



# Leadership Spot Check

An 8-part Leadership Development Journey



Leadership is tough, and you've decided to  
put yourself out there and make a  
difference, and that means something. So  
don't give up.

— Ryan Daffron

# Message from the Author

Welcome to Leadership Spot Check—a journey toward meaningful, transformational leadership. My name is Ryan Daffron, and my mission is to help leaders like you develop kinship in three core relationships – Yourself, Others, and God.

My experience as a pastor, coach, and Navy chaplain has taught me that leadership isn't just about results; it's about cultivating harmony within yourself, your relationships, and your spiritual path.

Through this podcast and accompanying workbook, I hope to offer you practical insights from real-world experiences that inspire self-reflection and growth. Leadership is not a one-size-fits-all approach. It's a personal journey that requires ongoing self-examination and a willingness to lead with integrity and empathy.

I invite you to explore these resources, engage in reflective exercises, and join me in discovering what it means to lead with alignment and harmony. Together, we can create lasting impact through thoughtful, transformative leadership.



Peace,  
Ryan Daffron



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# How to use this workbook

The Leadership Spot Check Workbook is a hands-on tool designed to help you engage deeply with your leadership journey. Whether you're a seasoned leader or just stepping into leadership roles, this workbook will guide you in exploring your own strengths, values, and areas for growth. It's not just about following exercises or answering questions; it's about taking the time to pause, reflect, and take an honest inventory of where you are in your leadership development.

The workbook is designed to mirror the content of the Leadership Spot Check podcast. Each section aligns with a specific episode, allowing you to dig deeper into the concepts discussed. As you move through the workbook, you'll discover that it isn't just a passive experience. You are invited to actively engage with the material, turning theory into practice.

Start each section with the overview, which provides a brief introduction to the episode's content. This will set the stage for what you are about to dive into. From there, move into the **core concept—a distilled, practical takeaway** that will serve as the guiding principle for your reflections and exercises. Think of this section as the heartbeat of each chapter, offering you a lens through which to view your leadership challenges and opportunities.

**The reflective questions are where you begin your personal journey.** These questions are crafted to make you think critically about your experiences, decisions, and attitudes as a leader. Don't rush through them. Take time to reflect deeply, write honestly, and consider not just what you have done but what you aspire to become.

Next are the **interactive exercises, which allow you to apply what you've learned in real-world scenarios.** These exercises might involve role-playing with colleagues, practicing communication techniques, or setting specific leadership goals. The goal is to create a bridge between theory and real-life practice, giving you tangible steps to implement immediately.

For those wanting to go even deeper, the **advanced learning exercises will challenge you further.** These exercises are designed for those who are ready to explore complex leadership dynamics or push themselves out of their comfort zones. They may ask you to look beyond your current leadership environment, consider broader leadership models, or engage in ongoing self-assessment.

Throughout the workbook, remember that leadership is a journey, not a destination. The process is one of continuous growth and learning. You are not aiming for perfection but for a deeper understanding of who you are as a leader and where you can improve. Approach this workbook with curiosity, openness, and a willingness to grow. Let it be a companion on your leadership journey—guiding you to become a more thoughtful, aligned, and effective leader.

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# Icon Key

## Core Concepts

A distilled, practical takeaway that will serve as the guiding principle for your reflections and exercises.



## Reflective Questions

These questions are crafted to make you think critically about your experiences, decisions, and attitudes as a leader.



## Interactive Exercises

Interactive exercises allow you to apply what you've learned in real-world scenarios.



## Advanced Learning

For those wanting to go even deeper, the advanced learning exercises will challenge you further.





# What to Expect Leadership Spot Check

Episode 1

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## Podcast Episode Overview

Kinship is a concept rooted in family, but it transcends biological ties. It's about how we work together, reflect together, and live together. As leaders, kinship is essential because leadership is inherently relational. Leadership involves fostering connections in three core relationships: with yourself, with others, and with God.

First, developing kinship with yourself is crucial. Many leaders neglect personal care, wearing busyness as a badge of honor while losing touch with their inner life. But to lead others effectively, you must first lead yourself, nurturing your well-being and a sense of purpose. Second, kinship with others extends beyond leading those you naturally like. It's about maintaining relationships with everyone, even those who challenge or frustrate you. True leadership requires you to build bridges, not just with your allies, but with those who may test your patience. Lastly, developing kinship with God or your spiritual life can transform your leadership because it forces you to engage with your soul, the epicenter of where you experience life.

This section invites you to reflect, grow, and apply leadership principles in a personal way. It's not just about understanding theories but deeply investigating their real-world implications and weaving them into your daily leadership practice. By embracing these relationships—self, others, and God—you unlock the potential for authentic, transformative leadership.



Kinship in leadership is about building deep connections with three key relationships: yourself, the people you lead, and your spiritual or moral center. This form of leadership emphasizes self-awareness, self-care, and nurturing meaningful relationships with others.

# Kinship



Kinship is a concept rooted in family, but it transcends biological ties. It's about how we work together, reflect together, and live together.

When you think about the word kinship, what comes to mind? How could you apply it to your leadership?

How would you describe your relationships with those you lead?

How do you foster positive relationships, and where do you notice challenges?  
How can you work toward building or restoring trust?

## Create a Kinship Pyramid:

Using the pyramid sections labeled Self, Others, God/Spiritual follow the directions below.



**OTHERS:** *List key relationships with peers, team members, and people you lead.*

Others

**SELF:** *Write down strengths, weaknesses, and areas where you'd like to grow.*

Self

God

**Spiritual Connection:** *Write down how your faith, sense of purpose, or moral values influence your leadership.*



*Look at each section of the pyramid and think about where you feel a lack of connection and a strong sense of kinship.*

*For each area you identify, write down one specific action you can take to strengthen that connection or improve harmony. See the example below.*

I feel a lack of connection with \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

I feel a sense of kinship with \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

To strengthen my connection and improve harmony I will  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Self-Leadership Strategy



Create a three-month plan focused on enhancing your self-leadership. Include goals for personal development, health, and emotional well-being. Reflect on how this strategy will improve your overall leadership. Check out the example below.

## Goal Setting

Goal: Develop communication and listening skills.

Action Steps:

- Listen to one leadership podcast episode per week that focuses on communication (e.g., Leadership Spot Check).
- Practice active listening in conversations, summarizing key points before responding.

Goal: Improve nutrition and physical endurance.

Action Steps:

- Follow a meal plan based on whole foods, focusing on balanced macros (protein, carbs, fats).
- Increase workout intensity by adding a 4th weekly HIIT session or strength training.
- Track sleep and ensure 7-8 hours per night.

Goal: Cultivate emotional intelligence.

Action Steps:

- Take an EQ (Emotional Quotient) test.
- Set weekly goals for improving empathy, self-awareness, and emotional regulation.
- Seek feedback from trusted individuals on emotional responses and adjustments.

# My 3-month Strategy

Goal:

Action Steps:

Goal:

Action Steps:

Goal:

Action Steps:



# Why Do A Leadership Spot Check

Episode 2

## Podcast Episode Overview

Leadership is often defined as influence, yet influence alone does not make a leader great. Leadership is far deeper than a title or a position. It's about the responsibility we take to guide, serve, and uplift others, especially when we face challenges. My own leadership journey taught me this hard truth—leadership is not just about being competent or charismatic. It's about understanding who you are at your core and leading from that authentic place.

Many of us stumble into leadership, relying on our natural abilities or personal charm to carry us through. But real leadership is tested in moments of crisis when the weight of responsibility presses against our soul. It's in those moments that we either grow or crumble. I learned that just 'being me' wasn't enough. I had to confront the fractures in my beliefs, reevaluate my core values, and embrace the vulnerability of asking for forgiveness and granting it to others. Leadership requires a deep inner alignment, where your actions, words, and beliefs are in harmony.

Through failure and grace, I've come to understand that leadership is a journey of constant growth. It's about forging kinship with yourself, others, and God and recognizing that leadership is not a solo endeavor. It's a relational process that demands both strength and humility. Remember—leadership isn't about perfection but progress. It's about stepping up, even when it's hard, and allowing the fire of adversity to refine us into better leaders.



Leadership is about influence, not just position. Discovering your "why" helps align your actions with long-term goals, enabling you to lead with clarity and resilience.

# Why do you lead?



What motivates you to lead? Is it responsibility, passion, ambition, or something else? Why do you step into leadership roles?

What impact do you think your leadership is having on your team or organization? Provide at least 2.

1.

2.

What kind of influence do you want to have on others, and what legacy do you wish to leave?

How do your core beliefs about life, leadership, and success shape your leadership?

What is your long-term vision as a leader? How do your current actions align with this vision?



## Craft a purpose

Have you ever thought about why you lead? What would you say your “reason” or “purpose” for leading? Take a few stabs at writing a leadership purpose statement.

Craft a leadership purpose statement starting with: "I lead because..."

Example: "I lead because I believe in empowering others to reach their full potential and creating positive change."

1. I lead because

2. I lead because

3. I lead because

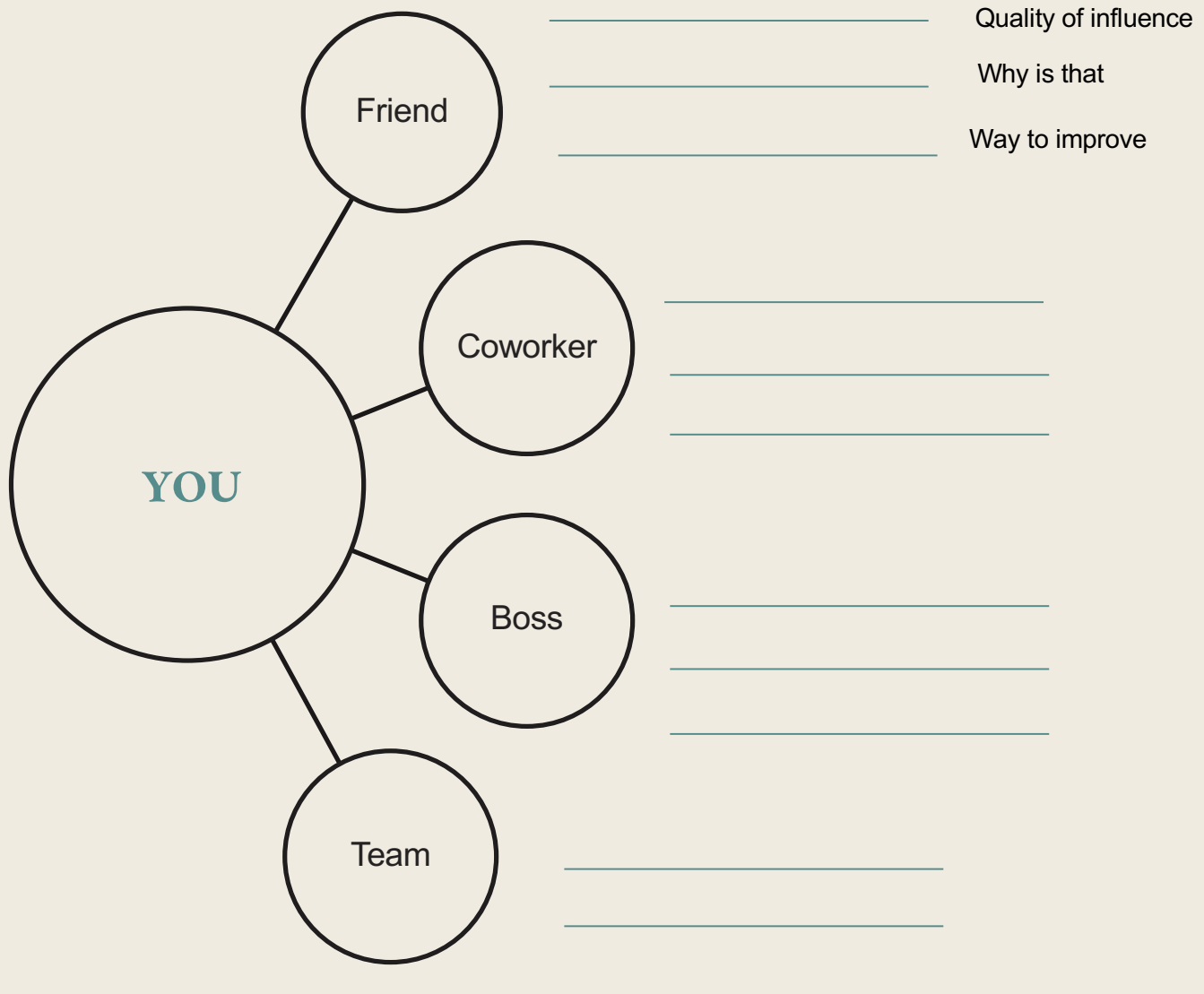
How do you feel about your answers? The goal here is only to start getting you thinking along these lines. It's ok if you don't like your answers or feel stuck. Remember this is a process. As we continue through this series, more clarity and conviction will develop.



## Create an Influence Map

Create a map of your influence within your organization or community. List people or groups you influence directly and indirectly. Try to list 3-5 people and at least 1 group. Below is an example, but you can make any map that suits your fancy.

Then, describe the quality of this influence—whether it's positive, neutral, or challenging—and identify why. Finish by considering a way to improve each relationship.



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## Spot Check

This workbook is designed to get you thinking and comfortable with the format. Throughout this section, we've explored the concept of kinship in leadership, delving into the importance of self-leadership, fostering positive relationships with others, and grounding leadership in a spiritual or moral foundation. The reflections and exercises presented were designed to help you uncover your "why" and strengthen your leadership from the inside out. Whether you lead a team of many or a few, your effectiveness is directly linked to the clarity of your purpose and the strength of these relational bonds.

Self-kinship is the foundation of everything. As a leader, it's tempting to focus entirely on external results and outcomes, but without nurturing your inner life, the sustainability of your leadership is at risk. Self-care, self-awareness, and personal development are not luxuries—they are essential components of effective leadership. This section has reminded us that to lead others well, we must first lead ourselves with integrity, compassion, and discipline.

Beyond yourself, kinship with others is equally vital. Leadership is inherently relational, requiring you to build trust and navigate complex dynamics with those you lead. We've discussed how leadership goes beyond working with people who are easy to lead; it extends to those who challenge us, disagree with us, or even frustrate us. Influential leaders don't just manage these relationships—they nurture them, fostering a culture of empathy and collaboration.

Finally, your kinship with God or your deeper spiritual connection serves as the anchor for your leadership. It provides you with a sense of purpose, aligning your actions with your values and guiding you through challenges. Whether through a faith-based perspective or a broader sense of morality, this spiritual dimension is crucial for grounding your leadership in something greater than yourself. It reminds us that leadership is a calling, not just a job, and that we are ultimately responsible for stewarding our influence for the greater good.

In moments of crisis or difficulty, these three dimensions of kinship—self, others, and God—will sustain and refine your leadership. By embracing this holistic approach, you not only lead with greater clarity and resilience but also leave a legacy that is built on transformative leadership. As you move forward, I encourage you to continue reflecting on these principles, to practice self-examination regularly, and to nurture the relationships that matter most.

Remember, leadership is not a destination but a continuous process of growth, learning, and connection. What will you do with your leadership? What is your key takeaway from this workbook? How can you implement what you have learned in the next 30 days?

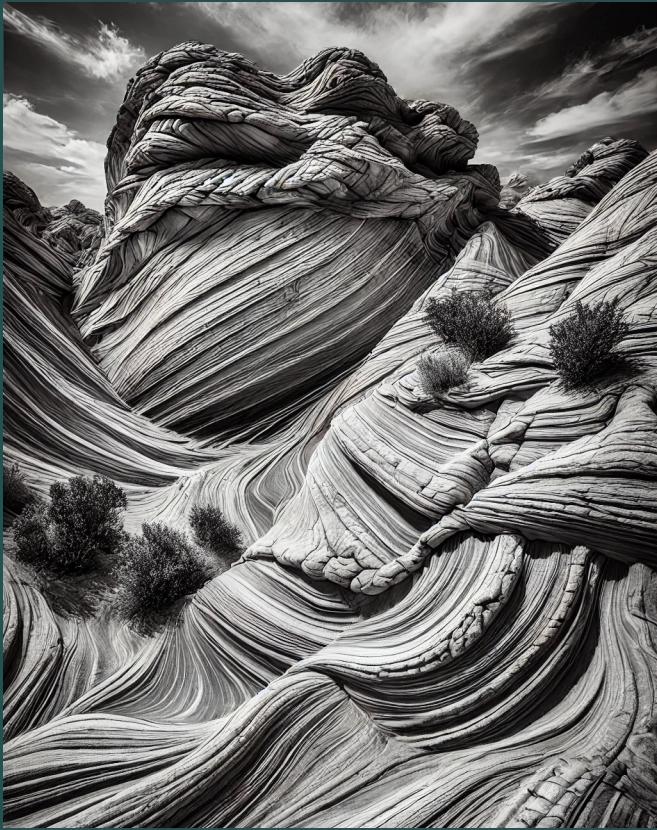
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# 02

## Leadership Spot Check

A Leadership Development Journey



"The moment there is suspicion about a person's motives, everything he does becomes tainted. Leadership requires that words and actions be in harmony."

—Mahatma Gandhi

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Episode 3

## Podcast Episode Overview

Leadership dissonance occurs when a leader's words and actions are out of alignment, creating a gap between their stated values and their actual behavior. It's like playing an instrument with one chord out of tune—no matter how much effort is put into it, something feels off. In leadership, this dissonance emerges when there's a misalignment between a leader and their team or even within the leader themselves.

One form of dissonance is when leaders say they are open to feedback yet consistently shut down the very ideas they claim to value. It creates confusion and frustration and erodes trust. Dissonance also manifests when leaders preach self-care and balance but drive their teams to exhaustion without allowing them to rest. It's in those moments of contradiction that leaders lose their authenticity.

But leadership dissonance doesn't just affect the team—it also affects the leader's soul. When leaders act against their own deeply held values, they experience inner turmoil, a fracture between who they are and how they lead. Over time, this dissonance can widen the emotional distance between the leader and the people they are responsible for, leading to disengagement and disconnection on both sides.

Recognizing dissonance is the first step in restoring harmony. It's about aligning what we say with what we do and ensuring that our leadership reflects the values we truly believe in. As we explore these concepts together, it's essential to reflect not only on the leadership of others but on our own. In doing so, we close the gap between intention and action, building trust and authentic relationships in the process.



Leadership dissonance occurs when a leader experiences a disconnect between their beliefs, actions, and followers' expectations. This disconnect leads to confusion, mistrust, and damaged team dynamics.

## Consider Dissonance



Can you recall a time when you experienced or observed leadership dissonance? What were the signs?

In you

In others

What are your core values as a leader?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How do they align (or not align) with your

Motives

Attitudes

Actions

How would you describe your emotional authenticity in leadership? Do you project a different image than what you feel internally? Why/why not?

# Dissonant Values



Write down three core leadership values you hold.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reflect on your leadership decisions and interactions. Can you identify moments when your actions did and did not align with these values? Describe these instances and the consequences.

Alignment

Misalignment

# Emotional Authenticity



Reflect on your emotional state over the past 30 days. Were there moments when you presented a different version of yourself than what you were truly feeling? Why is that?

What does balance between emotional authenticity and professionalism look like to you? Identify 3 ways.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Identify a possible strategy to maintain emotional authenticity in your interactions while balancing professionalism.

**REMEMBER:** Vulnerability and authenticity are not weaknesses in leadership. It's the cornerstone of genuine connection.



Investigate

Episode 4

## Podcast Episode Overview

Leadership dissonance occurs when there is a gap between a leader's intentions and their impact. It's the misalignment between what we say we value and how we act. This gap can create frustration, mistrust, and disengagement both within the leader and the team. To effectively address dissonance, we must go beyond just identifying it—we must investigate its root causes.

One of the primary root causes of leadership dissonance **is an unexplored worldview**. Leaders who haven't taken the time to understand their deeply held beliefs and how they shape their decisions are prone to misalignment. Without clarity on these core values, they may unknowingly act in ways that contradict their principles, causing dissonance. It's essential for leaders to explore their worldviews to ensure their leadership is grounded in authenticity.

Another common cause is **improvised planning**. Leaders who constantly react to crises without a clear long-term vision find themselves in a cycle of short-sighted decisions. This reactive leadership style creates instability and confusion among teams. True leadership requires foresight and strategic planning, not just putting out fires.

**Underdeveloped power skills**—often referred to as soft skills—are another factor. Leaders who excel in technical expertise but struggle with emotional intelligence, communication, and active listening are likely to experience dissonance. Leadership is more than knowing the job; it's about connecting with people on a human level.

Lastly, many leaders **fail to establish a maintenance plan** for their well-being. Leadership is a marathon, not a sprint. Without caring for their physical, emotional, and spiritual health, leaders become depleted, leading to emotional distance and burnout. To avoid this, leaders must prioritize self-care and soul-care, ensuring they can lead with clarity and strength.

Investigating the root causes of dissonance allows leaders to create strategies that foster alignment, growth, and harmony within themselves and their teams. Leadership is not about perfection but about continuously striving for authenticity and connection.



Root causes of dissonance include a lack of self-awareness in leadership, crisis-driven decision-making, and underdeveloped power skills (e.g., communication, emotional intelligence, active listening). Addressing these root causes can significantly reduce dissonance.

# Identify Your Root Cause



**Crisis-Driven Decision Making:** Do you find yourself frequently reacting to immediate crises rather than focusing on long-term strategies?

**Underdeveloped Power Skills:** In what situations have you noticed gaps in your communication, emotional intelligence, or active listening?

**Insufficient Self-Care:** How do you currently manage your physical and emotional well-being as a leader?

**Lack of a Leadership Maintenance Plan:** Do you have a sustainable plan in place to maintain your leadership skills and personal well-being over the long term?

# Comprehensive Root Cause Assessment



**Step 1: Identify multiple leadership challenges:** List 2-3 recent leadership situations where you experienced dissonance or misalignment with your team or organization. For each situation, describe what happened, how you felt, and how your team responded.

**Step 2: Analyze root causes for each situation.** Reflect on whether the dissonance stemmed from:

- ❖ Crisis-Driven Decision-Making: Were you constantly reacting to urgent issues without time for strategic planning?
- ❖ Underdeveloped Power Skills: Was poor communication, lack of emotional intelligence or difficulty listening?
- ❖ Insufficient Self-Care: Were you mentally or physically exhausted, affecting your decision-making and interactions?
- ❖ Other: Dissonance comes in many forms. If one of these doesn't fit your situation, explain why and what you think is the root cause.

**Step 3: Document your findings:** For each situation, write down the root cause(s) and explain why you believe these issues contributed to the dissonance.

**Situation # 1.**

**Situation # 2.**

**Situation # 3.**

# Skill and Leadership Maintenance Evaluation



Evaluate your current leadership skills: Using a scale of 1-5, rate yourself in these areas:

- ❖ Communication: Clear, concise exchanges that ensure alignment between leaders and their teams to foster an open dialogue that encourages collaboration and feedback. \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Emotional Intelligence: The ability to understand and manage your own emotions while being sensitive to the emotions of others. \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Active Listening: Being fully present in a conversation, understanding the speaker's message, and responding thoughtfully. \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Collaboration: The process of working together effectively towards a common goal. \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Problem-Solving: Identifying challenges, analyzing them, and developing practical solutions. \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Long-term Strategic Planning: To look beyond immediate crises and focus on setting a vision for the future. \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Self-Care (Mental, Physical, Emotional Well-being): Leaders who prioritize their mental, physical, and emotional well-being can lead more effectively over the long term, avoiding burnout and maintaining their energy and focus. \_\_\_\_\_

Identify the most pressing areas for improvement: From your evaluation, select the 2-3 areas where your skills are the weakest or where you believe improvement could lead to the most impact in reducing leadership dissonance.

1.

2.

3.



Reflect

Episode 5

## Podcast Episode Overview

Leadership dissonance is often the result of inner conflict manifesting as external struggles for control and validation. In the story of King Saul, we see a leader who, despite his initial success, becomes consumed by fear, jealousy, and insecurity. Saul's leadership is a cautionary tale of what happens when a leader loses alignment with their purpose and their people.

Saul's dissonance was most evident in his relationship with David. Instead of recognizing David as a valuable ally, Saul viewed him as a threat driven by a deep insecurity. His inability to nurture and develop David's talent led him down a path of manipulation, deceit, and, ultimately, self-destruction. A good leader would have seen David's potential as an opportunity to strengthen the kingdom. But Saul's fear clouded his judgment, turning an asset into an enemy.

This story reminds us of a powerful truth: **effective leadership is about empowering others, not controlling them**. When we focus on maintaining power at all costs, we become like Saul—constantly battling perceived threats rather than investing in the growth of our teams. Dissonant leadership occurs when we fail to align our actions with our values when we manipulate instead of motivate, and when we become preoccupied with our own image instead of the well-being of those we lead.

Reflecting on Saul's story, we are reminded that insecurity and fear can derail even the most capable leaders. To avoid this, we must consistently reflect on our motives, ensure that our leadership is grounded in integrity, and seek to build kinship with ourselves, others, and God. Leadership is not about clinging to power; it's about using our influence to create harmony and growth in those we lead.



Insecurity in Leadership leads to irrational behavior, as seen in Saul's jealousy toward David. Leaders who feel threatened by talented team members may act out of fear or jealousy, damaging their relationships and reducing their effectiveness.

## Being Honest With Myself



Have you or do you ever feel threatened by talented team members? How do you handle feelings of insecurity?

Have you ever acted out of fear or jealousy in your leadership? What were the consequences?

How can you shift from viewing talented individuals as threats to seeing them as assets for team success?

REMEMBER: leadership is not about perfection, it's about progress, integrity, and growth.



## Mentoring Potential

Reflect on a time when you felt insecure as a leader. How did this insecurity manifest in your actions toward your team?

Write down three ways you can support and mentor talented team members, turning potential threats into assets.

1.

2.

3.

# Identify Opportunity



Identify a talented individual (team member, peer, supervisor) who you may feel threatened by and explain why.

Develop a mentoring or development plan focusing on how you can empower and guide them rather than undermine their success. Consider these starting points

1. Set up for success pathways
2. Relationship-building techniques.
3. Networking opportunities

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## Spot Check

Leadership dissonance can feel discouraging, but recognizing it is a first step toward becoming a more authentic and effective leader. The fact that you're working on this area shows that you're committed to growth and are on the path to becoming the kind of leader who inspires trust and alignment in your team. Dissonance occurs when there's a gap between what we say and how we act, but it's important to remember that all leaders face this challenge at some point. What's most important is your willingness to address it.

As you work to align your actions with your values, know that you are not striving for perfection but for progress. Every step you take toward closing that gap between intention and action is a victory that will ripple through your leadership and positively affect those you lead. Your team looks to you not for flawless leadership but for authenticity, and your effort to reflect and improve is already building trust. The more you bring your leadership into harmony with your core beliefs, the more your team will feel motivated, understood, and empowered.

Take encouragement from the fact that leadership is a journey, and you are moving forward on that path. It takes courage to confront areas where dissonance exists, and your commitment to growth shows your dedication to your team's well-being and your own leadership integrity. Remember that leadership is about empowering others, not controlling them. By focusing on building up the strengths of those around you, you not only reduce dissonance but also create a culture of trust, collaboration, and shared success.

Keep reflecting on your motives, remain grounded in your values, and take the time to invest in your own well-being. As you do, you will find that the dissonance begins to fade, replaced by a deeper connection to your purpose and your people. Leadership isn't about having all the answers or never making mistakes—it's about being willing to grow, adapt, and lead with integrity. You are already on that path, and with every step you take, you are becoming a more aligned, authentic, and inspiring leader. Stay encouraged because your growth is making a real difference!

How will you handle dissonance in your leadership?

What safeguards will you put in place to alert you that leadership dissonance is near?

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# 03 Leadership Spot Check

A Leadership Development Journey



"A person's worldview is as unique as their fingerprints, shaped by their experiences, environment, and the meaning they give to both."

Anonymous

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# Leadership

WORLD-VIEW

Discover

Episode 6

## Podcast Episode Overview

Your worldview is like a lens through which you see and interpret everything around you. It's a framework shaped by your beliefs, values, and experiences, influencing every decision you make, especially as a leader. Whether or not we're conscious of it, our worldview affects how we respond to challenges, how we relate to others, and how we lead. Understanding our worldview is essential because it shapes the way we approach leadership, relationships, and life itself.

What's even more profound is the existence of hidden worldviews—cultural, social, and personal influences that shape us without our realizing it. Like a fish unaware of the water it swims in, we often don't notice how deeply our environment and experiences are shaping our thoughts and actions. Hidden worldviews can subtly shift our beliefs over time, sometimes without us noticing, influencing how we lead and interact with others.

As leaders, it's critical to reflect on both our conscious and hidden worldviews. This self-awareness helps us align our leadership with our values and beliefs, ensuring authenticity and integrity in our decisions. When we take time to discover the roots of our worldview—whether formed by family, culture, education, or personal experiences—we gain insight into why we lead the way we do. This process of discovery allows us to grow, refine our approach, and lead with greater clarity and purpose.

Leadership is not just about skills and strategies; it's about understanding the lens through which we lead. By exploring our worldview, we can ensure that our leadership reflects the depth of our values and the authenticity of our character.



Worldview refers to the lens through which you interpret the world and make decisions. It is shaped by personal experiences, cultural background, and beliefs, both conscious and hidden. Understanding your worldview allows you to lead with greater awareness and purpose.

## Preparing for your Leadergram



**In the next section (Investigate) you will be putting together a leadergram. It will require a lot of work and data collecting. As a result, this section will serve more as an orientation to prepare you for the leadergram.**

**Family and Upbringing:** Our family is often the first and most influential factor in shaping our worldview. Whether we grew up in a religious household or a more secular environment, the values and beliefs we absorbed from our caregivers impact how we understand the world. Reflecting on your upbringing—whether you were raised by parents, grandparents, or an extended family—reveals the foundational ways you view leadership and life.

**Culture and Society:** As we grow, the broader culture around us, including media, politics, and societal values, shapes our worldview. Constant exposure to certain messages, such as consumerism or frequent relocations, like in military or missionary families, can significantly impact how we perceive happiness, success, and our role in society.

**Education:** Education opens us to new perspectives and encourages critical thinking, playing a major role in shaping our worldview. School performance, exposure to diverse ideas, and the challenges we face during our educational journey all contribute to how we see the world and question our beliefs.

**Personal Experiences:** Our life experiences—both the good and the painful—play a significant role in shaping our worldview. These pivotal moments cause us to reflect on what we believe and how we interpret events. The type of leader you are today is often linked to how you've processed and grown from personal challenges and key life moments.

**Faith and Religion:** Religious beliefs, or even the absence of them, can form the core of how we view the world. For many, religion provides answers to life's fundamental questions, but even those who don't identify with a faith have a belief system that influences their worldview and leadership approach.



## Understanding Hidden World Views

Our goal here is not to critique these worldviews but to make you aware of them as you explore your leadership perspective.

**Individualism:** This belief prioritizes the individual and personal happiness. The goal is to foster independence.

**Consumerism:** This mindset values material possessions as the key to happiness, often placing wealth above spiritual and emotional health.

**Nationalism:** The belief that one's nation is uniquely favored by God and demands ultimate loyalty above all else.

**Moral Relativism:** This idea rejects absolute truths, claiming morality is subjective.

**Scientific Naturalism:** The belief that only the physical world exists, and that science is the sole path to truth.

**New Age Spirituality:** A mix of Eastern religions, mysticism, and self-help, promoting the idea that we are divine beings who can create our own reality.

**Postmodern Tribalism:** This worldview asserts that truth is defined by the group you belong to, whether based on race, gender, or politics.

**Salvation by Therapy:** The belief that psychological well-being is the ultimate goal, with therapy or self-help providing the path to fulfillment.



## Prepare your thoughts for creating a Leadergram

Identify the key influences in your life that have shaped your worldview, such as family, culture, education, personal experiences, and faith.

Identify one hidden worldview that might be affecting your leadership and create an action plan to mitigate its negative effects.



# Leadership

WORLD-VIEW

## Investigate

Episode 7

## Podcast Episode Overview

Often, we don't take the time to investigate where our worldview comes from—how our family, mentors, organizations, and peers have all contributed to the leaders we've become. But when we stop to investigate these influences, we gain clarity on why we lead the way we do.

Through the process of mapping your leadership worldview, using a tool like the “leadergram”, you begin to uncover the deep-rooted influences that have shaped your beliefs and behaviors. It's not just about identifying the positive impacts but also recognizing the challenges, pain points, and even failures that have played a role. Our leadership is formed by both the good and the difficult, and understanding these dynamics helps us to grow, adapt, and lead with greater self-awareness.

This process is not about assigning blame or labeling others; it's about seeing your leadership journey as a story that has been shaped by experiences and relationships—both good and bad. It's about reflecting on patterns and events that have influenced your decisions and behaviors as a leader. By doing this work, you gain insights that can help you make intentional changes and avoid repeating negative patterns in the future.

True leadership growth comes from understanding the roots of your worldview and how it impacts your leadership today. It's about facing the mirror, recognizing both your strengths and areas for improvement, and using that awareness to lead with more integrity, purpose, and connection.

**CAUTION:** Creating a leadergram can sometimes bring up challenging experiences from your past, resurfacing emotions or memories that you may have tucked away. I encourage you to face these moments head-on and work through them. As you do, it might be helpful to seek support from a counselor, coach, or trusted friend. The leadergram is a powerful tool that encourages deep self-reflection, offering immense rewards, even though it may feel difficult at times. Stay open and trust the process—you're not alone on this journey.



A “Leadergram” is a tool that helps you visually represent the influences that have shaped your leadership worldview. These influences can include family members, mentors, organizations, peers, and significant life events.

# Leadergram Directions

A leadergram (an adaptation of a genogram) focuses on your leadership relationships and dynamics. It uses symbols to map out key leadership connections.

**Step 1: Define the Purpose** – For your leadergram, the goal is to understand how your leadership worldview was formed, helping you better comprehend why you lead the way you do. You'll do this by examining the key people and contexts from your past.

**Step 2: Identify Key Individuals** – Once the purpose is clear, list the key players. Start by identifying your family members (going back at least to your grandparents). Then, identify 3-5 mentors, leaders, and organizations who have influenced you. They don't all have to be positive influences; sometimes, we are shaped by difficult experiences, too. Finally, identify 3-5 peers who influenced you.

**Step 3: Gather Information – Contemplate their leadership styles:**

- a. **Authoritarian/Autocratic** – Makes decisions with little input and focuses on authority.
- b. **Democratic/Participatory** – Involves others in decision-making, collaborative.
- c. **Transformational** – Inspires and motivates through vision and enthusiasm.
- d. **Transactional** – Focuses on structure, rules, and punishment/ rewards system.
- e. **Laissez-faire** – Provides minimal direction, gives resources, but offers little guidance.

List the relational status with you (parent with a broken relationship, mentor for 20 years). Identify a lesson learned from each person or organization. Add an adjective describing the impact they had on you.

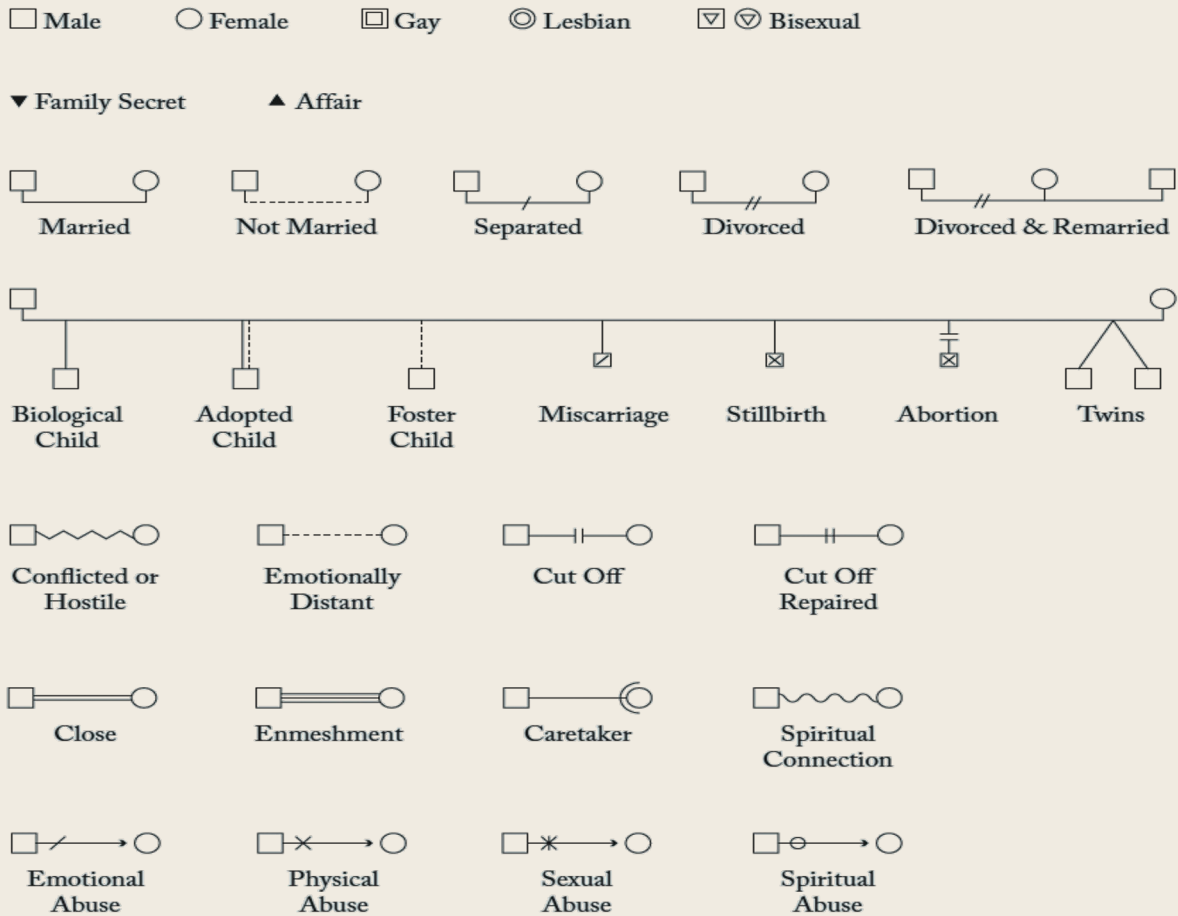
**Step 4: Identify Patterns and Dynamics** – After gathering information, identify patterns. Are there recurring leadership traits across generations? Did specific events, like a financial crisis or merger, shift leadership styles? For example, your grandfather might have been authoritative during economic growth, while your father adopted a democratic style during a financial crisis. Or perhaps a peer was once close, but after a conflict, you felt betrayed and went separate ways.

**Step 5: Choose a Layout for Your Leadergram** – Visualizing these leadership connections is key. It can resemble a family tree or a sports championship bracket, with an added layer of leadership traits and relationships. A sample and a key to help you create your leadergram is provided.

**Step 6: Add Leadership Traits and Key Events** – As you build your leadergram, include key events that explain why a leader adopted a particular style. Did someone step into leadership during a crisis? Was there a leadership change after a major organizational merger? Include these details to provide context for leadership decisions.

**Step 7: Analyze and Reflect** – Now, analyze your completed leadergram. Do certain leadership styles dominate? Did major events shift leadership approaches? Reflect on how your leadership fits into this broader context—are you continuing a tradition or breaking away from it?

# Leadergram Symbols



## For leadership style use the following colors.

Red – authoritarian/Autocratic – makes choices with little to no input – focuses on authority.

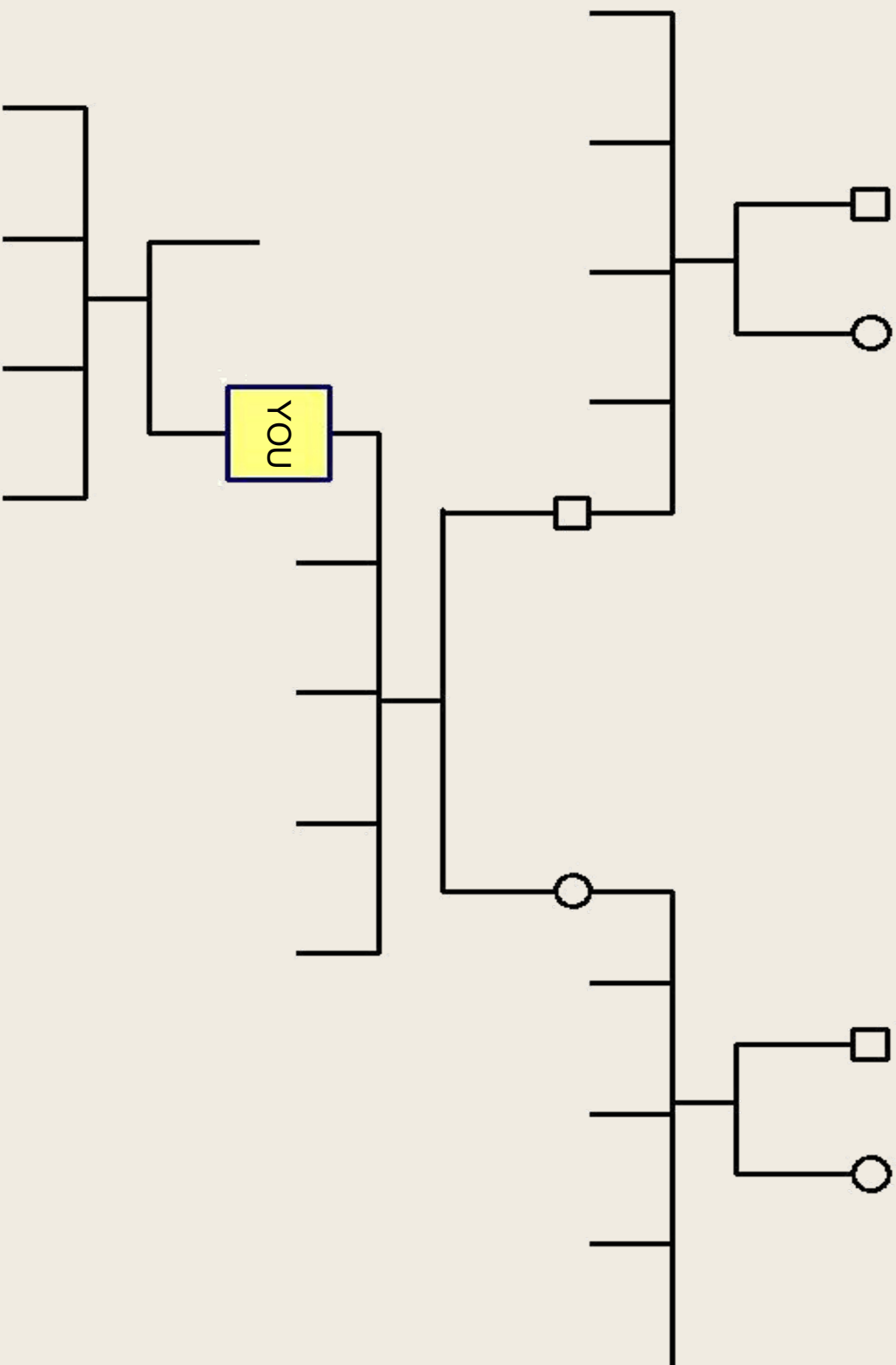
Green– democratic/participatory – involves others input in decision making, collaborative.

Purple – transformational – inspires and motivates thru vision and enthusiasm.

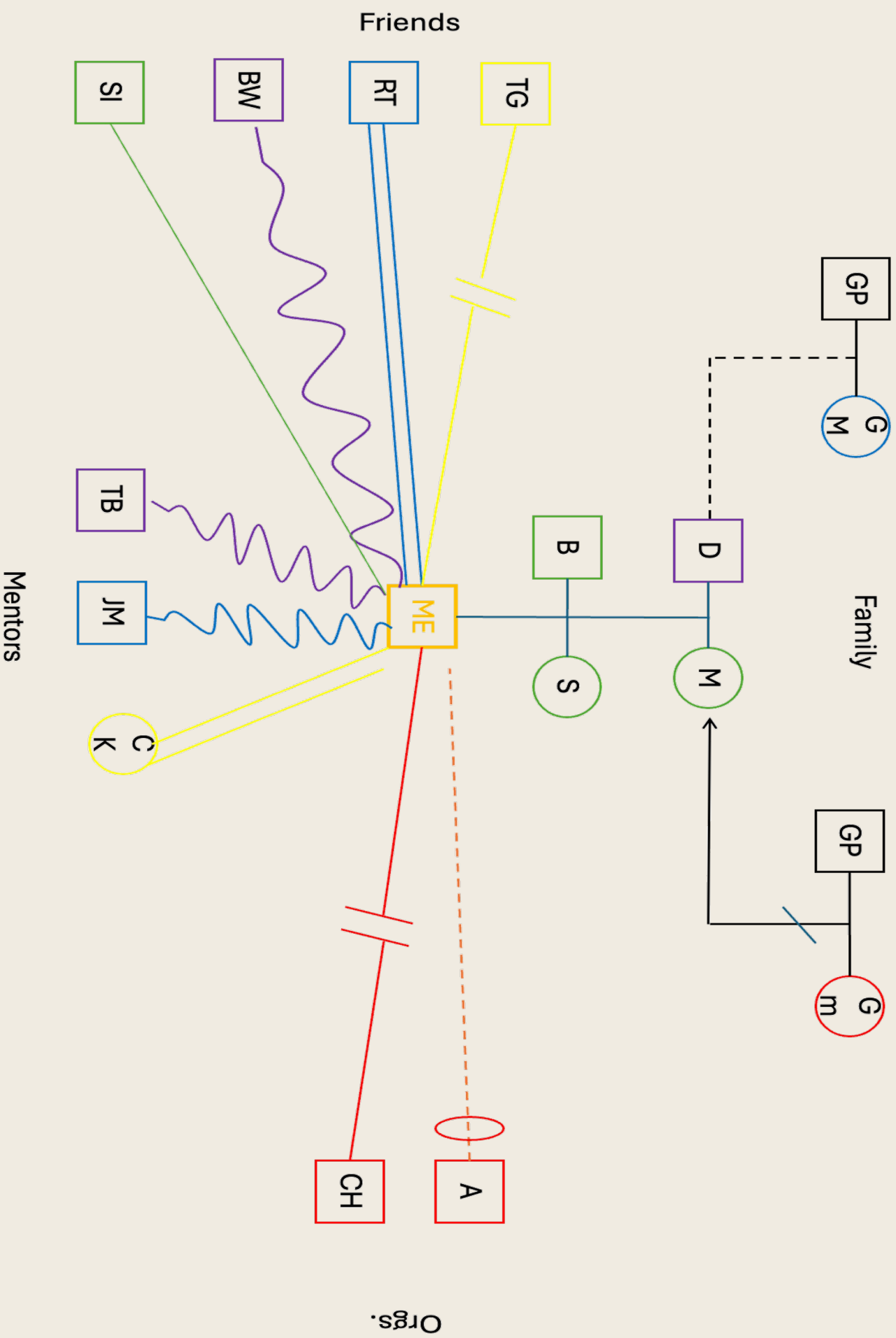
Yellow – Transactional – structure, rules, rewards, clear expectations and rewards based on meeting the expectations

Blue – Laissez-faire – minimal direction, gives resources or some support but the offers little guidance if at all.

## EXAMPLE



# EXAMPLE



## Create your Leadergram

## Analyze your Leadergram

Messages received about life from Father (Caretaker):	Messages received about life from Mother (Caretaker):
Messages I received from key events:	Messages I received from leaders
Cumulative messages I believe (beliefs that may or may not be true):	

## Defining Your Leadership World View

Developing a worldview statement involves reflecting deeply on your beliefs, values, and principles and how they shape your perspective on life. Using the results of your leadergram, identify the following

1. Identify Core Beliefs
2. Clarify Your Values
3. Define Your Purpose/the “why” you are on earth purpose (more on this in part 4).

### Example Worldview Statement:

I believe that all people are interconnected and that our actions ripple beyond ourselves. I value compassion, growth, and integrity, seeking to build relationships based on trust and respect. My purpose is to serve others by helping them discover their unique potential and lead with authenticity.

Write a world view statement using this structure;

**Opening sentence:** Capture your core belief about life or human nature.

**Second sentence:** Highlight the values that guide you.

**Third sentence:** Outline your purpose or mission.



# Leadership

WORLD-VIEW

## Reflect

Episode 8

## Podcast Episode Overview

Mother Teresa's leadership flowed from her singular conviction: 'I see Jesus in every human being.' This worldview wasn't just theoretical—it was the bedrock of her entire approach to life and leadership. She saw every person, particularly the most marginalized, as bearing divine worth. Her ability to serve others with relentless compassion, to embrace suffering, and to reject material comforts stemmed from her belief that serving the poor was a sacred act of worship. Her worldview redefined leadership—not as authority or power, but as humble service, where greatness is found in the smallest acts of care.

Similarly, Nelson Mandela's leadership worldview was deeply shaped by his vision of 'freedom and equality for all.' His long journey, marked by imprisonment, was not defined by personal anger or vengeance but by an unshakable belief in reconciliation and unity. Mandela's leadership wasn't simply about dismantling apartheid; it was about creating a future where every race could live in peace and equality. His commitment to forgiveness, even after decades of personal suffering, revealed a leader who understood that bitterness would only perpetuate the cycle of oppression. His leadership reminds us that true strength lies not in domination but in the ability to reconcile and forgive, even when doing so is deeply unpopular.

Both Mother Teresa and Mandela show us that leadership grounded in a strong worldview becomes a moral compass. It provides clarity in times of uncertainty and courage in the face of adversity. Their examples challenge us to reflect on our own worldview as leaders. What is the lens through which we see the world?



Leaders such as Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela exemplified leadership that was deeply rooted in their worldviews. Mother Teresa's leadership was driven by her belief in the dignity of every person, while Nelson Mandela's was focused on justice, equality, and reconciliation.

## Considering Values



Reflect on Mother Teresa's worldview: "I see Jesus in every human being." How Does  
How does seeing dignity and value in every person impact your leadership?

Nelson Mandela's worldview focused on freedom and reconciliation. How do these values  
resonate with you, and how can they influence your leadership?

What opposition or challenges have shaped your worldview, and how have you used  
those experiences to grow as a leader?

## Take Action



Choose one key principle from either Mother Teresa's or Nelson Mandela's leadership worldview. What was it about this principle that moves you to action?

Write down an action you can take this week in your leadership to embody this principle (e.g., showing compassion in a tough conversation or fostering reconciliation in a conflict).



## Leave a Legacy

Reflect on how your leadership worldview influences the legacy you are building. What impact do you want to leave on your team or organization?

Identify specific steps you can take to align your daily leadership actions with your long-term vision for your legacy. Try to get at least 5.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

---

## Spot Check

As we reach the close of this section in your leadership journey, take a moment to reflect on how much you've grown. Leadership is not just about achieving goals or managing teams; it's about understanding who you are at the core, embracing your values, and learning how your worldview shapes every decision you make. By now, you've done the deep work of examining your leadership worldview, investigating how it's formed, and understanding its influence on your leadership style. This is no small feat—it's the foundation for meaningful, transformative leadership.

Nelson Mandela and Mother Teresa offer powerful examples of how a strong, clear worldview can fuel leadership that transforms societies. Mandela's worldview of reconciliation and equality guided him through decades of personal suffering, yet he emerged without bitterness, focusing instead on unity and forgiveness. His leadership wasn't just about dismantling apartheid; it was about building a future where every person, regardless of race, could thrive. Similarly, Mother Teresa's worldview—rooted in seeing the divine in every human being—shaped her life of service. She didn't seek power or recognition but led through small acts of love, proving that humility and compassion can change the world.

Both leaders remind us that leadership is not about ego, control, or even the grand gestures we often associate with influence. It's about the heart behind the leadership—the worldview that drives us to act with purpose and integrity. As you continue to lead, remember that your worldview is your compass. It shapes how you respond to challenges, how you relate to your team, and how you make decisions. Aligning your leadership with your deeply held values creates not only more effective leadership but also a leadership legacy that will inspire others.

Now, as you move forward, take what you've learned and use it to refine your approach. Reflect often, seek to lead with clarity and conviction, and don't be afraid to evolve. The people you lead deserve a leader who is rooted in self-awareness and driven by values that foster connection and growth.

Thank you for committing to this journey with Leadership Spot Check. Continue pushing forward with courage and humility. Your leadership matters, and the impact you're making will resonate far beyond today. Keep leading with heart, and never stop growing. The world needs leaders like you.

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Leadership  
Styles

# 04 Leadership Spot Check

---

A Leadership Development Journey



"Your mantra is what you practice. It is the recurring thought or belief that echoes in your mind and guides your actions."

— Jay Shetty

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# Leadership Styles

## Discover

### Episode 9

## Podcast Episode Overview

We often think of leadership in binary terms: either someone is a leader, or they are not. However, leadership is fluid, and different styles emerge in different contexts. The "great man" theory, which suggests that leaders are born and not made, may not fully capture the nuances of leadership today. Modern leadership is less about inherent heroism and more about adaptability, like the contingency or situational style that adjusts based on the environment and circumstances. Leadership style is deeply personal, shaped by our personality, experiences, and the way we approach life.

For some, leadership comes naturally. Others may find themselves leading without realizing it through quiet influence and steady guidance. But all leadership styles share a common foundation: the ability to influence and guide others, whether through structured management, adaptability, or even servant leadership. In each of these styles, the leader's role is to bring out the potential in others, shaping their journey and outcomes.

As we explore different leadership styles, we are reminded that leadership is not confined to titles or positions. It is a relational process grounded in how we connect, empower, and influence those around us. Whether through transformational leadership, where individuals are inspired to reach their full potential, or servant leadership, where the leader's primary role is to serve others, every leadership style has the potential to create profound change. The question is: what style resonates with you? And how can you use it to impact those you lead?



Leadership styles can vary widely depending on the leader's personality, the team, and the situation. The goal is to help you identify which leadership style resonates with you and understand how different styles impact your leadership decisions.



## What's Your Style?

Take a look at the following 8 leadership styles and choose the top 2 that best fit you

**1. "Great Man" Style** - The "Great Man" approach to leadership believes that great leaders are born, not made. This style often portrays great leaders as heroic, mythic, and destined to rise to the leadership needed.

**2. Contingency/Situational Style** - The contingency style of leadership focuses on variables related to the environment that might determine which style of leadership is best suited for the situation.

**3. Transaction or Management Style** - Focused on supervision, organization, and group performance, this style bases leadership on a system of rewards and punishments. Managerial style is often used in business; when employees are successful, they are rewarded; when they fail, they are reprimanded or punished. Transactional leadership seeks to maintain stability rather than promote change within an organization.

**4. Adaptive Style** - Adaptive leadership focuses on followers. Adaptive leadership's primary concern is with how followers can adapt and adjust to the ever-changing circumstances they encounter.

**5. Authentic Style** - Authentic leadership is displayed in how a leader leads in four ways. When a leader is self-aware, maintains an internalized moral perspective, can balance information, and is relationally transparent, they are considered authentic. Simply put, authentic leadership is the ability of the leader to be authentic in good times and in bad.

**6. Dynamic Style** - Dynamic leadership style shifts the focus from the "way" the leader leads to focus on "who" the leader is as a person and how the follower-leader relationship evolves and grows. Dynamic leadership is the action that takes place between individuals in which a leader emerges from the group and is given power to lead the group.

**7. Transformational Style** - Leaders motivate and inspire people by helping others see the importance and value of the task. Transformational leaders don't just focus on the performance of their followers but also want to help each person reach their full potential.

**8. Servant Leadership Style** - This style is rooted in the heart of a leader. It originates in the desire to serve his or her followers. Servant leadership is a lifestyle that arises from the deep belief that the mission of a leader is to continually challenge others, to encourage them, and to give them a chance to develop their talents.

# What's Your Style?



Which leadership style do you naturally gravitate toward, and why?

Have you been led by someone using these styles? How did it impact your experience as a follower? Choose 3.

1.

2.

3.

Can you recall situations where you had to switch between different leadership styles? What prompted that switch?

## How do you lead?



Reflect on how you've applied different leadership styles in various situations or as you have matured. List a few.

1.

2.

3.

Write down specific examples where certain styles were more effective and where they were less effective.

Identify one or two leadership styles that you want to develop further and explain why.

1.

2.

# Strengths & Challenges



Identify your preferred leadership style. List 3-5 strengths and challenges of that style. Then, provide 2 ways you can mitigate the leadership challenges of that style.

LEADERSHIP STYLE:

STRENGTHS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

CHALLENGES:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

MITIGATION:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



## Leadership Styles

# Investigate

## Episode 10

## Podcast Episode Overview

Leadership is a journey, and at the heart of that journey lies a personal leadership mantra—an anchor to keep leaders grounded and focused amid the challenges they face. A mantra is more than just a statement; it is a compass, a guiding principle that embodies a leader’s core values, purpose, and vision. It serves as a mental anchor when everything else feels chaotic, pushing leaders to persevere and stay true to their path.

The process of crafting a personal leadership mantra starts with deep reflection. A leader must ask themselves, “Why do I lead? What drives me to take on the responsibility of guiding others?” This reflection helps uncover the true motivation behind leadership, whether it’s to inspire change, mentor others, or foster collaboration. Leadership is not just about managing tasks; it’s about impacting lives and shaping legacies.

A powerful mantra articulates the kind of impact they want to have on others and the legacy they hope to leave behind. Whether it’s “I will lead with integrity and inspire others to achieve their highest potential” or “I will empower others through empathy and innovation,” a well-crafted mantra encapsulates a leader’s philosophy and commitment.

**This section of the workbook breaks the mold from the others. Are you ready to write a Mantra?!**



A Leadership Mantra is a powerful, memoizable statement that embodies your leadership philosophy. It captures your purpose, values, and goals in a way that helps guide decision-making and behavior.

# 7 Steps to Create Your Leadership Mantra.

## 1. Reflect on Your Leadership Purpose.

Why do you lead? What drives you to take on leadership roles? Consider the deeper reasons behind your desire to lead. Whether it's to create positive change, mentor others, build strong teams, or inspire innovation. Don't forget to include your preferred leadership style in your thinking.

## 2. Identify Your Core Values.

Your mission statement should be rooted in your values, so don't forget your worldview statement. It will help you here. Think about what matters most to you—integrity, accountability, empathy, collaboration, excellence. These values will serve as the foundation of your leadership.

## 3. Clarify Your Long-Term Vision.

What is the larger goal or legacy you want to leave as a leader? Think about your aspirations and the mark you want to leave on your organization, team, or community. This could involve shaping culture, achieving specific outcomes, or empowering others.

## 7 Steps to Create Your Leadership Mantra.

### 4. Recognize Your Strengths.

Consider your strengths and how they influence your leadership style. Are you a visionary, a problem-solver, a motivator? How do your strengths uniquely contribute to the way you lead and the impact you want to make?

### 5. Consider Your Impact on Others.

A strong leadership mission statement reflects not only personal goals but also the effect you want to have on others. Think about how you want to inspire, guide, or empower the people you lead. Who are the people you want to serve through your leadership?

### 6. Envision Your Desired Legacy.

How do you want to be remembered as a leader? What difference do you want to make in the lives of those you lead? Consider the long-term impact of your leadership on both individuals and organizations.

## 7 Steps to Create Your Leadership Mantra.

### 7. Draft and Refine Your Mission Statement.

Combine these elements into a clear, concise statement that encapsulates your leadership philosophy, purpose, and goals. Make it specific, actionable, and meaningful to you. It should be something that motivates you and serves as a daily reminder of why you lead. Sample Structure for a Leadership Mission Statement:

**Purpose:** What drives you as a leader?

**Values:** What core principles guide your decisions?

**Impact:** What effect do you want to have on others?

**Legacy:** What lasting change do you want to create?

After you collect your thoughts write a mantra that is easy to memorize and is rooted in resolve. Consider starting your mantra with - I WILL

### Examples of Leadership Mantra Statements

"I will lead with integrity and inspire others to achieve their highest potential while fostering a culture of growth and collaboration."

"I will empower teams through empathy and innovation, driving positive change and sustainable success."

"I will cultivate an environment of trust and accountability, enabling others to excel and creating a lasting legacy of excellence and compassion."

"I will shepherd others with compassion and respect so that they can find kinship with themselves, others, and God."

**Your personal leadership mantra statement will act as a compass, helping guide your decisions, actions, and leadership journey.**

Purpose: What drives me as a leader?

Values: What core principles guide my decisions?

Impact: What effect do I want to have on others?

Legacy: What lasting change do I want to create?

My Leadership Mantra

I will



# Leadership Styles

## Reflect

### Episode 11

## Podcast Episode Overview

A leadership mantra is not just a personal affirmation; it can become a transformative force that reshapes entire organizations and movements. When rooted in authenticity and aligned with one's leadership style, a mantra becomes a powerful tool to inspire action and guide others. History offers us examples of leaders whose mantras not only defined their leadership but reshaped the world.

Winston Churchill's mantra, "Never, never, never give up," became a rallying cry for an entire nation during the darkest days of World War II. It wasn't just words—it was a call to resilience and perseverance that united a country in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. In just a few words, Churchill captured the essence of his leadership philosophy: unwavering determination in the face of adversity. His mantra galvanized the British people, giving them the strength to endure and ultimately triumph.

Similarly, Gandhi's mantra, "Be the change you wish to see in the world," encapsulated his philosophy of nonviolent resistance and self-transformation. Gandhi believed that true change began within the individual, and his leadership reflected this belief. By embodying the values of peace, justice, and equality, Gandhi led a movement that not only liberated India from colonial rule but also inspired global movements for civil rights and social justice. His mantra became more than just a personal guiding principle—it became a call to action for millions.

These examples show that when leaders anchor themselves in a clear and meaningful mantra, they can inspire profound change. A leadership mantra is not just about personal motivation; it is about creating a shared vision that others can rally around.



Great leaders often operate from guiding principles or mantras that encapsulate their leadership style and philosophy.

## Historical Mantras



Share your mantra with a trusted colleague or friend for feedback. Ask them which mantra they believe best reflects your leadership style. What was their feedback?

Refine your mantra based on this feedback and your own reflections. Write it down and keep it somewhere visible to remind yourself daily.



## Mantra Immersion Challenge

Over the course of one week, intentionally apply your mantra in different leadership situations.

For example: When making decisions, ask yourself: Does this align with my mantra? During moments of stress or challenge, repeat your mantra to stay grounded.

How did it go?

Before meetings or presentations, center yourself with your mantra to ensure your leadership style shines through. At the end of the week, journal about specific moments where your mantra influenced your actions and how it felt to use it. What changed in your mindset or interactions?



## Mantra as a Leadership Tool for Team Transformation

1. Select a key team or department you lead and introduce the concept of personal leadership mantras. Encourage each member to develop their own mantra that reflects their personal leadership style.
2. Facilitate a team-building session where each person shares their mantra and explains its significance. Discuss how these individual mantras align with the team's goals and collective vision.
3. Over the next month, track how incorporating personal mantras influences team dynamics, collaboration, and problem-solving. Reflect on how your leadership mantra contributes to fostering a shared sense of purpose and cohesion.

---

## Spot Check

Leadership is a continuous evolution, not a destination. Each of the leadership styles you explored—whether transformational, authentic, or servant leadership—offers unique strengths and challenges. The key takeaway is that no one style fits all situations. Effective leaders adapt, grow, and remain open to change, allowing their leadership to be shaped by the needs of their teams, circumstances, and their own growth.

Your leadership mantra acts as a compass, grounding you during the inevitable highs and lows of leadership. It's more than just a statement—it reflects your core values, purpose, and the legacy you wish to leave behind. It serves as both an anchor in turbulent times and a rallying cry during moments of clarity and inspiration. As you continue to apply your leadership mantra in real-world settings, it will further solidify your leadership identity and help guide your actions with purpose and integrity.

Remember, leadership is not about perfection but progression. It's about fostering relationships, building trust, and creating environments where others can thrive. Your ability to inspire, guide, and influence others is rooted in your willingness to lead with empathy, authenticity, and a commitment to continual growth.

As you move forward, continue reflecting on your leadership mantra. Embrace feedback, remain adaptable, and always lead with intention. By staying true to your values and your leadership mantra, you will not only grow as a leader but also help others realize their potential. Leadership is not a solitary endeavor; it's a collective journey. And as you grow, so will those you lead.

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# 05 Leadership Spot Check

A Leadership Development Journey



“Leadership is the ability to anticipate the inevitable and turn it to advantage.”

– William McFee

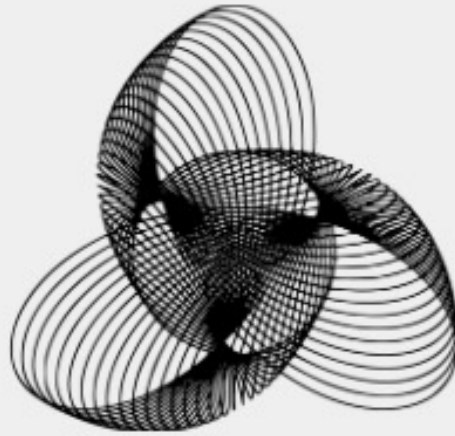
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# **LEADERSHIP**

FORESIGHT

Discover

Episode 12

## Podcast Episode Overview

Leadership is not just about reacting to the present but anticipating the future. To be truly effective, a leader must be "future smart," a mindset that combines desire, insight, and preparation to navigate the challenges ahead. Being future-smart means more than just daydreaming about possibilities; it requires an active pursuit of foresight. Robert Frost's poem, *The Road Not Taken*, beautifully illustrates this concept. Like the road less traveled, future smart leadership calls us to make bold, unconventional decisions that set us apart from the norm.

A future smart leader possesses three key qualities: desire, insight, and preparation. The desire to look beyond what's immediately visible is essential for those who wish to lead with vision. Insight involves recognizing trends and understanding how today's actions will shape tomorrow's outcomes. Preparation is the final step, ensuring that we are ready to adapt to whatever comes our way.

Most of us are already practicing future-smart leadership without realizing it. Every time we invest in personal growth, plan for long-term success or prepare our teams for future challenges, we are setting ourselves on a future-smart path. But to truly embrace this mindset, we must cultivate the traits of an explorer, pioneer, disruptor, and futurist. An explorer looks into the unknown, a pioneer opens new ways of thinking, a disruptor challenges the status quo, and a futurist anticipates and prepares for possible futures.

These traits are not just abstract concepts; they are actionable qualities that enable leaders to navigate the complexities of an ever-changing world. By embracing future smart leadership, we can move beyond merely reacting to events and start shaping the future. It's a continuous, disciplined process that helps us make decisions today that will define tomorrow's successes. Are you ready to step onto the road less traveled?



Being future-smart means having the desire, insight, and preparation to face future challenges head-on. This requires proactive planning and the ability to anticipate trends and shifts that could impact your leadership environment.

## Traits of a Future-Smart Leader



There are 4 traits of a Future-smart leader. Reflect on each of these traits. Using a scale 1-5 rate your current comfort level with each trait. Then explain why.

**Explorers:** Explorers are leaders who travel into the unknown for the sake of discovery. Future-smart leaders actively look into the unknown to anticipate what's coming.

My comfort level \_\_\_\_\_

That is because

**Pioneers:** Pioneers open new ways of seeing situations and events. Future-smart leaders help their teams and clients recognize the possibilities of the future and embrace new perspectives.

My comfort level \_\_\_\_\_

That is because

**Disrupters:** Disrupters challenge the status quo to make way for something new. Future-smart leaders don't shy away from uncomfortable decisions if they promote movement and progress.

My comfort level \_\_\_\_\_

That is because

**Futurists:** Futurists are trend researchers who help identify possible futures. Future-smart leaders use trends and data to point people toward potential futures and prepare them accordingly

My comfort level \_\_\_\_\_

That is because

# Tools for Developing Future-Smart Leadership



Get familiar with the Future-Smart tools. Then answer the questions below.

**Framing:** Identifying the right problem the future holds. This helps leaders gain clarity about which challenges and questions they need to address for the future.

**Scanning:** Collecting data from the past to face future challenges. Use trend reports, emerging technologies, and social patterns to inform strategic decision-making.

**Forecasting:** Describing a variety of alternatives and choices for the future. Rather than predicting one outcome, create multiple scenarios based on current trends.

**Visioning:** Choosing a preferred course of action to address the future. Encourage leaders to imagine their preferred future and align their strategies accordingly.

**Planning:** Organizing and preparing to face the future. Set flexible plans that adapt to changing information and circumstances.

**Acting:** Stepping into the future by taking concrete actions. Leaders need to make small, early moves based on their foresight rather than waiting for certainty.

Write down three areas in your leadership where you feel the most desire to prepare for the future.

1.

2.

3.

Reflect on what excites or challenges you about these areas and why they are important for your leadership growth.

# Apply Future-Smart Thinking To Your Leadership



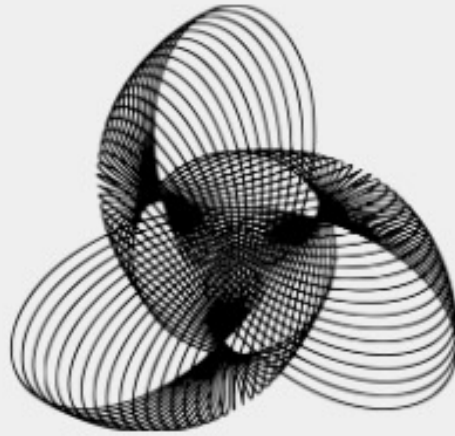
Reflect on one area in your leadership where you can apply future-smart thinking.

For example:

A small café owner **notices** that more customers are asking for plant-based and gluten-free options. They **scan** their sales data and customer feedback to confirm that demand for healthier food choices is growing. In **forecasting**, they consider different possibilities: a steady increase in health-conscious customers or a temporary trend that might fade.

To get started, they **envision** a future where their café becomes known for offering a wide variety of healthy options. They **plan** to add a few plant-based and gluten-free meals to their menu and sourcing new ingredients that are adaptable. **Acting** on this, they could start small by introducing a weekly special that features a healthy dish, testing customer interest, and gathering feedback.

Ok, it's your turn. This can feel overwhelming or intimidating but give it a go and see what happens.



# **LEADERSHIP**

FORESIGHT

## Investigate

Episode 13

## Podcast Episode Overview

The future wheel is an advanced leadership tool that allows us to anticipate the ripple effects of our decisions. It helps leaders stress-test their leadership mantra by mapping out the potential consequences—both positive and negative—of their actions. Developed by Jerome Glenn, the futures wheel is not just a method for predicting what might happen but a way to explore various scenarios so we can adapt with agility and resilience.

At the center of the futures wheel is YOUR leadership mantra (see Part 4) a guiding principle that defines who you are and what we hope to achieve as a leader. From this core, we draw out first-order consequences—immediate impacts of our leadership decisions. These consequences lead to second-order effects, which take us further into the future, and even third-order effects, which push us into more distant, less predictable outcomes. This layered approach provides a more comprehensive view of how your leadership decisions might play out over time.

For example, if a leader's mantra is "I will empower teams through innovation and collaboration," the first-order consequence might be higher team morale and increased creativity. But second-order effects could include over-collaboration that slows down decision-making or an increase in risky, impractical ideas. By examining these outcomes, leaders can identify both the opportunities and challenges they may face, allowing them to adjust their leadership strategies accordingly.

The futures wheel gives leaders a clear, visual map of how their decisions may influence the future. It allows us to plan not just for the immediate impacts of our leadership but for the long-term effects that may not be immediately apparent. In doing so, we become more intentional, adaptable, and proactive, setting ourselves and our teams up for long-term success.

**This section breaks the mold of the other parts. Are you ready to create a futures wheel?**



The Futures Wheel is a visual tool that maps out the ripple effects of decisions over time. By placing your leadership mantra at the center and mapping out first, second, and third-order consequences, you can stress-test your mantra and ensure its resilience in future challenges.

## Directions for Creating a Futures Wheel

The future wheel is an advanced leadership tool that allows us to anticipate the ripple effects of our decisions. Starting from the core or center, we draw out first-order consequences—immediate impacts of our leadership decisions. These consequences lead to second-order effects, which take us further into the future, and even third-order effects, which push us into more distant, less predictable outcomes.

For this section, we are going to focus on creating a futures wheel centered around the leadership mantra you created in Part 4.

The purpose of this exercise is to **stress-test your leadership mantra** by examining how it might play out in various future scenarios.

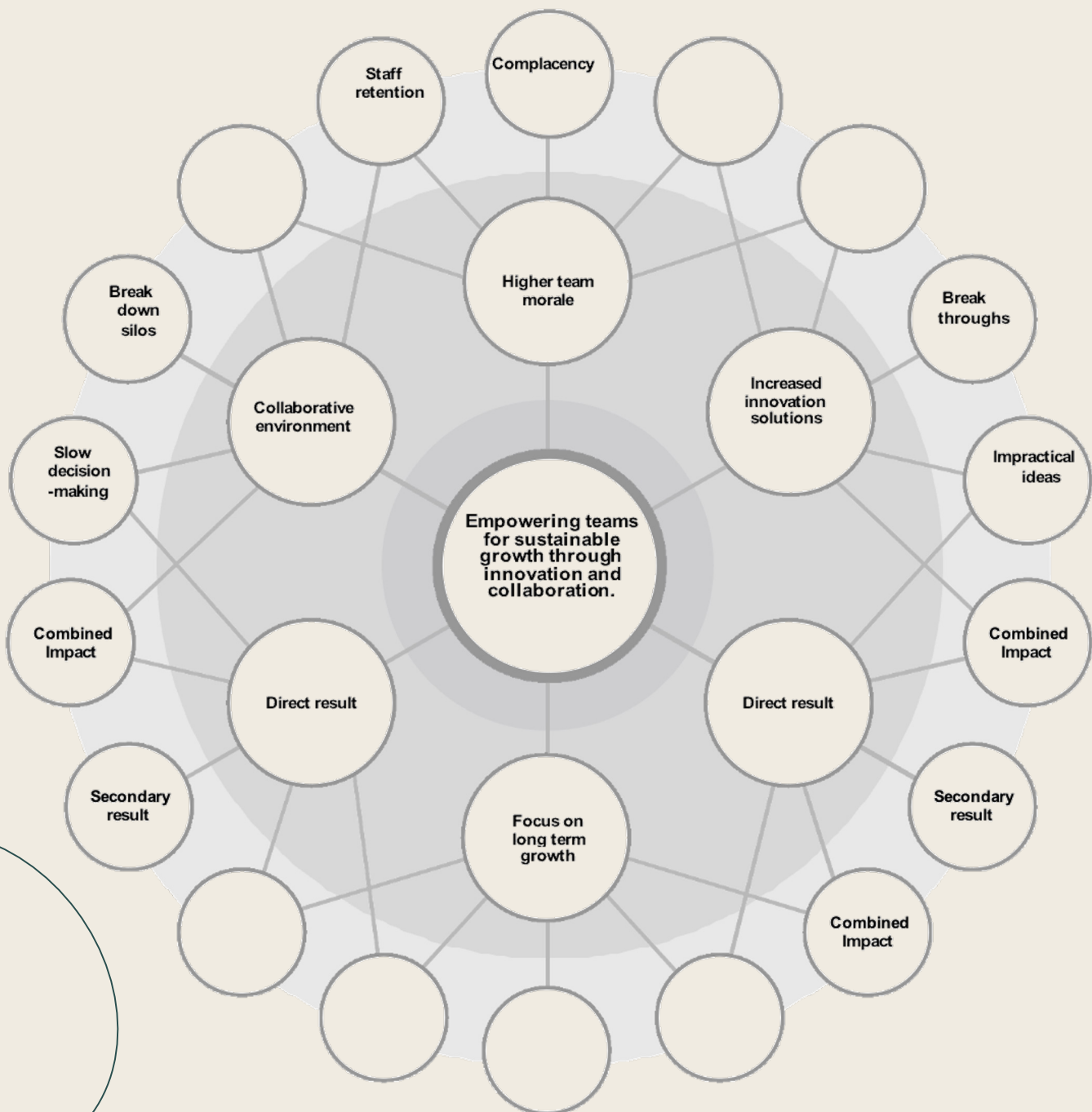
By doing this, you'll be better equipped to plan ahead and maintain effective leadership in any situation you may face.

### Directions

1. Start by writing your leadership mantra in the center of the wheel.
2. Draw lines outward to represent first-order consequences (both positive and negative).
3. Expand on these consequences with second and third-order effects.
4. Reflect on the outcomes. Are there any unexpected consequences that concern you?

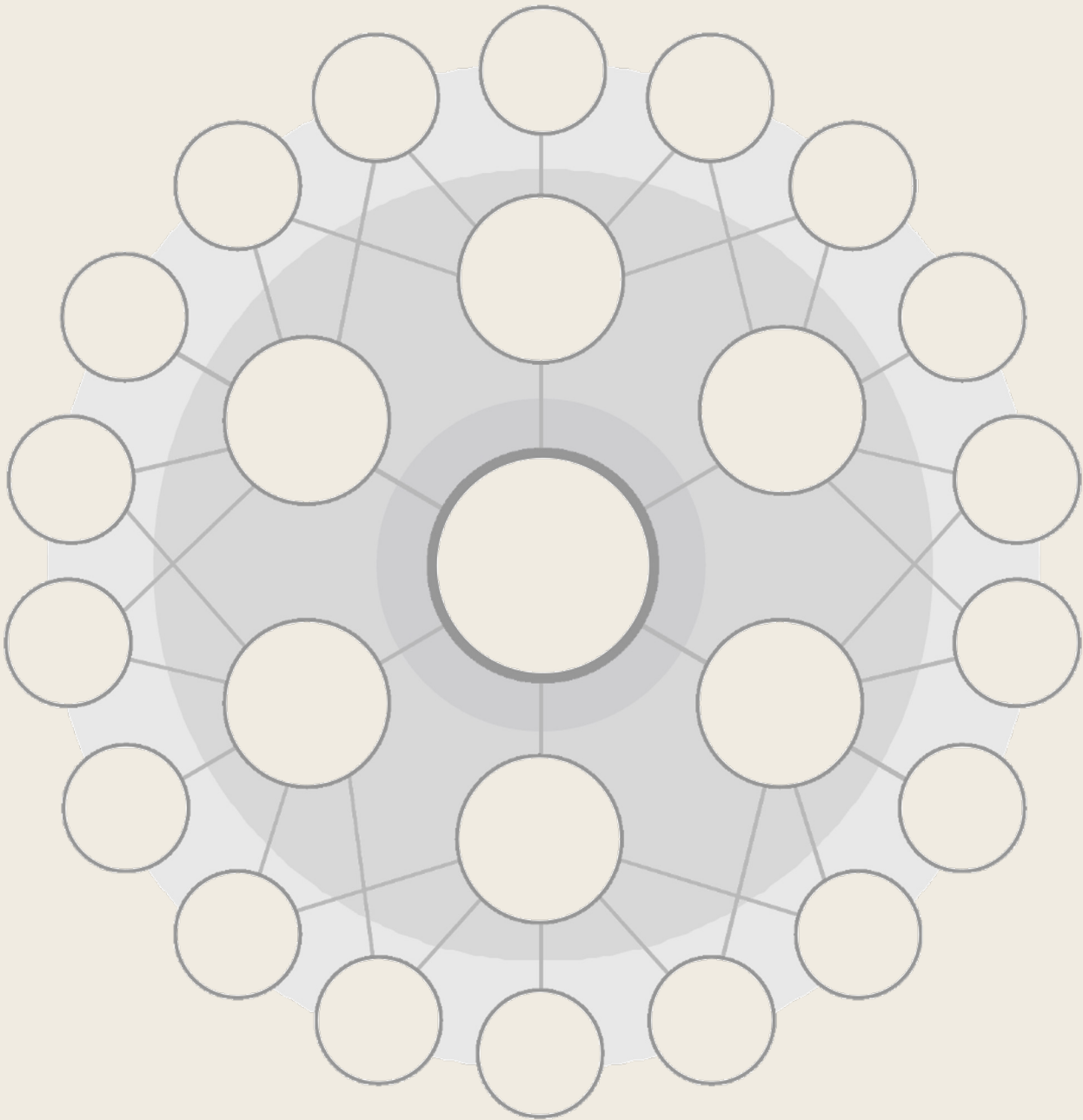
## Example

Below is a visual example of a futures wheel using the mantra – “Empowering teams for sustainable growth through innovation and collaboration.”



Note: This example does not have 3<sup>rd</sup> order effects.

**Your Mantra Futures Wheel**



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## Directions: Analyze Your Results

As you created your Futures Wheel, you'll notice both positive and negative outcomes. The goal isn't just to foresee potential challenges but to learn how to balance them effectively. The Futures Wheel helps you anticipate these challenges, giving you the opportunity to adjust your leadership approach before they become issues.

Now, it's time to analyze your Futures Wheel:

Choose one first-order consequence from your Futures Wheel and develop a scenario where that consequence becomes a significant challenge.

Write down the steps you would take to address or mitigate the issue before it escalates.

Select one negative consequence from the second or third order.

Develop a proactive strategy to manage or mitigate that consequence before it becomes a major issue.

How can you strengthen your leadership mantra to remain resilient in this situation?

### Example from Futures Wheel

First-order consequence: Fostering innovation leads to an increased risk of failure.

Scenario: Your organization encourages innovation, but some of the initiatives fail, leading to wasted resources and decreasing team morale. The fear of failure starts to hinder creativity, slowing down progress and impacting overall team performance.

Steps to address or mitigate the issue before it escalates:

Step 1: Implement a "fail-fast" approach, where small-scale, low-cost experiments are encouraged. This allows teams to test new ideas quickly, learn from mistakes, and make improvements without significant loss or impact on the broader organization.

Step 2: Create a culture that views failure as a learning opportunity. Recognize and celebrate lessons learned from failed experiments. By making failure part of the innovation process, you reduce the fear of mistakes, which encourages continued creativity and forward momentum.

Step 3: Establish clear risk management protocols, such as frequent feedback loops and agile workflows. These structures will guide innovation, ensuring that failures are quickly identified and adjustments are made before they escalate into bigger problems.

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## Analyze Your Results

Choose one first-order and one second-order consequence from your Futures Wheel and develop a scenario where that consequence becomes a significant challenge.

First-order consequence:

Scenario:

Write down the steps you would take to address or mitigate the issue before it escalates.

Step 1.

Step 2.

Step 3.

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## Analyze Your Results

Second order consequence:

Scenario:

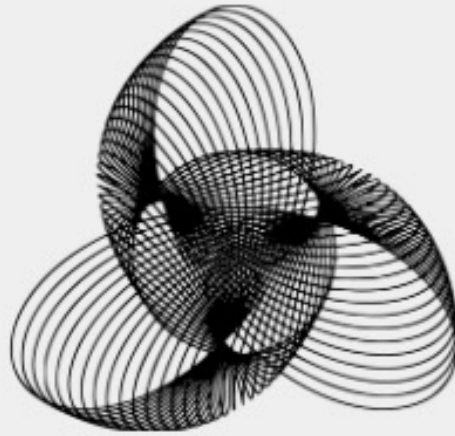
Write down the steps you would take to address or mitigate the issue before it escalates.

Step 1.

Step 2.

Step 3.

---



# **LEADERSHIP**

FORESIGHT

Reflect

Episode 14

## Podcast Episode Overview

Reflecting on what it means to be future smart, we can draw valuable lessons from companies like Netflix and Patagonia—organizations that have successfully adapted to the future by staying ahead of trends. Netflix, once a DVD rental service, foresaw the shift to digital streaming long before the infrastructure for such a transition was fully developed. By anticipating the move to on-demand entertainment, Netflix disrupted its own business model before anyone else could, positioning itself as a leader in the streaming world.

Patagonia, a major clothing brand, also exemplifies future smart thinking. From the beginning, Patagonia aligned its business model with environmental sustainability, recognizing early on that consumers would increasingly value products that minimized environmental impact. Their forward-thinking approach to sustainability, such as the worn-wear program that encourages customers to repair rather than replace their products, has set the company apart in the world of fast fashion. Patagonia's commitment to sustainability and transparency has made it a pioneer in ethical business practices.

These examples highlight the power of being proactive rather than reactive. Leaders who scan for emerging trends, act early, and align their business strategies with long-term goals are better equipped to navigate uncertainty. The key takeaway is that future smart leadership isn't about waiting for change to happen—it's about anticipating change and preparing for it.

By embracing foresight, adaptability, and innovation, leaders can position themselves to lead with confidence in an unpredictable world. Like Netflix and Patagonia, future smart leaders act with intention, using their insights to guide their teams and organizations through both challenges and opportunities. What trends do you see emerging in your leadership field, and how can you begin to prepare for the future today?



Future-smart leadership is forward-thinking, based on desire, insight, and preparation to guide organizations through inevitable changes. Netflix and Patagonia exemplify this approach by proactively preparing for the future and adapting to market demands and environmental shifts.



## Emerging Trends

How can the future-smart leadership examples of Netflix and Patagonia influence your approach to leadership?

What emerging trends in your industry or organization might impact your future decisions?

What proactive steps can you take to ensure your leadership remains adaptable to future challenges? How does your mantra play a role in this?

Just like Netflix and Patagonia, think of one way you can disrupt your own leadership or business model before external forces do.

Are there any tweaks you need/want to make to your leadership mantra so that you remain resilient in the future?

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## Spot Check

In concluding the Future Smart section of your leadership journey, it's important to celebrate how far you've come while looking ahead with optimism and confidence. Leadership isn't just about managing the present—it's about shaping the future. The insights you've gained in this section are key to becoming the kind of leader who doesn't just react to change but anticipates and navigates it with purpose and foresight.

Being "future smart" is a mindset that will serve you well in every aspect of leadership. It's about having the courage to explore new ideas, the vision to see beyond current trends, and the strength to challenge the status quo when necessary. The traits of an explorer, pioneer, disruptor, and futurist are not just concepts—they are qualities you've begun to embody, and they will guide you as you continue your leadership journey.

The futures wheel you've explored is a powerful tool, helping you visualize how your decisions today can shape outcomes tomorrow. It allows you to plan with confidence, knowing that you've thought through the potential ripple effects of your leadership choices. This proactive approach equips you to lead with agility and resilience, empowering both yourself and your team to thrive in the face of uncertainty.

As you move forward, take pride in the fact that you are now better equipped to lead with vision, adaptability, and strength. The future may hold challenges, but you are prepared to face them head-on. Keep leaning into your leadership mantra—it will keep you grounded in your values and remind you of the impact you're striving to make.

You've already proven that you're not a leader who waits for change—you create it. Embrace the future with confidence, knowing that you have the tools, insight, and passion to lead your team into new and exciting possibilities. The road ahead is full of potential, and you are more than ready to step boldly into it

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# 06 Leadership Spot Check

A Leadership Development Journey



"The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime."

— Babe Ruth

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# This section breaks the mold

This part (part 6) of the Leadership Spot Check workbook is different in length and subject matter from other sections you may have encountered. It serves as an overview of the three key power skills—communication, emotional intelligence (EQ), and active listening—without diving into extensive details or complex exercises. The purpose is to introduce these essential skills in a concise manner while still providing reflective questions that prompt self-assessment and awareness.

Unlike the other in-depth leadership spot check workbooks that you are familiar with, this version is streamlined, offering a more compact reflection and discussion on these topics. The brevity makes it ideal for leaders who are looking for a quick yet impactful way to assess and begin improving their power skills. It's intended to provide immediate value and act as a starting point for deeper exploration.

Additionally, I am available to conduct workshops on these power skills, where we can explore these concepts in much more depth. These workshops can offer hands-on learning opportunities, practical strategies, and real-time feedback, allowing you and your team to apply these skills more effectively in your leadership roles.

Looking ahead, in the summer of 2025, I will be releasing a more comprehensive series of workbooks, each dedicated to one of the power skills—communication, emotional intelligence, and active listening. These in-depth workbooks will provide extensive exercises, examples, and case studies, offering a complete guide to mastering these critical leadership abilities.

If you're interested in learning more or scheduling a workshop, please reach out, and I look forward to partnering with you on your leadership journey.

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**POWER**  
SKILLS

# What are Power Skills

Episode 15

## Podcast Episode Overview

Power skills—once referred to as soft skills—are now recognized as the key differentiator for effective leadership. Hard skills, such as technical knowledge and expertise, are essential, but they are no longer enough. Power skills like communication, empathy, and emotional intelligence are what separate good leaders from great ones. These skills enable leaders to navigate complex human dynamics, build strong relationships, and inspire teams to succeed.

In today's leadership landscape, power skills are becoming increasingly critical. Research shows that 91% of employers prefer leaders with strong power skills over those with just technical expertise. This shift reflects the growing recognition that leadership is not just about managing tasks but about leading people. Leaders who master these skills create environments where trust, collaboration, and innovation thrive, setting the stage for long-term success.

By understanding and developing power skills, leaders can balance technical proficiency with emotional and relational intelligence, making them more effective in driving both performance and people.



**Hard Skills vs. Power Skills:** Hard skills are technical and measurable, while power skills, often intangible, are essential for navigating relationships and team dynamics.

## What Are Your Skills?

Hard skills are those technical, job-specific abilities that you typically learn through education, training, or certification.

Power skills—sometimes still called 'soft skills'—are different. These include abilities like communication, active listening, emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, adaptability, and so much more. While they're harder to measure and often seen as more intangible, power skills are increasingly being recognized as critical to success, especially in leadership roles.

Think of it this way, while hard skills might get you in the door or qualify you for a specific role, it's your power skills that will keep you there and help you rise to greater leadership responsibility. A leader can be technically brilliant but fail miserably if they lack the ability to connect with, inspire, and lead their team.

### Reflection Questions

What are some of the hard skills and power skills that you excel in as a leader? Try to identify 3 each.

Think of a time when you faced a leadership challenge. Did you rely more on hard skills or power skills to solve it? How did it affect the outcome?

Reflect on your current leadership role. Are there any power skills you think you need to develop further?

What is one area of your communication, listening, and emotions that you believe could be improved to build stronger relationships with your team?



PUBLIC SPEAKING

# The Art of Communication

Episode 16

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## Podcast Episode Overview

Communication is one of the most powerful tools a leader can wield, yet it is often misunderstood. Effective communication is not just about speaking but about ensuring that what is spoken is heard, understood, and acted upon. At its core, communication is the exchange of thoughts, messages, or information, but its complexity lies in how it's delivered and received. Research shows that the majority of communication is non-verbal—our body language, tone, and gestures often speak louder than our words. A leader may say one thing, but if their posture, facial expressions, or tone contradict their message, the impact can be entirely different.

In leadership, communication can take on various forms: verbal, non-verbal, and written. The key to mastering communication is recognizing that clarity, listening, and mutual understanding are foundational elements. Leaders must be intentional about their tone, body language, and even how they present themselves because each of these communicates something to the team, whether intended or not. For instance, a leader may say, "I'm excited about this project," but if their arms are crossed, their tone flat, and they avoid eye contact, the team may interpret it as disinterest.

Communication barriers—such as assumptions, expectations, and information overload—complicate this process even further. A leader must navigate these barriers by being self-aware, engaging in active listening, and ensuring their message is clear and respectful. By understanding these dynamics, a leader can transform their communication from simply delivering information to inspiring action and building trust.



Communication is the exchange of thoughts, messages, or information, both verbal and nonverbal. It is the foundation of leadership, as it helps leaders connect with their teams, build relationships, and achieve goals. Effective leaders master not only what they say but also how their words are understood and acted upon.



"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place."

— George Bernard Shaw

# Communication Breakdowns

There are three specific causes of communication breakdowns.

**Expectations:** The assumption that people understand things the same way we do, which can lead to missed cues or misaligned goals.

**Probing or Fixing:** Sometimes, we jump into problem-solving mode before we fully understand the issue.

**Information Overload:** Bombarding someone with too much information at once makes it hard for them to process the key points.

## Reflection Questions

Which communication breakdown do you think you cause? Come on, be honest; we all have them.

What can you do to mitigate this breakdown?

# Communication Styles

There are four “typical” communication styles. Which one are you?

**1. Aggressive** communicators dominate conversations. They often interrupt, speak loudly, and are more focused on winning than understanding.

**2. Passive** communicators avoid conflict at all costs. They tend to stay quiet, agree to things they don’t believe in, and let others make decisions for them.

**3. Assertive** communicators strike the perfect balance. Assertive communicators are confident, clear, and respectful. They express their thoughts and needs without overpowering others or staying silent.

**4. Passive-aggressive** communicators express frustration indirectly. They avoid confrontation but use sarcasm, subtle criticism, or delays to show displeasure. This behavior creates confusion and tension, as their actions undermine open, honest communication.

**Example: Imagine you’re working on a project, and a coworker misses a deadline.**

Aggressive - “You’re always late! You’ve messed everything up!”

Passive - say nothing, quietly pick up the slack and fume in silence.

Assertive - “I noticed the deadline was missed. Can we discuss what happened and how we can make sure we stay on track in the future?”

Passive-aggressive - “Oh, I guess deadlines aren’t really important to everyone. I’ll just finish it myself—again.”

**So which one is your typical go to and how does this affect your leadership?**

Write a response: You need to ask a team member to come in to collaborate in person on a project, but they push back and say, “I’ll do it over zoom”.

Aggressive

Passive

Assertive

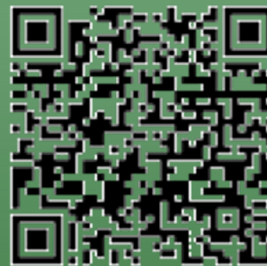
Passive-aggressive



# Paying Attention to Others

Episode 17

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## Podcast Episode Overview

Active listening is more than just hearing words; it's about engaging fully with the speaker to understand not only their message but the emotions and context behind it. As leaders, we often fall into the trap of "listening to respond" rather than "listening to understand." Steven Covey's quote encapsulates this: "Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply." This approach creates disconnection and frustration, leading to poor decision-making and misaligned goals.

Active listening is a relational skill that requires leaders to focus entirely on the speaker, putting aside their own thoughts and responses to truly absorb the other person's perspective. It's about listening beyond words—paying attention to body language, tone, and what is left unsaid. Leaders who master this skill build stronger, more trusting relationships and foster an environment where their team feels heard and valued.

One practical aspect of active listening is reflecting back on what you hear. Phrases like, "So what I'm hearing is..." help clarify understanding and show the speaker that their message is being received. Additionally, active listeners ask open-ended, powerful questions that encourage deeper reflection from the speaker, guiding them to their own solutions rather than imposing answers.

By practicing active listening, leaders can better understand the needs, concerns, and aspirations of their teams, which builds trust, opens the door to more honest conversations, and aligns team efforts with a shared vision.



Active listening is a power skill that allows leaders to better understand and connect with their team members. It's not just about waiting to respond but about focusing on the speaker's agenda, emotions, and body language.



"The biggest communication problem is we do not listen to understand. We listen to reply."

– Stephen R. Covey

## Guiding Principles to Active Listening

Active listening is more than just hearing words—it's about being fully present and engaged in the conversation. It involves understanding both spoken and unspoken messages, asking insightful questions, and creating meaningful connections with others. Consider the four guiding principles and then reflect using the questions below.

**1. Active Listening:** Immersing yourself in the other person's agenda, listening beyond words, and focusing on their emotions and unspoken cues.

**2. Powerful Questions:** Asking open-ended questions that encourage reflection, insight, and discovery rather than providing solutions.

**3. Direct Communication:** Communicating clearly and respectfully while reframing situations to promote positive perspectives.

**4. Creating Awareness:** Guiding others to step back, look at the bigger picture, and explore emotions and new perspectives.

When was the last time you truly listened without preparing a response? What did you learn about the other person in that moment?

How can you shift from offering solutions to asking more insightful, open-ended questions in your leadership?

Reflect on a recent conversation where you struggled to communicate clearly. How might direct but compassionate communication have changed the outcome?

How do you currently create awareness in others, and what new strategies can you adopt to help them gain a broader perspective on their challenges?



**EMOTIONAL**

INTELLIGENCE

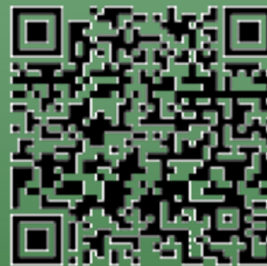
Responding

vs.

Reacting

Episode 18

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## Podcast Episode Overview

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is the power skill that underpins nearly every other leadership ability. It's the capacity to recognize, understand, and manage your own emotions while also perceiving and influencing the emotions of others. Research shows that leaders with high EQ outperform those with strong technical skills alone because they can navigate the complexities of human behavior, manage conflict, and inspire their teams more effectively.

EQ is divided into four key competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Self-awareness is the ability to recognize your emotions as they arise and understand their impact on your behavior and decisions. Self-management is about controlling those emotions, especially under pressure, and responding thoughtfully rather than reacting impulsively. Social awareness involves empathy—understanding the emotions and needs of others—which is crucial for building trust and connection. Finally, relationship management is about using emotional insight to guide interactions, resolve conflicts, and foster collaboration.

Leaders with high emotional intelligence not only navigate difficult situations with grace but also create an environment where their teams feel valued, heard, and motivated. Whether managing stress or fostering team collaboration, EQ allows leaders to balance logic with empathy, creating stronger, more resilient teams.



Emotional intelligence (EQ) is a crucial leadership skill that allows leaders to recognize, understand, and manage their own emotions while being attuned to the emotions of others. Leaders with high emotional intelligence can build stronger relationships, make better decisions, and foster a positive team environment.



"Feelings are much like waves; we can't stop them from coming, but we can choose which one to surf."

— Jonatan Mårtensson

## Emotional Intelligence Inventory Directions

On the next page is an Emotional Intelligence worksheet. Using the questions below fill out the appropriate quadrant for each EQ competency.

<p><b>Self-Awareness</b></p> <p>What emotions do you feel most often, and how do they impact your actions?</p> <p>What triggers strong emotions in you?</p>	<p><b>Self-Management</b></p> <p>What helps you stay calm when you're stressed or frustrated?</p> <p>How can you pause before reacting in tough situations?</p>
<p><b>Social Awareness</b></p> <p>How can you be a better listener in conversations?</p> <p>What non-verbal cues do you need to pay more attention to?</p>	<p><b>Relationship Management</b></p> <p>How can you handle conflict more calmly and respectfully?</p> <p>What's one thing you can do to build trust with others?</p>

# Emotional Intelligence Inventory

**Self-awareness** is your ability to recognize your emotions as they happen. It's knowing what you're feeling and why you're feeling it.

**Self-management** is about controlling your emotional reactions, especially when under pressure.


**Social awareness** is the ability to understand and empathize with the emotions of others. It's about picking up on social cues, body language, and even unspoken feelings.

**Relationship management** is where all the other skills come together. It's about using your emotional awareness — both self and social — to manage interactions successfully.

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## Spot Check

As we wrap up this exploration of power skills, it's essential to reflect on how communication, active listening, and emotional intelligence shape effective leadership.

First, communication stands as one of the most powerful tools a leader possesses. It's not just about delivering information but ensuring your message is clear, understood, and acted upon. Effective communication builds trust and alignment, laying the groundwork for meaningful connections. Whether it's a one-on-one conversation or addressing an entire team, the way you communicate determines how others perceive your vision and goals. Clarity, intentionality, and empathy in communication are what turn simple messages into powerful calls to action.

Next, active listening is equally critical. It's more than just hearing words—it's about being fully engaged in the conversation, understanding the emotions behind the words, and creating a space where the other person feels truly heard. As a leader, listening without the intent to respond immediately allows you to grasp the deeper needs and perspectives of your team. By practicing active listening, you foster trust, encourage collaboration, and unlock the potential for greater innovation and problem-solving.

Lastly, emotional intelligence ties everything together. The four key components—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management—equip leaders to navigate the emotional complexities of both themselves and their teams. Leaders who are emotionally intelligent can handle stress, resolve conflicts, and motivate others with greater empathy. It's the ability to understand and manage your own emotions while also tuning in to the emotions of others that truly sets great leaders apart.

Incorporating these skills into your leadership approach ensures that you not only manage tasks effectively but also lead people with authenticity, empathy, and integrity. Leadership is a continual journey of growth and reflection. By refining your communication, active listening, and emotional intelligence, you can inspire others, build stronger relationships, and foster environments where teams flourish and succeed. Stay committed to improving these skills, and your leadership will leave a lasting impact.

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# 07 Leadership Spot Check

A Leadership Development Journey



“Check yourself before you wreck  
yourself.”

— Ice Cube

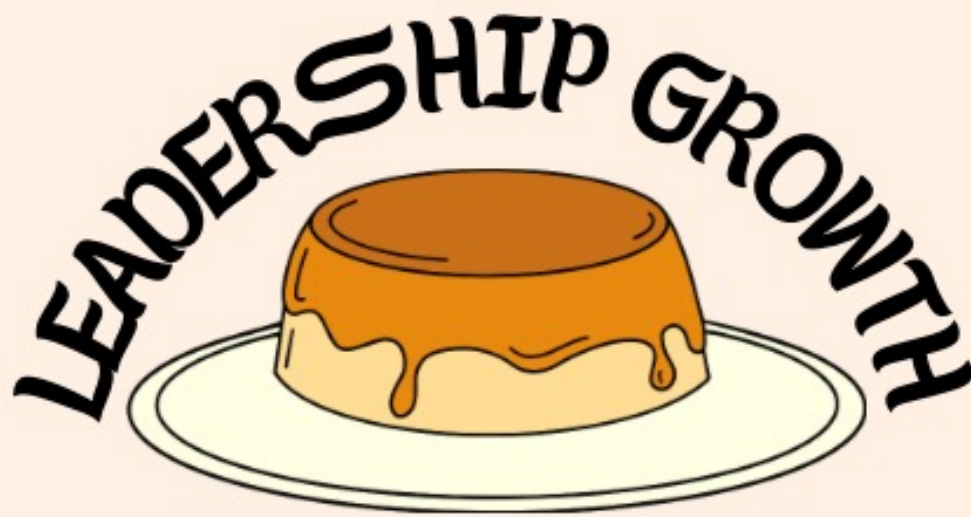
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Take care of yourself

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Episode 19

## Podcast Episode Overview

Leadership maintenance is not just about strategy or charisma; it's an ongoing journey that requires consistent attention to one's inner life. Leadership isn't a one-time accomplishment—it is an evolving practice of learning and self-refinement, grounded in integrity and authenticity.

Effective leadership begins with self-leadership. Before influencing others, a leader must manage their own internal dialogue—the competing emotions, ambitions, and doubts that arise. Leadership calls for discerning which inner voices to heed and which to silence. This inner work forms the foundation for leading with clarity, courage, and authenticity.

Integrity is at the heart of leadership. It is not about perfection but alignment—being the same person in private as in public. Integrity builds trust, and trust is the most valuable currency a leader possesses. Without it, leadership crumbles. Maintaining integrity requires constant vigilance, especially in the smallest decisions.

Leadership demands continual learning and adapting. The world changes constantly, and so must leaders. Embracing discomfort is key, as the moments that stretch us often lead to the greatest personal and professional growth.

Finally, leadership is inherently relational. It's about more than achieving goals—it's about building meaningful connections. Leaders who neglect relationships risk burnout, isolation, and disconnection. Investing in emotional health and nurturing relationships helps create a supportive environment, both for oneself and those being led. Leadership, ultimately, reflects the deepest parts of the leader's character and values.



True leadership begins with the inner journey of self-leadership. The journey involves learning to balance the different voices inside yourself, choosing integrity as your foundation, committing to lifelong growth, and nurturing authentic relationships.

## It starts with you



Leadership begins with learning to lead what I like to call your "internal family." This family is made up of all the parts of you—your past experiences, your ambitions, your doubts, your strengths. At any given moment, different parts of that internal family will try to take the lead. There's the encouraging voice that says, "You can do this," and then there's the quieter, more doubtful one that whispers, "It's too hard."

True leadership starts with understanding and leading these inner voices, aligning them with your core values. Integrity becomes your internal compass, guiding you when no one is watching. It requires consistency and vigilance. Leadership also demands lifelong growth—a commitment to stay curious and adaptable in an ever-changing world. Above all, leadership is about relationships. The people you lead aren't just part of the role—they are the heart of the journey, requiring your care and attention.

**Self-Leadership:** What inner voices are leading your decisions right now? Are they guiding you toward the leader you want to become, or are they pulling you back into old patterns?

**Integrity:** Are there areas in your leadership where you feel out of alignment with your core values? How does this misalignment affect your leadership?

**Growth:** When was the last time you stepped out of your comfort zone to grow as a leader? How can you embrace discomfort to expand your leadership skills?

**Relationships:** How are you nurturing your emotional health in your leadership relationships? Are you leading from a place of authenticity and connection, or are you simply managing tasks?

# Integrity Voices



**Self-Leadership Reflection:** Spend 10 minutes identifying the different "voices" in your inner world—the ambitious voice, the doubting voice, the fearful voice. Which voice has been most dominant in your leadership recently? Write down one way you can amplify the voice that aligns with your leadership goals (e.g., the voice of courage or integrity) and one that gets you off track (e.g., the voice of fear or pride).

**Integrity Check:** Think of a recent decision or action where you felt out of sync with your values. Reflect on what led to that decision and how it impacted your leadership. Then, write down your leadership mantra (part 4) to remind yourself of your commitment to integrity.

## Growth Challenge



Identify one area in your leadership where you feel stagnant. It might be a skill you've neglected, a new technology you haven't embraced, or a part of yourself you haven't explored.

Commit to learning something new in this area over the next month. Set a specific goal (e.g., read a book, take a course, or seek feedback from a mentor) and plan regular check-ins to track your progress.



# Investigate

Episode 20

## Podcast Episode Overview

Leadership, much like a high-performance vehicle, requires regular upkeep. Without consistent attention to maintenance, leaders risk burnout, disconnection, and a breakdown in effectiveness. A well-rounded leadership maintenance plan should address four critical areas: self-care, skill development, relationship building, and soul care.

Self-care forms the foundation of leadership health. Physical well-being is essential for maintaining the energy and focus necessary to lead. While this may seem obvious, it is often neglected in the daily grind of leadership. Proactive self-care prevents burnout and ensures that energy levels are sustained, enabling leaders to make better decisions and remain present for their teams.

Skill development is equally vital. Leadership is not static—it evolves as the world around us changes. To remain effective, leaders must embrace continuous learning and stay adaptable to new challenges. Attending workshops, seeking feedback, and pushing oneself to develop new skills ensures that leadership remains relevant in a constantly shifting landscape.

Building and maintaining relationships is a crucial aspect of leadership. Leadership is fundamentally about people, and without strong, trusting relationships, it becomes hollow. Fostering connections based on mutual respect and open communication helps create a healthy and productive work environment. Regular check-ins, team-building activities, and mentorship are strategies that can strengthen these connections.

Finally, soul care is essential for sustaining leadership over the long haul. It involves reflecting on one's deeper purpose, values, and motivations. Leaders who neglect this aspect risk disconnection, not just from others, but from themselves. Regular practices of reflection, meditation, or journaling can help maintain alignment with core values, leading to more fulfilling and sustainable leadership.



Leadership isn't just about achieving external goals—it's about maintaining harmony within yourself and those you lead. A holistic approach to leadership maintenance includes caring for your physical and emotional well-being, continuously sharpening your skills, fostering deep and trusting relationships, and nurturing your soul.

# Leadership Maintenance Plan: Directions

Before we dive into the details of building a Leadership Maintenance Plan (LMP), let's quickly explore why it's essential. Think of your leadership like a high-performance vehicle. You wouldn't drive that vehicle every day without changing the oil, checking the tires, or monitoring the dashboard. Similarly, your leadership requires regular check-ins and upkeep.

Without consistent maintenance, even the best leaders risk burning out, losing focus, or falling into leadership dissonance — where your effectiveness as a leader begins to deteriorate due to stress, disconnection, or poor self-management.

This is why a holistic plan is needed to keep you in top form — physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. A complete Leadership Maintenance Plan includes these four components:

1. Self-Care
2. Skill Development
3. Relationship Building
4. Soul-Care

Follow the directions below and then study the example before you craft your own LMP.

## 1. Self-Assessment

Begin by assessing where you currently stand in each of the four areas: Self-Care, Skill Development, Relationship Building, and Soul-Care. Reflect on your habits and routines and identify areas needing improvement. Use a scale from 1-10 for each component, where 1 is the lowest and 10 is the highest.

## 2. Set Clear Goals

For each area, set specific and measurable goals. Ensure your goals are realistic and can be integrated into your daily or weekly routine. The goals should be time-bound and revisited regularly.

## 3. Schedule Time for Implementation

Set non-negotiable blocks of time in your schedule to work on each area. For example, schedule specific days for exercise, reading, or one-on-one meetings with your team. Planning in advance increases the likelihood of follow-through.

## 4. Monthly/Quarterly Check-Ins

Schedule time at the end of each month or quarter to reflect on your progress in each area. Adjust your goals or strategies based on what worked and what didn't. These check-ins are essential for maintaining momentum and adapting to new challenges.

# Leadership Maintenance Plan: Example

## **Self-Assessment: Rate each (1-10) and give reason for that rate.**

Self-Care: 5/10 – I've been skipping workouts and not getting enough sleep.

Skill Development: 6/10 – I've attended some training but haven't been reading as much.

Relationship Building: 8/10 – I have a strong connection with my team, but I could spend more time with mentors.

Soul-Care: 3/10 – Haven't set aside time for reflection or spiritual renewal.

## **Goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound**

Self-Care: Exercise at least three times per week, aiming for 7-8 hours of sleep nightly, and take a 10-minute break for mindfulness each day.

Skill Development: Read one leadership book every two months and attend one conference or workshop each quarter.

Relationship Building: Schedule bi-weekly one-on-ones with team members and have a quarterly check-in with my mentor.

Soul-Care: Spend 30 minutes every Sunday reflecting on my leadership purpose through journaling and meditation.

## **Monthly Check-In: Schedule time to evaluate and adjust as needed.**

Self-Care Progress: Exercised twice per week. Need to work on getting more sleep.

Skill Development Progress: I finished reading one leadership book and registered for a workshop next month.

Relationship Building Progress: One-on-ones with the team are on track, but I haven't scheduled time with my mentor.

Soul-Care Progress: I began journaling on Sundays but only did it twice this month.

# Leadership Maintenance Plan: Template

**Self-Assessment: Rate each (1-10) and give reason for that rate.**

Self-Care:

Skill Development:

Relationship Building:

Soul-Care:

**Goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound**

Self-Care:

Skill Development:

Relationship Building:

Soul-Care:

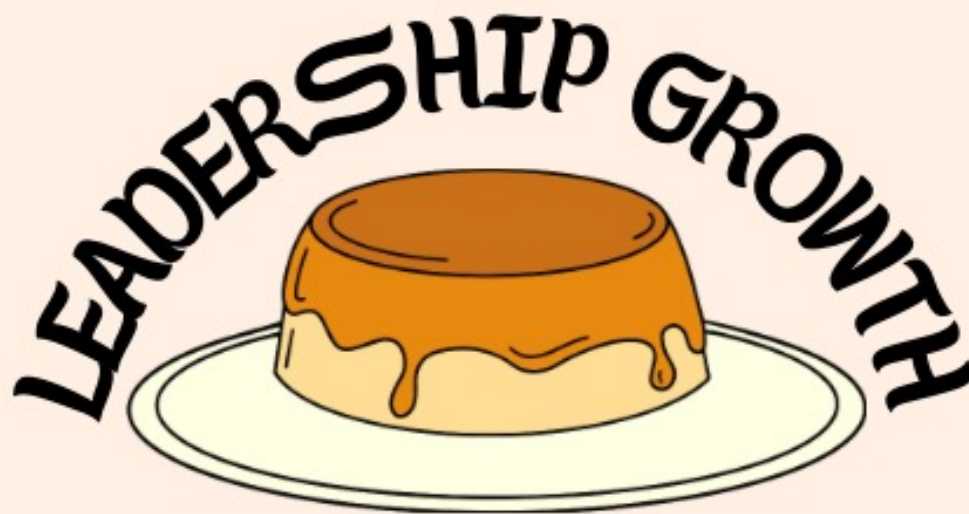
**Monthly Check-In: Schedule time to evaluate and adjust as needed.**

Self-Care Progress:

Skill Development Progress:

Relationship Building Progress:

Soul-Care Progress:



Take care of yourself

# Reflect

## Episode 21

## Podcast Episode Overview

Leadership fatigue is a real, often unspoken challenge that many leaders face. Over time, the weight of leadership can become overwhelming, leading to feelings of burnout and exhaustion. Drawing on examples from the biblical characters Moses, Elijah, and Jonah, this reflection explores the different forms of leadership fatigue: relational, spiritual, and emotional.

Relational fatigue occurs when the burden of leadership becomes too heavy to bear alone. Like Moses, leaders may find themselves overwhelmed by the constant demands of those they lead, leading to a sense of isolation and exhaustion. This highlights the importance of sharing the load—leadership was never meant to be carried alone.

Spiritual fatigue, as seen in the story of Elijah, can affect even the most resilient leaders. After experiencing great victories, leaders may still find themselves drained and vulnerable, needing time for rest and spiritual renewal. Without attending to their spiritual well-being, leaders can become disconnected from their purpose and lose the strength to continue.

Jonah's story illustrates emotional fatigue, where frustration and anger cloud judgment, leading to bitterness and burnout. When leaders become emotionally exhausted, they risk losing sight of their core values and reacting in ways that are uncharacteristic of their true selves. Addressing unresolved emotions and taking time for emotional recovery are crucial steps in preventing burnout.

Leadership is not about avoiding fatigue altogether—it's about recognizing it and taking proactive steps toward renewal. By resting, reflecting, and allowing others to share the burden, leaders can recover from fatigue and return to their roles with a renewed sense of purpose. Leadership is challenging, but through self-care, reflection, and support, it can be sustained for the long term.



Leadership is a demanding journey that can lead to various forms of fatigue—relational, emotional, spiritual, or physical. Recognizing these challenges and taking steps toward renewal is essential for sustained leadership.



## What's Your Fatigue?

What type of leadership fatigue are you experiencing (relational, emotional, spiritual, or physical)? Why, what's going on?

How have your inner conflicts or emotions, like frustration or anger, impacted your leadership recently?

Are there areas in your leadership where you feel you're shouldering too much responsibility?



## Consider This

**Leadership Journal:** For one week, journal your emotional and physical energy levels at the end of each day. Identify patterns and reflect on what caused your energy to deplete or recharge.

**Delegation Plan:** Identify two tasks or responsibilities you currently handle alone. Create a plan to delegate them to others who can share the load, mirroring Moses' delegation approach.

**Rest and Renewal Day:** Choose one day in the next week to intentionally disconnect from leadership tasks. Spend time reflecting, resting, and nourishing your spiritual and emotional health.



## Invest In You!

**Accountability Partner:** Find an accountability partner to check in with weekly about your leadership fatigue. Share your struggles and victories, helping each other stay grounded and balanced.

**Spiritual Health Retreat:** Plan a mini-retreat for yourself, even if it's just for a few hours. Spend time alone in reflection, prayer, or meditation, focusing on restoring your spiritual health, much like Elijah needed to do.

**Emotional Inventory:** Take an emotional inventory of the past month. Write down moments where your emotions—anger, frustration, or disappointment—took over. For each instance, explore how it could have been handled differently and what you can do to better manage emotional fatigue in the future.

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## Spot Check

Leadership is a journey that requires ongoing maintenance, not just in skill development or strategic thinking but in the health of your mind, body, and soul. Like Moses, Elijah, and Jonah, every leader faces moments of fatigue—whether relational, emotional, spiritual, or physical. The key to sustaining leadership is recognizing when you are reaching the limits of your endurance and taking proactive steps toward renewal.

Leadership is not about carrying the entire burden alone; it's about sharing the load with others, investing in your own growth, and nurturing the relationships that sustain you. Embrace the importance of self-care, and don't neglect the power of rest and reflection. Leadership is not about perfection; it's about authenticity, integrity, and aligning your actions with your core values.

As you move forward in your leadership journey, remember that your well-being is essential to your ability to lead effectively. Take time for yourself—whether that's through journaling, finding an accountability partner, or taking a spiritual retreat. By maintaining balance and prioritizing your personal growth, you will be better equipped to lead others with clarity, compassion, and strength.

You are not alone on this journey. Keep moving forward, take care of yourself, and stay true to your values. Leadership is tough, but with self-awareness and a commitment to renewal, you can sustain it for the long haul.

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08

## Closing Remarks

A Leadership Development Journey

# Congratulations

Congratulations on reaching this incredible milestone! You have embarked on a transformative journey through the Leadership Spot Check series, and what an inspiring path it has been. Each step along the way has been an act of courage, reflection, and commitment to becoming the best leader you can be.

Leadership is not for the faint of heart. It demands vulnerability, self-awareness, and a willingness to grow through discomfort. Through this process, you've explored profound truths about yourself, your relationships, and the impact you wish to have in the world. You've developed the skills to listen actively, communicate authentically, and lead with emotional intelligence—tools that will serve as the cornerstone of your leadership for years to come.

As you reflect on all you've learned, take a moment to acknowledge the growth you've achieved. Consider how far you've come since the start of this journey. The insights you've gained, the habits you've cultivated, and the leadership mantra you've developed are not just markers of progress; they are a testament to your resilience and dedication.

But this isn't just about the destination; it's about the journey. Each workbook, each exercise, and each moment of introspection has shaped you into a leader who seeks alignment between values and actions. You've become someone who prioritizes kinship—with yourself, with others, and with a higher purpose. That kind of leadership changes lives—yours and those you influence. This is not the end of your story. Instead, it's the beginning of a new chapter. Armed with the principles and practices you've learned, you are equipped to face challenges with courage, navigate complexity with wisdom, and inspire those around you to do the same. Leadership is an evolving journey, and you are now prepared to continue walking it with confidence and clarity.

So, celebrate this moment. Celebrate the hard work, the insights gained, and the transformation you've undergone. And remember, leadership is not about being perfect—it's about showing up, being authentic, and committing to growth, one step at a time.

You are ready to lead boldly, intentionally, and with purpose. The world needs your leadership, and there is no doubt you will rise to the challenge. Well done!

## The Leader's Reflection

A leader stands where paths divide,  
With heart and mind as compass guide.  
In kinship first, they find the thread,  
That weaves through all the words unsaid.

To lead oneself is where it starts,  
In quiet chambers of the heart.  
Where truth and grace in harmony meet,  
And fear gives way beneath their feet.

In service born of love, not pride,  
They walk with others, side by side.  
Through storms and calm, with vision clear,  
Their courage turns to quiet cheer.

For leadership is not a crown,  
But knowing when to kneel down.  
It's hearing both the strong and weak,  
And finding strength within the meek.

In every challenge, leaders grow,  
And through their kinship, learn to know  
That every fall and every rise  
Brings wisdom gained, and clearer skies.

So lead with heart, with hands outstretched,  
In every soul, a light is etched.  
For leadership begins within,  
Where true alignment can begin.

- Ryan Daffron

## Now What?

This final workbook is designed to help you reflect on your growth, integrate the lessons learned, and prepare for the ongoing evolution of your leadership.

Leadership is a continuous journey of alignment, self-awareness, and intentional action. This workbook will help you consolidate insights from the series, evaluate how far you've come, and commit to sustaining your leadership growth.

What has been your biggest takeaway from the Leadership Spot Check series?

How have you changed as a leader since starting this journey?

Review your actions and decisions over the last month. Evaluate them against your leadership mantra and principles. Identify areas where you're thriving and where further alignment is needed.

Teach one principle or skill from the Leadership Spot Check series to a colleague or mentee. Reflect on what you learned from the process of teaching.

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## Spot Check

As you reach the end of this workbook and the Leadership Spot Check series, take a moment to reflect on the journey you've undertaken. Leadership is not a destination; it's an evolving path marked by growth, learning, and connection. Through this series, you've delved into the foundational principles of leadership—awareness, empathy, purpose, and the courage to align your actions with your values. These are not just ideas to ponder; they are tools to integrate into your daily life.

Leadership is not about perfection but about progress. It's about embracing the moments when you stumble, recognizing the lessons they hold, and continuing forward with renewed commitment. You've built a framework that supports not only your development but also your ability to inspire and uplift others. Leadership is a ripple effect: every intentional action you take, every empathetic conversation you have, and every value-driven decision you make contributes to a broader impact.

Now, it's time to carry these lessons forward. The world needs leaders who are willing to lead with authenticity, vulnerability, and courage. It needs leaders who understand that success is measured not just by outcomes but by the relationships and harmony they cultivate along the way.

Commit to revisiting this workbook and the series periodically. As seasons of leadership bring new challenges and opportunities, these tools will help you stay grounded and aligned with your vision. Share your insights with others—whether it's a mentee, a peer, or a team member. Your journey can inspire others to find their own paths to authentic leadership.

Leadership is a sacred trust, a privilege to influence and serve. As you step into the next phase of your journey, remember this: You are not alone. Kinship with yourself, others, and a higher purpose will guide you. Lead with courage. Lead with compassion. Lead with conviction.

And when challenges arise, remember the truth that has resonated throughout this series: leadership is a journey of growth. Embrace it fully, and let your leadership ripple out to transform lives, communities, and the world.

Your leadership matters. Now go forward and lead with purpose

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# Leadership Spot Check



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