

Improve Leadership with Personal Development

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What makes a great leader? Leadership capacity is directly linked to the level of self awareness embodied by the leader. While visiting a consultant friend recently, he shared a model he developed and delivers to senior engineering executives which demonstrates this point.

Knowing their purpose, passion and what brings meaning into their life has a direct impact on how credibly leaders are viewed by their employees (or followers) and peers. When they express themselves authentically there is a congruency between what they say, what they do and what they stand behind. Consequently, people are much more likely to rally around them.

The following week I was gifted with a book on leadership, entitled "Who You Are is How You Lead" written by [Gail Gibson*](#), founding faculty member of the, Certified Executive Coach Program and Masters in Leadership Program at Royal Roads. In the book Gibson presents a model which identifies awareness, choice and personal responsibility as attributes of Conscious Leadership, which are supported by trust and courage. The results are growing people and effective organizations.

As I'm reading my head is nodding affirmatively, each point she makes resonates so deeply with the messages I've been sharing. For example "Being conscious means being fully aware, and personally responsible for the impact you have on the world as well as being able to effectively manage the impact the world has on you."

The term Conscious Leadership coined by Lance Secretan, leadership expert and author, is further explained in his foreword to Gibson's book, "*We are one, and the world would be a better place if we loved each other,,, Simply put, our notions of separateness are no longer appropriate in the conditions now facing humanity and our planet. As leaders we inspire when we awake to the principles of oneness.*

When I pollute my backyard, I pollute the world. When I inspire just one person I brighten the world... When I teach a noble lesson I add to the progress of humanity. When I inflate my departmental budget, I constrain someone else's... Whatever I think, feel, say or do changes the world."

Does this sound like metaphysics to you? Secretan suggests it could be, and it can also be viewed as pragmatic description of reality.

I was fortunate to learn these principles several years ago, and in my own career path found self awareness and self-responsibility to be most helpful in navigating the leadership territories I've encountered. Being 'leaderful' or taking responsibility rather than waiting until I had my Director's attention and guidance, was fundamental in quickly moving up the ladder when I worked in a large educational institution. Taking the time to consider how he would view the situation and determine what was best for everyone concerned earned me his and my colleague's respect. Being attuned to others motivations also helped me to encourage and engage the people who worked along with me and to mitigate potentially conflicted situations.

At the time I didn't talk much about how I learned to empathize with others to determine what their motivations were. As a student of metaphysics I had learned to heal and read people's energetic fields (auras). I figured people would think I was a bit of a flake.

Now when I hear and read about how the principles of personal development are fundamental to becoming inspiring, conscious, authentic leaders, it all sounds very familiar!

So as we all awaken and become more self actualized we need people who are equally attuned to lead us. As a coach I meet many who have left the corporate sector and are healing themselves after having worked within the old model of command and control leadership.

If you are on the leadership track, and would like to become better at engaging others or simply want to manage yourself in a more effective and leaderful way its imperative you get to know yourself better. It's not about maneuvering people to do what you want, it's about knowing yourself deeply to express yourself authentically, be highly self responsible, respond with integrity to the best of your ability and be INSPIRING. This is what fuels motivation.

Quote:

"Leaders must know themselves thoroughly before they can hope to lead others." Warren Bennis, Institute of Noetic Sciences

*Gibson is now deceased, unfortunately, and the book may no longer be in print. It is listed at Amazon <http://www.amazon.ca/Who-You-Are-How-Lead/dp/B00HTW7PQE>