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QUALITIES, TO AWAKEN THE LEADER IN YOU

by: Janice Kobelsky



5 Qualities to Awaken the Leader in You

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"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead

I've met very few people whose vision was to "change the world." And I've been extremely fortunate to have met and worked with some real "world-changers."

They *have already* or *are now* finding ways to make deep and meaningful impact.

I've discovered that global visionaries -- those with massive reach or scale -- are rare.

But, I've yet to meet anyone who did not desire to 'change' their *corner of the world*, at least at times. Or, in some way. This applies universally -- to parents, colleagues, bosses or friends. Many walks of life. All ages. Different titles. One universal commonality: *the desire to make things better*.

These are the everyday giants, unsung heroes, anonymous leaders.

They're eager to make a difference that matters to those they care about. They're ready to give their all to the issues or opportunities that enliven their spirit.

Yes, You.

I've known several game-changers, as you probably have too. And, I've read about or admired countless others. They all have one thing in common. This is true regardless of their reach or impact.

They all started out just like the rest of us – as ordinary people.

What set them apart was their remarkable drive and desire to make a difference. Enthusiasm, coupled with an aspired “reach” or “vision” that was *bigger* than ‘normal’.

They all shared five qualities. 5 qualities to awaken the leader in you.

So whether you’re looking to change the world, or your corner of it, this post is for difference-makers of every size and stature.

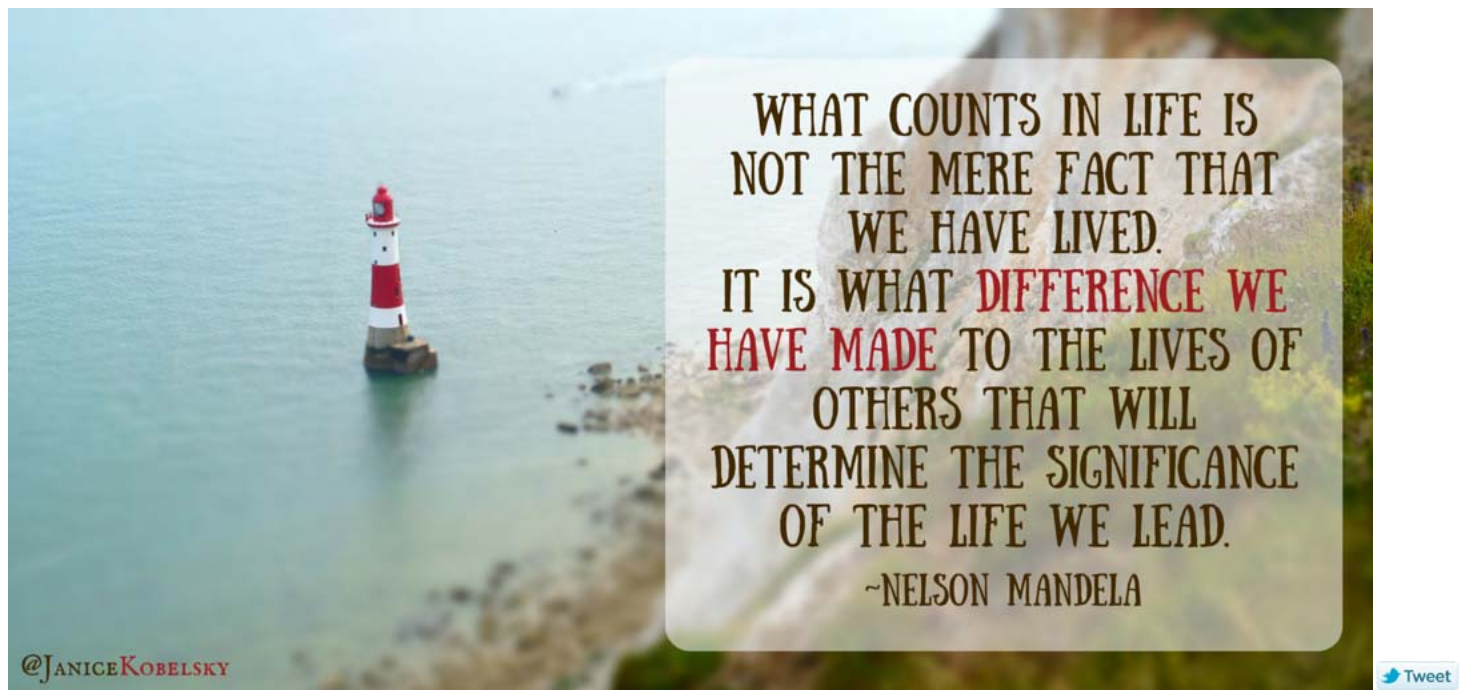
Mostly, however, it’s for the *everyday leaders* – everywhere. It's for everyone whose actions can and do have meaning. It's for those whose reach... well, who knows what is yet to be discovered and unfolded?

It's for us -- you, and me – the daily difference-makers.

These are qualities to think about.

Attributes to cultivate and practice.

Perspectives to share.



5 C's: Qualities to Awaken & Strengthen Your Inner Leader

It is not an exhaustive perspective, by any means. 5 qualities to awaken the leader in you. Five simple, though not easy, core precepts. Each one is essential to a legacy worth living and leaving!


1. Courage

Leadership *takes courage*. This applies regardless of scale or level. It's true whether your leadership is by formal authority or informal influence.

And, like leaders themselves, courage comes in many forms.

Think about it, for yourself:

- It may be the valor to do what's needed in a difficult situation.
- It could be the willingness and the daring or 'audacity' to be authentic. Being bold enough to do, be and act in a way that fulfills your vision and purpose.
- It could be simple ethics; sometimes tested.
- Courage could even come in the form of contribution. It's being the one who is willing to do what's needed. To give of yourself and to serve and contribute to others' wellbeing. To do so even if, and especially, when it may never be reciprocated.

What courage is not, is the absence of fear. 

It's akin to boldness, bravery or bravado, but it is also more than that.

Indeed, it could be any of the above; but it's also something else.

Whatever the form, here's what the essence of courage looks like in leadership.

- **Strength:** mustering the strength to face what would otherwise intimidate or derail you. It's the courage to forge ahead in spite of grief, pain, fear or discomfort. Real leaders need the ability to show real strength.
- **Choice:** strength without action most often shows up as resistance or inflexibility. Courage, therefore, requires the willingness to act. It's fluid, adaptive and purposeful. Mark Twain said, *"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear."* Indeed, it's choosing to be bigger than fear, and act anyway.
- **Heart:** the word courage stems from the Latin word 'cor', meaning heart. Courage is often illogical, irrational, uncalculated or even unsound. That's because it doesn't come from our mind. Courage comes from your heart. It is fueled by passion, caring and conviction.

It's about summoning the inner strength to choose action. It's the first of the 5 qualities to awaken the leader in you. It's the quality of a difference-maker. And, it's guided and enlivened by heart.

2. Compassion

The word compassion and leadership are rarely used together. Compassion is often seen as a somewhat 'soft', even passive quality.

It's a response to the suffering of others. An ability to relate, and to feel care and concern.

In contrast, leadership is more often equated with bold, even tough, action. It's about getting results!

Yet compassion is an essential leadership quality. In fact, it is *exactly* what so many 'greats' throughout history have demonstrated. That's because it's more than a feeling.

Compassion as a necessary quality of leadership harkens to the true meaning of the word. It is a feeling in response to another or circumstance.

It's more. Because it is a feeling that evokes and motivates constructive, positive action.

Action aimed at alleviating or ameliorating the situation.

This is where toughness does, indeed, come into play. Not hard-heartedness. Rather, the kind of tough action needed to actually make a difference, to thrive. The kind of tough action born of courage.

Let's think about that. What would it mean to have compassionate leadership? What would it look like? What would be its effect on performance, productivity, and results?

Perhaps... a stronger attention to people. More social consciousness. Heightened corporate citizenship. Better ethics. More stewardship. A committed focus on the "triple bottom line": people, planet, and profit. Synergistic solutions.

That's what this 2nd C – compassion – intends to awaken in us. The ability to relate to others. *This includes those who are different and/or times of disagreement.*

It's the crucial ability to act in a way that transcends differences or problems. To lead in a manner that *fosters meaningful action and resolutions.*

It's a quality of leadership founded on the willingness to understand. The ability to relate. And then, the desire, impulse and felt-responsibility and commitment to take action. It is, as Maya Angelou said, a mission to thrive.

"My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style." ~Maya Angelou

3. Commitment

Not surprisingly, the 3rd of the 5 qualities to awaken the leader in you is: commitment.

We're talking about something more than promise, engagement, loyalty, or other assurances.

This is about the commitment to hear. To listen to, and to understand others. To do so in a way that your 'leadership' is not directing your own agenda, OR theirs.

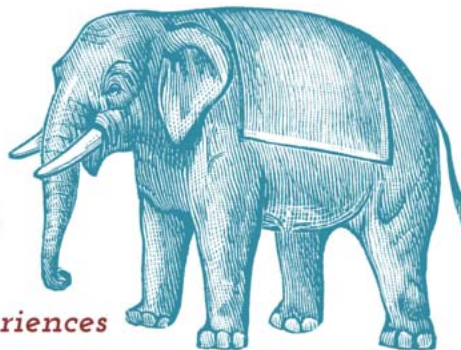
Rather, it's focused on a more holistic and comprehensive perspective. A commitment to reach for an outcome that is bigger than any singular party.

It's a willingness to accept challenge.

It requires intent and dedication to 'understand'. It's being able to be open to other, often multiple, and even contradictory, perspectives.

An ancient metaphor describes 5 blind men explaining an elephant. One touched the tail, another the trunk, one the ear, the fourth the tusk, the fifth the underbelly.

Each discovered and declared a different truth:
the tail, a rope; the trunk, a tree branch;
the ear, a fan; the tusk, a pipe; the belly, a wall.



Their descriptions were based on their own experiences of the same thing. Similarly, the challenge of leadership -- and listening -- is often to integrate multiple perspectives, with an open mind, a clear heart, and a willingness to see things from another's point of view.

JANICE KOBELSKY

When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand." ~Karl A. Menniger 

It requires discipline; and, it's not easy. As Tom Hanks exhorted, in the movie 'In a League of Their Own': "It's supposed to be hard. If it were easy, everyone would do it."

Challenging though it may be, this quality of commitment is the key to empowerment, for others and us.

4. Connection

"Now, as never before, in an atmosphere of international tensions, fears, and insecurities, we need the channels of communication among peoples kept open." ~Dorothy Carnegie

You're probably thinking that this quote is recent, considering how aptly it applies!

In fact, Dorothy Carnegie wrote this in 1962. It was in the introduction to a book written by her husband, Dale Carnegie (best known for his timeless, best-selling human relations classic: "How to Win Friends and Influence People").

Here we are -- some 55 years later -- still grappling with the same issues.

I dare say, this could have been written 150 or 500 years ago, and it would still apply.

The question is, will it still apply 50, 150 or 500 years from now?

Probably.

Given the nature of humanity, living in a world without tension, fear, and insecurities is unlikely.

Keeping the channels of communication among peoples truly open? It's perhaps a dream never to be realized.

But isn't it time for us to begin fulfilling this appeal?

Leadership calls upon us to continue to strive. It's up to us to ensure the kind of connection that makes "open channels of communication among peoples" a real possibility.

It starts with you.

And me.

It begins with the quality of our own connections and communication. It's about putting "human relations" back into our interpersonal effectiveness -- to 'relate' vs. 'transact' with others.

It is the work of leadership.

5. Conditioning

This final 'C' of the 5 qualities to awaken the leader in you is three-fold:

Outer-conditioning: refers to what *happens* (or *happened*) to us that conditions our 'learned' response. It can be easy to fall prey to outer circumstances. This is especially so when they feel harsh or we experience an inability to control them.

This can lead to what is coined, "learned helplessness". It's a victim type of mindset. It can overwhelm and quash the inner leader's ability (or hope) to make a difference.

Therefore, must consider our external contexts very carefully.

This "C" - Conditioning - *reminds us to choose*. To be present, mindful and deliberate about what we 'let in'. To take charge of the 'story' we create in our own thinking about circumstances and events.



Simply put, we need to apply emotional intelligence. It's up to us to assure the level of social awareness that supports our continued ability to lead.

Other-conditioning: is what we *experience in relationship with others*.

Our experience with others forms the basis for our judgments, opinions and connections. Therefore, it lays the foundation for our interpersonal effectiveness.

It's the type of conditioning whereby, over time, we think we 'know' the other person. Or, we think we know what "people like *them*" do, say, think and/or how they reason.

At that point, when we think we know, it's easy to become blind. We stop seeing others for who they really are or how we may be impacting them.

Awakening the leader within means that we continue to remain open. Receptive to others. Informed but not biased or conditioned by our past experiences. This allows us to continue to "see", "hear" and "experience" others for who they are. Then, we're more able to energize their potential.

Inner-conditioning: is what we *deliberately choose, create and cultivate from within*. It's building new habits -- to learn, grow and develop.

This last type of conditioning calls upon us to become mindful of the 80-20 rule as it applies to our own mindset.

A good 80% or more of our time and attention is likely being pulled, influenced or magnetized by others. Or, by external circumstances. We are easily conditioned.

Real results happen when we invest at least 20% on inner reflection, learning and growth.

That 20% spent on the inner leader is what often leads to 80+% of our results. It's not the other way around!

This means we need to spend time on our self-awareness, management and renewal. Rest. Reading. Preserving your health and wellbeing. Learning, skills and talent development.

Leaders must practice what Stephen R. Covey referred to as Habit #7 of "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People": '*Sharpen the Saw*.'

It means, he said, "*preserving and enhancing the greatest asset you have -- YOU.*"

To sum up, conditioning may be outer, other or inner. As it relates to leadership, it's like becoming an athlete.

It means taking the role and responsibility of leadership to heart. It's acknowledging that it's a privilege and a gift. It's making the most of yourself so you can bring your best to others, and the world.

It's the mindset of an Olympian with respect to the leader in you.

It's a tall order. Leadership takes commitment. And practice. To help keep the 5 C's top-of-mind, I leave you with this visual summary of the **5 QUALITIES TO AWAKEN THE LEADER IN YOU**.

It's a reminder of what it takes to foster and cultivate these qualities more deeply in yourself. For your teams. And, to do it at what I call, "the speed-of-life".




QUALITIES AWAKEN LEADER IN



Strength-Choice-Heart

1. COURAGE

Whether it's your own courage or encouragement about summoning the inner strength to change, it's enlivened by heart. It's the first quality of a leader.

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it."



Caring + Helpful Action

2. COMPASSION

Compassion is a feeling in response to another person's suffering which then evokes and motivates constructive action to alleviate or ameliorate the situation. It's a quality that is essential for leadership.

"My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive."



3. COMMITMENT

Commitment is a quality of leadership focus that provides a comprehensive perspective that reaches for more than any singular party. It takes listening -- not just with the ears, but with the heart. It's the key to empowerment: our own and the empowerment of others.

Listening-Discipline-Work

"It's supposed to be hard. If it were easy, everyone would

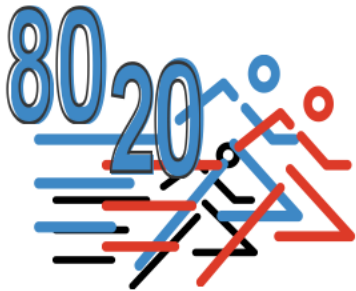


You + Me = WE

4. CONNECTION

Connection is what makes 'open channels c peoples' possible. It starts with you. And me own connections and communication. Learn with others. It's the work of leadership.

"Eventually everything connects - people, ideas, objects. the key to quality per se." - Charles Eames



Outer-Other-Inner

5. CONDITIONING

Like an athlete, conditioning is making the bring your best to others, and the world. It perspective: 20% inner work yields 80% of Olympic mindset regarding your personal

"Preserve and enhance the greatest asset you have -- YC



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Leadership Works for Difference-Makers*

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Your Meaningful V

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Challenged. Empowered. Energized.

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5 qualities to awaken the leader in you. I hope you'll become ever more resolute about awakening and cultivating the leader within.

Practice and hone the skills needed to become better stewards – for each other and of our world.

Awaken our spirit and rekindle hope and faith in our ability to make this world, or our corners of it, better.

Why? Because together we are stronger.

Let's seize the chance to learn from and grow with each other.



How do you develop your leadership skillset? Where do you even start? The online program, [CHART YOUR COURSE](#) will help you create your own, tailored, high performance path. OR, support others in finding and tailoring theirs!

You'll enjoy in-depth guidance to help clarify the competencies of leadership. You'll then get clear (or clearer) on your own skill levels and aspirations. You'll decide and identify what would make sense for you to work on next.

Use this program as a guide for yourself, especially if you are an emerging or next generation leader. Or, use it in a coaching role with someone on your team. And, you can also have me deliver it as a [tailored-to-you team workshop](#).

What are you doing to awaken the leader in you?

You have needed talents to develop. Now is the time to develop them.

You have important gifts to offer to the world. Now is the time to offer them.

If you haven't already, subscribe to the [Leader's Digest](#). Once or twice a month, I'll share resources (mine and others) to help support your success. Please join me: it's an honour to be more closely connected with like-minded thinkers!

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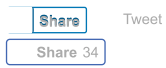
Let's connect:



8/27/2018

5 Qualities to Awaken the Leader in You

I sometimes feel that everything that could possibly said about leadership has already been said. *Why write yet another post?* Yet, look around. Look in the mirror, too. *There are so many ways we can still improve.* So many more ways to have constructive impact. *If you think so too, please share this post!* Just tap on the buttons below. Together, we can continue to make a difference.



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