deans (the learners' managers), and the VPA (as champion), - and their respective roles, and to make effective use of them in the Program. This maximizes support and ownership, minimizes resistance, strengthens relationships, and ensures your program is meeting real learning needs. In the DHLDP, the VPA champions the Program, provides opening comments at all events, leads some sessions, and plays the

¹ For a full description of this model, its application to this DHLDP and how it can be used as a tool to design, deliver, or strengthen similar programs at a University or any other organization, see Learning to Lead: Facilitating Leadership Development at the University, working paper #2000-x, Leavey School of Business, Santa Clara University.

participant/resource person at retreats. Finally, all official Program communication comes from the VPA's office. In the seven years of our Program, there have been three VPAs – and I have taken the time to orient all of them into their champion role, to listen to their academic agendas and to learn how each planned to strengthen the Program. Their contributions have been vital. The VPA provides the strategic topics in the academic agenda and the Chairs provide the specific issues that “keep them up at night.” Both are essential to create a meaningful Program that meets the combined goals of Chair development and the University academic agenda.

The Deans, as key stakeholders, are in a position to influence, support and encourage Chairs' ongoing leadership development and their attendance at all DHLDP learning events. The Deans' select a member of Deans' Council to be on the Program Advisory Committee. The Program offers two annual joint sessions with Dean's Council around strategic topics, and Deans are often resource persons for Program events.

Our Program Advisory Committee, representing the Chairs, is composed of one Chair from each of the departmentalized colleges and as mentioned earlier, one Dean. This committee plans and evaluates the Program and offers advice on communication and promotion of the Program to other Chairs. The members' individual roles include being resource persons for sessions, briefing speakers, communicating to their peers about the Program, and making sure we are drawing on solid applied research, models, and materials. They also ensure that all Chairs are involved as much as possible in the learning needs assessments, through informal feedback and session evaluations. For the most part, I have found our Advisory Committee members committed to making our academic community into a healthy, productive, nurturing environment.

3) Selecting a Leadership Competency Model

Thirdly, selecting or developing a leadership competency model for your Program serves as a framework and provides a common language for the learners' ongoing dialogue and learning about leadership. As Conger and Benjamin point out, “It is clear from our research that a single well-defined model or framework of leadership improves participant learning. Having a well-defined model allows more opportunity to explore in depth the various dimensions of a given framework”(1999: 33). There are many models of leadership. The DHLDP uses Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Challenge Model (1995), a well-researched contemporary transformational model of leadership with associated behaviors. One of the co-authors (Barry Posner), in his role as a faculty member and dean at Santa Clara University, contributes to the model's face validity in a university context.

The Leadership Challenge Model is grounded in extensive research that demonstrates sound psychometric properties - reliability and validity (Kouzes and Posner, 1997: LPI Facilitators Guide: 27& appendix C). Kouzes and Posner studied how ordinary people accomplished extraordinary things in organizations. Their research demonstrates that leadership is a pattern of behavior that can be developed. It also shows that those who

engage in these behaviors become more effective leaders. The authors found a consistent pattern of behavior described by five distinct practices and ten commitments.

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE MODEL²

Challenging the Process

Search for challenging opportunities to change, innovate, and improve.

Experiment, take risks, and learn from the accompanying mistakes.

Inspiring Shared Vision

Envision an uplifting future.

Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to their values, interests, hopes and dreams.

Enabling Others to Act

Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust.

Strengthen people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competency, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support.

Modeling the Way

Set an example for others by behaving in ways that are consistent with your stated values.

Plan small wins that promote consistent progress and build commitment.

Encouraging the Heart

Recognize individual contributions to the success of every project.

Celebrate team accomplishments regularly.

The leadership behaviors associated with this model can be measured with an empirical instrument, the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) (1997). We use the 360-degree feedback process, because feedback on leadership behavior is a critical component of learning effective leadership. Typically, leaders have few opportunities to learn how their constituents perceive them. The feedback on Chairs' leadership behaviors is used to guide individual development plans and group feedback drives the agenda of

² Adapted from: Kouzes and Posner (1995), *The Leadership Challenge: How to Get Extraordinary Things Done in Organizations*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

development programs. From my own experience, when the LPI is introduced following the method in the facilitator's guide, participants understand and buy into this model of leadership because it is grounded in leaders' experiences and has high face validity. The entire model has helped us learn and talk about leadership, frame strategic issues in a leadership context, and develop a common language about leadership.

4) Conducting a Leadership Retreat

The fourth and final key lesson from the DHLDP involves the four-day "Strengthening Departmental Leadership" retreat, where the most in-depth and meaningful leadership development occurs. We have held four retreats over the past five years with approximately 20 Chairs at each. Most Chairs attend once during their term, typically early in their term to benefit from the network building, chair role clarification exercise, the overall understanding of leadership. The retreats are co-facilitated by the Director for Organization and Employee Development and myself. The VPA spends at least two days at the retreat, participating in the learning activities and acting as a resource person for one or two sessions. Other resource persons have included the President, a Dean, experienced Chairs or members of the participant group with specific experiences to share, such as leading strategic planning within their departments.

At the retreat, Chairs focus on their understanding of leadership with the Leadership Challenge Model providing the framework. The retreat is divided into five modules following the model's five broad practices of leadership - challenging the process, inspiring shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart. These practices are presented, discussed and applied in the context of current university challenges and strategic issues. Chairs receive feedback on their leadership and engage in personal development activities such as developing a personal/professional vision and values statement that reflects the kind of leader they want to be. They build new skills through practical sessions on a topic such as conflict management, managing performance or leading change in their department. Finally, they create and strengthen their learning and support network with other Chairs, the VPA, and resource persons from across campus.

The retreat is held at a university-owned retreat center on a beautiful northern lake. Being in nature, away from day-to-day distractions with ample time for reflection helps facilitate contemplation and dialogue with one's innermost self. Time for reflection is essential for participants to evaluate their own experience and retain new lessons and insights. A Chair who attended stated "The annual retreat provides useful session material and setting that is highly conducive to reflecting and gaining perspective on the role of the Head and the personal adjustment that must be considered, as well as for strengthening my network across campus." The first retreat was the hardest to recruit for, primarily because of the four-day time commitment. Those who attended subsequently became great advocates for the Program.

Challenges Facing Department Chairs

Most Chairs in our Program had not aspired to being Chairs nor had they considered successful management and leadership part of their career path. Typically, most faculty do not think they need leadership and management. Paul Ramsden describes “the two cultures of management and the academy crossing swords along the frontier defined roughly by the caricatured problems that they have with each other”(1998: 27). Such problems include management’s problem with the slowness of academic collegiality, academics’ lack of accountability and unwillingness to share the burden imposed by tighter budgets, and their complaints, negativism, and cynicism. Academics traditionally complain about management's rejection of collegiality, being burdened with administrative tasks that take valuable time from their academic work, and increasingly intrusive assessment processes. Because of their bridge role between faculty and administrators, it is a challenge for Chairs to lead well but they can do so by respecting and working with both cultures. Such a creative dialogue would also benefit the university on a macro level. Currently, academic leaders (Chairs and Deans) and administrative leaders (Managers, Directors and Administrators) have separate development programs. In the future, joint development sessions on topics of mutual interest would build relationships and develop greater understanding between the two sides of the university.

Strategic Guidelines for Chairs' Development

Recent national and international conference presentations on "Academic Department Chair Leadership Development" and discussions with Chairs at several universities in Canada, the United States, and Australia have revealed these common themes that provide valuable strategic guidelines for Chairs' development.³

- **The best source of help and support to a Chair is another Chair.** As I've found in the DHLDP and at other universities, Chairs are excellent resources for one another. They are eager to create and strengthen collegial relationships with their counterparts across campus and share challenges and best practices.
- **New Chairs are initially overwhelmed and need a solid orientation.** A new Chairs' orientation should cover the administrative aspects of the job, timelines, and who to contact for advice and information. In the DHLDP orientation, we include a panel of experienced Chairs who describe the transition from faculty to Chair and the lifecycle of the Chair from beginner to seasoned Chair. They field questions for new Chairs and share the top ten things they wish they had known when they started.

³ Discussions about Chair Leadership Development at the Universities of Saskatchewan, Regina, Santa Clara, Missouri, Canberra and San Francisco State University, and at The Conference Board of Canada Quality Network of Universities May 2000 meeting, and conference presentations titled "Academic Department Chair Leadership Development" at the 1999 Canadian Association for University Continuing Education Conference, the 1999 United States Conference on University Management and Executive Development, and the 1999 United States Conference of the College and University Human Resource Association.

- **Chairs typically find personnel problems the hardest issues to handle.** Probably the most commonly asked questions I receive from Chairs are “How do I motivate people?” “How do I improve morale?” “How do I deal with difficult people?” How do I deal with a performance problem?” or “How do I deal with an employee's personal problem?” Chairs benefit greatly from sessions on “human resource practices for chairs,” plus timely access to consulting and coaching services from Human Resources when they experience a problem.
- **Most midterm and outgoing Chairs discover opportunities for creative leadership and want to make a difference in the lives of their constituents, their department and the University.** Like participants in other executive development programs, Chairs are highly educated in their specific areas. They see the need to strengthen their leadership capabilities and appreciate the social psychology of leadership, which is most often a new area for them. Chairs typically discover the deep rewards of the position. After the first year or two, realize that their new leadership skills are transferable to the classroom, to their research, to service to the University and the broader community, as well as to their personal lives.
- **Succession planning and transition planning for new Chairs is a big gap in most universities.** Perhaps if academic leadership development were provided for faculty, being Chair could be seen as a valuable developmental opportunity. Knowing there would be adequate preparation and support before going into the role would help mitigate the current negative attitudes about taking the position.

Most Chairs express negativity and reluctance going into the role. Many did not see “administration” as part of their University career path. The position of Chair is also unique in that as faculty, Chairs go into the role for typically three to five years and then return to a faculty position. The Chair is perceived by faculty more as a peer, and the Chair often prefers to be seen this way. Hence, Chairs need to learn to use their influence and persuasion, experience and expertise to lead changes and make things happen in the department as opposed to using the power of their position.

Chairs struggle to harvest the rewards of the position. Many express concern about work/life balance, and balancing teaching, research and administration. They worry that being Chair might actually be detrimental to their careers by derailing research or jeopardizing opportunities for promotion to full professor. This is something the DHLDP is beginning to address, by offering Chairs programs on "Balancing Teaching, Research and Administration" and "Work/life Balance", providing opportunities to strengthen their leadership capability and the leadership capability of others in their department, and helping them discover opportunities for leadership action. Chairs are finding rewards in the Program, the lessons it offers, and in their new or strengthened network across campus. They are discovering the deep satisfactions of leadership development, acquiring skills that will enhance all aspects of their personal and professional lives.

In the early years, our Program focused more on training. It has now evolved to reflect a broader learning and organizational development approach designed to meet the

combined goals of Chair and University development. The Program partners with Organization and Employee Development (O&ED) of the Human Resources Division to provide specific skill training programs. Several programs are devoted to facilitated dialogue between Chairs and Senior Leaders (Deans, VPs, and the President) around strategic issues. We have found communication to be a foundational skill of leadership – specifically active listening and speaking in a way that contributes to quality dialogue while building respect and trust.

Evidence of Making a Difference

Most trainers struggle with questions of what difference they are making. Coming to grips with how the success of a leadership program for Chairs would be measured is important from the outset. There are both quantitative and qualitative measures of Program effectiveness. The quantitative measures we use are an evaluation questionnaire after each learning event and an attendance record. The qualitative measures include comments from open-ended questions on the learning event evaluation forms, and Advisory Committee formative and summative evaluation comments. The Advisory Committee uses this information to strengthen and evolve the Program. I will share some Chairs' comments about the Program and some of my own observations and perceptions of the Program making a difference.

An early success was the first Leadership Retreat where we introduced Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Challenge Model and the LPI. Department Chairs are first and foremost academics, with finely honed skills in research and intellectual debate. Fortunately, the Psychology Department Chair in attendance liked the LPI instrument, and the Organizational Behavior Department Chair appreciated the Leadership Challenge Model so much he adopted Kouzes and Posner's text (1995) for his leadership class. Intellectually and personally stimulating, the retreat was a great success, resulting in testimonials and word of mouth promotion for subsequent programs and retreats. As one Chair stated, "I highly recommend participating in the DHLDP. The monthly sessions cover key areas of concern and the opportunity to network with Chairs and resource people who are willing to help when new issues or problems arise. The retreat was a valuable experience. The content was sequenced and presented in a manner that allowed Chairs plenty of time to grapple with the issues and to reflect on personal practice. The group discussions were lively, animated and always focused on developing leadership abilities. After a busy academic year, this retreat was truly a professional boost." Informal feedback from participating chairs consistently underscored how rewarding leadership development is for academic leaders.

In the last few years, many Department Chairs have initiated their own departmental strategic planning retreats, calling upon the O&ED Director and me for facilitation services. Hence, we have seen first hand process-driven planning that involves all departmental members in these new ways of communicating and working together. According to the O&ED Director, as a result of the Program, many Chairs have sought consultation and intervention services around challenging human resource situations and

encouraged their departmental members to attend learning programs offered by the Human Resources Division.

Following in the success of the DHLDP, leadership development programs have been provided in the last three years for other leader groups on campus including Deans, Administrators (Managers, Directors, and Administrators), and student leaders. As all these leadership groups address strategic issues such as “enriching the student experience” and “performance management,” they are coming together to create a leadership culture at the University. Academic leadership development for faculty is the next program opportunity that I personally would like to help lead. Inspired faculty with high morale are essential to instilling a passion for lifelong learning, and inspiring their students toward lives of and leadership and purpose. Parker Palmer in his book, The Courage to Teach (1998), states "that good teaching cannot be reduced to technique and that good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher"(1998:10). The same holds true for leadership; when reading his book, I found I could substitute "leader" and "leading" everytime he uses the word "teacher" and "teaching". Both teaching and leading are dynamic processes of human interaction.

Further evidence of the DHLDP's impact is that the language of leadership is being used across campus, and in public forums the comments and questions reflect leadership concerns. For example, at a VPA candidate presentation to the academic community, a Chair asked of the candidate “Do you see yourself more as a manager or as a leader?” More recently, the current VPA stated “At this particular moment in the evolution of the University, the language of entitlement has given way to the language of expectations. We are entitled to hope for a better future but we are expected to show why we deserve it. The task of the academic leader is to encourage risks that will inspire hopes.”

By making the atmosphere of our leadership retreats and ongoing programs as respectful, open, honest, supportive, as possible, I had hoped participating Chairs would take back some of this atmosphere to their respective departments. In the seven years of the DHLDP, we have developed a critical mass of department leaders, the language of leadership is being used around campus, and our University leadership development initiatives are becoming increasingly aligned. Our Program has been a powerful catalyst to developing a leadership culture at the University.

<u>Summary Lessons of Leadership in Action</u>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow a process-driven model of individual and organizational development to design, deliver and evaluate your leadership development program. |
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- Identify who your primary stakeholders are and their roles to ensure you maximize their involvement in the Program.
- Choose a leadership competency model as a framework for learning leadership.
- Provide leadership retreats designed to meet chair and university development goals.

The Inside Story: Uncovering the Spirituality of Leadership through Ongoing Personal Development

From the beginning of my career, leadership development captured my heart, mind and soul. Before coming to the University, I had worked hard and been successful as a human resource development manager in a corporation. However, what was missing from this context was attention to people and process. Ideally, one manages the work and leads the people. My early work experience, however, is better described by John Kotter's statement "that most organizations are over managed and underled. They need to develop their capacity to exercise leadership"(1999:51). I wanted to make a difference in the lives of leaders and their constituents in the workplace.

When I began my new position at the University of Saskatchewan, I realized that if I was going to lead leadership development through Extension Programs and the DHLDP, I needed to learn and live leadership practices and principles. That first year, I read all I could about contemporary leadership models, tools, instruments, and development and attended conferences, and a program at the Center for Creative Leadership in San Diego, California. The work of Conger, Kouzes and Posner greatly influenced my approach to leadership development. A trusted friend and colleague, Linda McCann, Director, O&ED at the University of Saskatchewan, and I became learning partners and supported each other in the area of university leadership. But along with all the reading, networking and conferences, I realized that I needed to spend more time on my own personal development as I had been far too activity or "doing" focused. I recognized that I needed to lead myself more consciously. Now that I had tremendous influence over many others, I had a responsibility for thoughtful, appropriate personal and professional leadership action. Developing my inner life to meet this challenge, I took workshops on creativity, wellness and spirituality, and committed to yoga, meditation, reflection and journaling.

I believe in the need to elevate the value of inner work as part of leadership development programs. The best leadership models, techniques and strategies in the world will fall short if of a leader cannot instill trust and lead with courage, vision and heart. As Kouzes and Posner state "People don't follow your technique. They follow you - your message and your embodiment of that message." They go on to add, "Finding your voice is absolutely critical to becoming an authentic leader" (1999:146 - 147). People learn and respond to who and what we are. Palmer explains that the activities that constitute inner work are as important as any other project or task – activities like

journalling, reflecting, reading, spiritual friendship, and meditation. "We must come to understand," he points out, "that if we skimp on our inner work, our outer work will be diminished as well"(1994: 38). Palmer further states that although inner work is deeply personal it is not necessarily a private matter. Being with one another in community, being present to a person's solitude, a person's mystery while that deep inner work goes on is a powerful experience (p.38). We lead from an inner place – the very core or essence of who we are. Katherine Tyler Scott links this inner place to leadership when she observes "The overemphasis of the external in our culture has contributed to a devaluing of the internal life of the leader. Self-reflection, exploration, and analysis in any depth frequently and divisively are referred to as touchy feely. This is a character that colludes in the separation between public and private, and in my view dismisses a discipline that powerfully forms and informs the nature of leadership"(1994: 68).

Because of this imbalance, the developed world has evolved in material and outer ways but remains impoverished in inner ways. Within the human heart, Palmer points out "is the salvation of this human world ...in the human power to reflect, in human meekness and in human responsibility." He quotes Vaclav Havel, President of the Czech Republic "Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness, nothing will change for the better" (1999: 20). I have experienced my own and witnessed Chairs' readiness for this deep personal development work of leaders - discovering and expressing their souls at work and further developing their innermost selves.

There are low points and high points in my inside story of leadership development. The low points have to do with my strengths taken to extreme becoming weaknesses and also the growing pains of a new program and its struggle for acceptance and credibility. When I have an excessively external focus, characterized by a lot of activity and "doing", I don't spend as much time as I need to in reflection and contemplation. My passionate commitment to my work can also lead to impatience when I don't see immediate results. I continue to remind myself that leadership development is a long-term process for the individuals and for the Program, hence my need to be patient and look to the long term.

Many challenges and low points occurred for me in the first couple of years. I was new to the University and, like any new leader, had to earn credibility. In any organization, credibility building is a process that takes time, hard work, devotion and patience. What differs in an academic environment is the hypercritical culture of the University. I soon found myself and the DHLDP on the receiving end of critical feedback. For example, a Chair on our Advisory Committee who had not been on the leadership retreat, stated that the retreat was a waste of money and that faculty don't want to be led. The next day this individual partially apologized, saying he/she was under personal stress. I admitted there was an element of truth in the statement 'faculty don't want to be led,' particularly in the traditional top-down sense of leadership. This Chair went on the next retreat and found it a worthwhile learning experience. Upon reflection, I realized what had initially felt like mean- spirited criticism were usually reactive comments, generalizations, personal attacks, opinions stated as facts, rather than specific balanced feedback. Balanced feedback provides both constructive critique and positive reinforcement. All too often feedback comes only in the form of critique. At first, when criticism came, I was

overcommitted and exhausted. I felt defensive and vulnerable. I have learned not to react defensively, but to frame critical comments as resistance to change and to ask for more details. I strive for a constructive discussion that builds support for the initiative and strengthens our relationship in the process.

Feedback is most welcome, but I prefer feedback given in a spirit that is useful and respectful. I am reminded of the Sufi lesson around the three gates that verbal communication needs to pass through. The first gate is “is it the truth, including the hard truths?”; the second gate is “is it important? does it serve a purpose?”; And the third gate is “is it delivered in a way that shows respect and that you care?”(Easwaran, 1991:159). We all recognize what mean-spirited feedback does to the receiver, but it also damages the sender at a very deep level as well. Easwaran states "we need to choose words that will be supportive and loving, not words that embarrass or wound another person. All of us understand what blows can do to someone, but we do not realize that words can create a more painful injury, one that can last for many years. Nor do we understand the terribly destructive impact words can have on the consciousness of the person who uses them" (Ibid.).

When I shared this Sufi lesson with a colleague recently, he responded “Yes, you can’t love people too much!” I would like to hear more people at the University responding like this! This is something I have given a lot of thought to, and I strive to leave all my encounters with people with the feeling that I care. I would like to think of the University as a loving organization. I am reminded of my favorite leadership quote;“We suspect the best kept secret of leadership is love: being in love with leading, with the people who do the work, with what their organizations produce, and with those who honor the organization by using its work. Leadership is an affair of the heart, not of the head”(Kouzes and Posner, 1995: 305).

In the early years some naysayers dismissed my work, saying, “That is a business model,” or, “You can’t herd cats,” “Watch the fluff,” and so on. Painful as some of this was at the time, it not only contributed to my challenge, but it caused me to persevere and develop a thicker skin. It also taught me a valuable lesson by negative example. It reinforced my intent to contribute to a more encouraging and nurturing culture than what I was experiencing.

As a high achiever, soon I realized that passion, when taken to extremes, becomes obsession and leads to a total loss of work/life balance. After the first two years providing the Program, along with my other Extension programs, I had too much of an activity or "doing" focus, was overcommitted, felt exhausted, and lost much of the joy of my work and life. I also recognized these symptoms in many of the University leaders with whom I worked. I have found that many dedicated people at the University run the same risk of overwork. This realization forced me to become more centered, to be clear about my priorities and to say "no" to some good ideas in order to say "yes" to others. Appropriate passion for me is being devoted to leadership development at the University, but not obsessed. What has helped me the most is ensuring I take some time daily for reflection and contemplation through personal journal writing. This keeps me centered in the

present, makes me more thoughtful and conscious in my leadership development work, and makes it easier for me to be congruent with my values. Increasingly, I accomplish what really matters to the University and me while being more able to enjoy my life.

In early years, I used to worry about why some Chairs never came to programs. I feel less worried now as I realize there will always be some who choose not to participate. Leaders must want to engage in personal development. An important factor in leading is the desire to learn, change and grow. All the University can do is to make the best leadership development program available. I believe we are developing a critical mass of Chairs who are embracing leadership development and integrating it into our university culture. I have now seen a new Chair become an Advisory Committee member, serve his five years as Chair and then become Dean. He enthusiastically encourages his Chairs to attend the Program and has recently encouraged a student leadership initiative in his College Student Association.

The highlights of the Program for me include the in-depth personal development work at the four-day leadership retreats, evolution of my professional interests and finding my unique core competence, and being able to link this process to my life's work. The outcome is finding greater balance, meaning and joy in my life.

For our Chairs, the high point of our Program is definitely the four-day leadership retreats where the most in-depth personal development occurs. The subsequent changes applied to their personal and professional lives, result in transformational leadership that produces extraordinary results. Ultimately, the personal is the professional. As a facilitator at these retreats, I create and hold a sacred space, an environment where true thoughts, feelings, insights, and inspirations can safely emerge. Chairs come together in community as the group meets in a circle for much of the retreat. Group guidelines are established that include deep listening and truthful speaking designed to encourage authentic dialogue. If we want to grow as leaders we must talk to each other about our inner lives. This is new for most Chairs in a learning and university context. Typically, the culture of educational institutions is bureaucratic and competitive, valuing the rational way of knowing. Within the retreat we are creating a culture that fosters collaborative leadership and values learning in the broadest sense including personal and subjective ways of knowing.

As a facilitator I have moved away from the trainer approach and am increasingly including less content and structure and playing a less central role. I find the more I hold back, the more others bring forth their own answers. This allows me to pay closer attention to the immediate needs of the individuals and the group, Becoming more flexible with the agenda, I can modify it to meet these needs. Being more fully present, I am able to uncover and utilize the resources and talents in the group. For example, in one retreat the Chair of the English Department created an exercise on Encouraging the Heart through the use of metaphor, and in another an aboriginal Senior Leader (A Dean) concluded the retreat with an aboriginal traditional 'round dance' where all participated.

I take calculated risks by going deeper into personal development components, such as providing Chairs with the opportunity to walk the labyrinth or participate in a strength bombardment exercise. The labyrinth is an ancient walking meditation tool that exists in many spiritual traditions. Each person's experience is different. In my case walking the labyrinth quiets my overactive mind. Labyrinths have only one path leading to the center and back out again. For me, this path symbolizes going inward in contemplation, reflection and thoughtfulness (inner leadership) and then back out into the world of people and events (outer-leadership in action) with heightened consciousness.

The strength bombardment exercise is best done towards the end of the retreat when participants know each other better. They are given a short presentation to remind them of the guidelines for giving and receiving feedback – both constructive critique and positive reinforcement. Participants reflect on the successes they have had in life and work and then, in small groups, briefly share their success stories. The others listen for the strengths and talents underlying their successes and feed them back to the storyteller. People often need others to point out to them their strengths and talents, so that they can draw on them more often. Chairs experience giving and receiving positive reinforcement first hand, hence experiencing what the leadership practice 'encouraging the heart' feels like, instead of just having an intellectual discussion about it. This exercise is also an opportunity to story tell, actively listen and to be reminded that acknowledging successes and pointing out strengths are part of performance management feedback. They return to their Departments reminded that recognition is powerful leadership strategy for bringing out the best in people. My experience tells me never to underestimate the readiness of the group for such deep personal development work.

Finally, I am conscious of modeling the practices of leadership in my daily life and most certainly in the retreat. The DHLDP experience has strengthened my overall professional work as I have moved to a broader learning consultant and facilitator approach in the retreat and in overall DHLDP and Extension programming. It has contributed to my developing a unique core competence in leading leadership development at the University. It has focused my Business and Management Extension work in leadership for public, customized, credit and noncredit programs. Recently, we have changed our name to Business and Leadership Programs to reflect this core competence and are gaining a national reputation for our agricultural leadership programs. With the Chamber of Commerce, we have initiated a community leadership program. Plans are in process to offer a master's degree in agricultural leadership and a new leadership development certificate program.

By seeking to live the leadership principles I teach, I have achieved better balance, satisfaction, and joy in my life. I feel very blessed for the work I do, for the joy of learning and the joy of leadership and what it brings to individuals and organizations. I am uncovering the spirituality of leadership by being congruent with my soul and clearer on my life's purpose, connecting it to my life roles, and helping create sacred space to help others find this vital connection in their own lives and work. This deeper work in leadership is about living with integrity, a point captured beautifully in a book by Diane Dreher, entitled The Tao of Personal Leadership, (1996) which, incidentally, she wrote

while being the Chair of the English Department at Santa Clara University. She describes the four stepping stones to developing greater integrity: to live values consistently; to maintain a spiritual practice; to tell the truth; and to practice openness (p.220). Similarly, Thomas Teal defines integrity in leaders as "being responsible, communicating clearly and consistently, keeping promises and knowing oneself" (1996:37).

In writing this article, I was initially hesitant to use words like "soul" and "spirituality" because of their broad meaning, their somewhat taboo nature in business, and their overuse in popular culture. However, not only were these worlds very prevalent in my personal journal, they have occurred with increasing frequency in leadership books over the past decade. These linguistic clues point to a paradigm shift: a growing recognition that spirituality is essential to leadership, because leadership emerges from our essence as human beings. As Russ Moxley states in his book, Leadership and Spirit "Spirit works within us. It helps define the true, real, unique self that is us. ... We are who we are because of spirit" (2000: 23). The implications of this concept for other leaders of leadership development is the vital importance of personal authenticity and genuineness, deep caring about people, leading from the heart, living daily leadership principles and practices, seizing the opportunity to do your own inner work in the process, knowing it will show in your outer work. In the process you will discover how deeply rewarding it is to grow yourself and make a solid contribution to leaders at your university or organization.

Where Inner and Outer Leadership Come Together

I have come to believe the greatest leverage to being a better leader is emotional and spiritual development. This process is difficult, complex, and often overlooked in a culture that focuses almost exclusively on intellectual and physical development. Yet the wisdom of this innerwork reaches from recent leadership studies to as far back as Socrates. We lead from the essence of who and what we are. Knowing ourselves is as crucial to leadership as knowing our people and knowing our organizations. The best leadership cannot be reduced to technique. It arises from our identity and integrity and appears in authentic leadership behaviors and action.

For good leaders, doing and being work together in a dynamic relationship. However, the being part has to come first. We have to answer the question "what do I want to be?" before "what do I do?" We have to uncover the leader within. Who and what you are as a leader powerfully influences behaviors that impact others and the organization. Doing without being results in inauthenticity, which can be felt by those around us. It can also trap us in frantic, harried activity, preprogrammed behaviors, and workaholism. On the other hand, being without doing leads to passivity, escapism, and delusion. We need to hold the creative tension between the two: to heighten our consciousness, being mindful of our inner thoughts and feelings as well as outer people and events. Where these inner and outer worlds meet, in the present moment, is our point of power as leaders.

Organizational leadership requires us to be effective in the moment of action. Yet organizational life, with the fast pace, ambiguity and chaos that accompany challenge and change, and the growing demands of stakeholders, is full of distractions that pull us out of the present moment. It takes concerted effort to be a leader. Learning more about ourselves and improving how we use our knowledge, skills and abilities in loving service to our constituents and organizations makes us effective leaders. This point where inner and outer leadership come together is the secret that enables a leader to make a lasting difference. This is the essential challenge of leadership and my greatest desire is that I achieve this creative balance and have a positive impact on my constituents and my organization. As I conclude, I realize that the challenge is ongoing, that I write what I struggle with, and my leadership story is still a work in progress.

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