

Leadership

By Torkum Saraydarian

Life is built on the principle of leadership. The principle of leadership is the source of evolution, of the Law of Karma, of striving, and of sensitivity to the Cosmic Magnet. The whole Cosmos reflects this principle.

In each atom you have the nucleus. In each plant you have the controlling system. In each animal you have the guiding core. In each man you have the brain and the soul. In each planet you have the planetary life. All are based on the Law of the Hierarchy, the law of successive experience, and on the principle of leadership.

Evolution is not carried forward all on the same level. Each becomes according to what he does. Each is drawn forward according to his sensitivity to the Purpose of all creation.

The Need for Leadership

There is a false idea that confuses people; it emphasizes group work without leadership. This idea is based on an inner failure on the path of leadership. Those who even deny leadership are led by their own ideas, by the examples of others, and they themselves try to impress and lead others to follow their path. Concealed hypocrisy flows through such activities.

Leadership is not imposition. Leadership is achievement. Leadership is the ability to conduct an orchestra, to guide a nation, to contact the highest light possible, and to reveal it to the multitudes. Leadership is the ability to sacrifice, to be the cement for a cathedral.

Only those who do not have contact with their real self wander, barking against the principle of leadership. Without the principle of leadership, we will end in anarchy. Leadership is vision. Leadership paves the way for freedom. Leadership is not dictatorship. Leadership is the ability to go ahead with one's own evolution and share his achievements

with others.

Those who achieve more than others naturally impress and inspire others. Those who are impressed and inspired by those who achieve great heights follow their steps, not to imitate them but to learn the ways and means of achievement. Those who know more are naturally leaders to those who do not know. Those who have greater strength are naturally leaders to those who are weak. Those who function on higher levels of awareness are the leaders for those who can only function on lower levels and need guidance.

It is not only illogical to ignore the principle of leadership, but it is also insanity and vanity. Look at your body. There is harmony in it. Every part is precious, but you have the leader of the body that is you if you are absent, there is no leader ... and you are dead.

It is true that many so-called leaders have exploited human beings, countries, or nations. But what about those Great Ones in all fields of human endeavor who inspire people and lead them one or two steps higher on their evolutionary path? Bees are more intelligent in recognizing their leaders than those who promote the psychology of groups but try secretly to be their leaders.

Types of Leadership

When the leadership acts against the interests of others, it turns into a source of exploitation. When the leadership imposes its will, it turns into dictatorship. Such a leadership destroys itself through these two means, only to open the way for new leaders who live for the interests of others and protect people from their own weaknesses; who release the power of striving in others, challenge them to new achievements, and inspire them every

time they fail.

Often when people think about leaders, they think about impostors, dictators, and totalitarians, and they develop in their hearts some kind of refusal or denial of the idea of leadership

A leader who imposes himself on others is not a real leader. A real leader is one who realistically realizes that he should lead people because all of them need the guidance that only he can give them. He leads people not by using them for his advantage but by working for their advantage, serving their interests. This is a very different concept of leadership. A leader is not a boss; a leader is not an object of worship. He is truly a servant, but a servant far more advanced in virtues, in knowledge, and in skill so that without vanity he can invite people around him that they may follow his steps--not to reach him, but to reach their own Inner Self and the treasury of their inner potentials.

There was a big fire in the mountains. Fifteen people were trapped on a highway surrounded by the burning forest. When everyone was desperate, a little girl jumped out of her car and said, "Follow me. I know a path which may save us." She led them to the seashore by a shortcut and saved their lives. This is a very clear example of leadership. She made people follow her and save their own lives only because she knew the path.

Those who have no outstanding spiritual gifts and are tired of not reaching a higher level, refuse leadership. Because they can no longer become leaders, they do not want anyone else to become a leader. This is a very sad phenomenon especially in so-called new age groups that, loaded with vanity, selfishness, and self-interests, do not tolerate anyone to be a leader.

People who are polluted within their own heart with negative emotions and vanity prevent others from making a breakthrough and standing outside of their locked chains or circles. They excuse themselves with the deceitful logic that they advance together and they do not need any leader to tell them what

to do. But the pitiful point is that they do not see that already they are followers of some idea given by somebody else, whose name they would never mention. And the most pitiful point is that they want, by all means, for people to follow their steps.

The Progress of Leadership

The principle of leadership is found in every walk of life. One must have spiritual humility to see where he is on the chain of the evolution. There is the one who is above him and the one who is below him. With one hand he holds the hand above him to raise himself up; with the other hand he pulls up the one below him. And this chain is the chain of leadership. Everyone is a leader, everyone is a follower, and only vanity and self-deceit will curtain the eyes and blind them from seeing this fact.

On the path of leadership, one needs education and training. When a man advances from one position to another position, it is like graduating from one class and entering a higher class.

In each higher class the student needs to learn more in order to expand his consciousness, to observe objects and events from more viewpoints, to use the law of synthesis more, and to see the greater need. With this learning he will notice that his expanding consciousness and increasing viewpoints put a tremendous pressure on his physical body and its various systems. Here his training starts: to adapt his physical, emotional, and mental nature to the incoming, increasing flow of light and to the revealing needs of the field in which he is situated at the time.

The progress of the leader is like a walking cross. His feet are on the ground of human need. His head is immersed in the will and purpose of life. His hands are ready to lift and guide.

On each level of his leadership path the leader deepens his wisdom, expands his consciousness, and appropriates his physical,

emotional, and mental instruments to the incoming light and to the demands of the need.

Leadership is a training ground and an opportunity to develop, unfold, and expand the activity of the sense of synthesis. The greater a leader is, the more unfolded is his sense of synthesis.

It is very important that a leader is open to new viewpoints and is ready to learn and to change the narrower viewpoints he had before. He will, however, be very careful that he is not carried away by separative but "intelligently" prepared viewpoints, which are intended to limit his expansion and use him for separative ends.

The leader has a great opportunity to come in contact with many hidden motives, with self-seeking interests and plans. The psychology of individuals and groups can be an open book for his studies.

The leader's intention is to serve the highest good for the greatest number of people and find ways and means to expand the consciousness of those who are inclined only to care for their own separative interests.

Thus the office of the leader is a classroom where he reads the pages of the Book of Life and prepares himself to serve in larger fields and for the higher interests of the people. He learns every minute, and he has the opportunity to train himself with each drop of learning.

We are told that the Hierarchy¹ is formed by those individuals who worked and served as great executives in many fields of human endeavor and, in the meantime, served the Plan with their whole heart. But they started the path of service in their homes and carried it out into their groups, nations, and humanity with a sensitivity to the Plan of the Hierarchy. The Plan of the Hierarchy was the source of their inspiration and orientation.²

Thus you are a leader wherever you are. You lead yourself to the field of service, to the field of greater light, to the field of greater synthesis, to the field of greater sacrifice.

You do not force people to follow you. You shine your light; you increase the intensity of

your light through your experience and wisdom. You increase the resources of your psychic energy by coming in contact with your Inner Divinity. Thus you become a challenge to others and a beauty for their hearts and souls.

It is only challenge and beauty that create the most irresistible magnetic currents and put the centers in human beings into motion. One must strive toward higher and higher summits.

The Universality of Leadership

Leadership belongs to all human endeavors. The real leaders are those who, in their particular field, cultivate the principle of sensitivity and direction toward the common good and who, in cooperation with all other fields, respond to the principle of synthesis. Every single person in each field of human endeavor will eventually learn to cooperate with those who are working in different fields for the common good.

The common denominator of all fields is the one human life. The common denominator of the leadership of all fields is the good of all humanity, in all dimensions of life. When we are referring to leaders, then, we have in mind the whole field of life with its specialized sections in the One field.

Leadership and Freedom

We must remember that a leader is not an authority. An authority is one who is considered infallible in his knowledge, decisions, plans, and directions. We have never seen nor do we expect such an authority. Such an authority will be a prison for the human soul and will hinder his progress for ages if imposed.

We know, however, that every entity in this universe is progressively going forward on the path of evolution. This statement does not deny that there are people who are far more advanced than we are on the Path. This does not deny that there are people who have greater insight, deeper foresight, and a more

powerful ability to synthesize. We call these people our leaders, and they lead us by the power that their own evolution has given to them.

We call them our teachers who teach us, not because they need to teach us but because our response to them creates the link for the transference of wisdom. Those who are further progressed and wealthier by their deeds of sacrificial service are those to whom we look for guidance and for courage.

In its positive and relative meaning, we respect authorities. Such authorities are great specialists in any field of human endeavor. They are not absolute sources of knowledge, information, or direction but they are great treasure houses of experience, information, and wisdom. We love and respect such authorities without abandoning our right to question them, to reject them, even to disbelieve them.

No power in the world must use its position to enslave the human soul. The greater the power, the greater the freedom it inspires in you because by freedom one proves his level of achievement and affirms the true nature of his beingness.

The Need for Leaders in Esotericism

There is an increasing need for leadership in the field of esoteric knowledge. More and more people are becoming disillusioned with the teachings given to them by opportunists, by people who have good intentions but are full of glamors and vanities, or by people who want to use the Teaching as a business to raise money.

Great damage is done to people who approach the Teaching with sincerity in their heart and are caught in groups, institutions, or organizations that are only for social activities or that function as traps for exploitation. Some of these searchers gradually forget about their quest and adapt themselves to their environment. Some of them totally suppress their aspiration and spiritual striving because of their disillusionment. Only a small

percentage, through discrimination, continue their search to find the proper field where they can grow and serve.

The number of true searchers is increasing. We must prepare ourselves to meet their need and at the same time safeguard ourselves from the dangers of falling into vanities, glamors, or of using the searchers for our own interests.

A leader must always stand on guard. There are so many temptations in his environment, in his work, in his relationships with people. Those who come to him may bring new temptations. That is why the leader must stand on guard and not let his personality vehicles negotiate with temptations. Some of these temptations are money, sex, praise, flattery, the need for friendship, and the need for security.

The leader is not an angel. He needs money, he needs love, he needs friendship and security--but he never uses the Teaching as a fishing net to catch people and use them for his own ends.

The leader must be so careful that he does not despise anyone who comes with the sincere desire in his heart for spiritual development and service.

The leader also must know that all who come to him are not really coming for the Teaching. They may come for the leader's beauty, manliness, womanliness, or money; they may come to secure positions for themselves through side doors. Such people appear very sincere, intelligent, and full of the zeal to serve. But the leader must recognize them.

Some people do not like spiritual discipline. They can be tested easily. Some of them do not commit themselves to heavy labor. Some of them are not punctual or they are jealous or they do not like to sacrifice. They appear very obedient. They like to praise the leader in public. They like to show off. They criticize when the opportunity is given. They like high positions. All these signs in the newcomer indicate the need for extreme caution by the leader. It is difficult to uproot a tree that has been kept in the wrong place for a

long time.

Some people just like to stay in a group by any means and gather information that can be used against the leader if he does not satisfy their secret motives. The leader must be alert to the first signs of dishonesty or treachery, but also give such people a chance to contact their soul and choose the noble path of sincerity and renouncement.

The best students are those in whom you see sincerity and the spirit of renouncement and silence.

There are also people who appear sacrificial in order to hold offices, but once you depend on them they express their true colors and present their various demands.

You can see how delicate is the task of the leader.

A leader is a leader not to satisfy and enjoy his leadership or to enjoy the friendship of thousands of people, but he is a leader under the command of his soul or his master. He may personally love you, need you, or enjoy your friendship, money, or position, but if this relationship does not fit the plan of his master or soul, he instantaneously cuts it and renounces all his ties. This is why an experienced leader creates as few ties as possible, so as to be able to sever them in due time without doing any harm to the work or to the person.

Let us repeat here that a leader has no favorites. He can negotiate with someone with whom he had no former interest and cut off someone with whom he was very close if the work requires such actions. He also takes such actions sometimes to test his co-workers or to remove hindrances on the path of service.

The demand for new era disciples is increasing daily, and leadership must prepare itself to meet the need--not only the need of true disciples, but also the problems of false disciples.

Striving Creates Leaders

We must repeat here that you cannot prepare leaders and you cannot create leaders.

They are the result of their own labors of many lives. But you can instruct those who already are leaders by birth, or by the labor of many lives. You can recognize them. They have all the weaknesses of average people, but they have a few signs by which you can recognize them, no matter how deeply they are covered with superficial activities.

They love labor; they love striving. They do not give up. They never hide and never like to show-off. They stand as they are. They see their mistakes and admit them when you point them out. They never talk ill about a co-worker, even if they are hurt. They do not act in pity; they have a tendency to make people stand on their own feet.

When such people come to the leader, he must recognize them and be patient until he sees their spirit of striving and improvement. Then he gives them responsibilities and watches.

To meet the demands of aspirants, disciples, and those who are born to be leaders, the leader himself must continuously improve himself. The leader must be careful that the pure Teaching of the Great Ones flows through his living expressions, teachings, and writings.

The Development of Leadership Abilities

Here are seven techniques to develop leadership abilities:

1. We must make ourselves up-to-date physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. This is a Herculean task.

2. We must try to have closer contact with the beauty hidden within ourselves. A leader radiates beauty because he is fed by beauty. He contacts beauty and expresses beauty.

We touch the beauty within through our sacrificial service, our meditation, and our contemplation. Unless we are rooted in these three spheres of activity, we cannot radiate beauty. And any expression lacking beauty cannot impress people and lead them toward their Inner Selves. The contact with the inner beauty enables us to develop greater love,

purser simplicity, and deeper insight.

The leader is only a leader when he has this inner contact.

3. The leader must every day and in every act examine his motives. This can be a great safeguard on his path. Let us not forget that the leader has his lower self, and the associates of the lower self are greater in number than the associates of his soul on the physical plane.

This is why so often the pull of the lower self is stronger than the Higher Self. The search for his motives in most cases brings him back to the right track.

4. The Teaching given by the Great Ones is generally available to the public, but the leader's task is to teach the Teaching through living it. Only after he starts living the Teaching does his soul or his master expand his consciousness and inspire him with the new and progressive pages of the same Teaching.

The Teaching needs to be lived if we want to keep it alive. The Teaching needs to be enriched by the attainment of the leader. When the leader meets new challenges, the inner Source inspires him with new answers.

The Teachings of the Great Ones are like outlines of great beauty. The leader must use these outlines and fill them in without distortion, but with new inspirations and sometimes with new instructions.

True leaders are branches of the Tree of the Hierarchy. They can grow and expand and bear fruit as long as they are connected to the Hierarchy.

As you give the Teaching, you will see many kinds of people. The leader does not deal with aspirants directly but works closely with accepting disciples. There are two kinds of students:

- Those who have not developed their brains to think for themselves--gullible, goody-goody people. You can fill the minds of such people

with almost anything and manipulate them in many ways. Such people must be kept away, no matter how easily they claim to accept masters, evolution, Hierarchy, immortality, etc.

- The second kind--accepting disciples--are those who have very discriminative minds but also a clear intuitive perception, a faith by which they accept the Teaching as it is given by the Christ, Buddha, or Krishna. It is only an accepting disciple who can be led on the path until he becomes an accepted disciple.

An accepted disciple is one who is accepted by his soul, by his master, or by his ashram. He knows that he belongs now to an ashram. He has contacts that verify his faith. Leadership must try to create those conditions in which such disciples grow and mature without wasting the time and energy of the masters.

It is very important to emphasize that the leader must create the right conditions for growth, for unfolding, for testing--even through crisis--but always after examining his own motives.

5. The leader must prepare his lectures and classes carefully, even if he knows what he is going to talk about. Remember that lectures serve two purposes:

- a) To lead, inspire, and encourage people, unfolding the true beauty of the Teaching in them.

- b) To prove to the watching master or senior disciple that the leader is unfolding through continuous striving and preparations.

The leader should not be content to give the things that he knows, but must find new things. He must present the things that he did not know but learned as he prepared the instructions and lectures.

The guide watches you to find out how much new light you are bringing in while you are serving other people. A true lecture is the extension of your divine self.

When the leader does not have new inspirations, people feel it and leave him alone. Our magnetism increases only when we

transmit new inspiration, new facets or hues of the Teaching on the same foundation.

6. The leader not only must prepare his lectures, but he must also rehearse them. Rehearsal is very important. It is rehearsal that sustains the flow of renewal and improvement. Rehearsal gives confidence and freedom of expression and enlarges the channel of inspiration.

Rehearsal builds those vibrations around you that, as the need arises, come and flow through your speech.

Rehearsal breaks those thought waves that are antagonistic to your topic or destructive to your goals. When you rehearse, you clear many obstacles that could make it hard for you to speak creatively.

Rehearsal attracts help from invisible beings. Some of them like people who strive. They feel joy in the presence of striving leaders.

Rehearsed lectures are those which are less clichéd and freer. Non-rehearsed lectures imprison the leader.

7. The leader must make a one-year plan for the daily classes and activities of the group. The plan must be made in such a way that it can be adjusted, added to, and improved upon without losing the principal purpose. Those who are dealing with plans must be very careful that every change they make brings the plan closer to the original purpose.

The leader must prepare the future courses, which can grow in a gradient scale and in conformity with the need and purpose. It is very easy for young leaders to be trapped in nice activities to such a degree that eventually they can lose almost a whole life cycle before they free themselves from unnecessary engagements. Honest leaders are mostly tempted by sidetracking activities, especially through their glamors.

A leader is an engineer. He provides the blueprint and the various materials to build the Inner Sanctuary. To do this, he plans his lectures and activities in such a way that

people grow harmoniously.

Sometimes we like to emphasize only one part of the Teaching and forget other parts. Thus we create unbalanced growth in our students. When only one part of the Teaching is taken as the whole Teaching, we create fanatics or blind people.

So the leader will be like a wise cook who gives his people a well-balanced diet by which they are well nourished.

Meditation and Leadership

One of the areas in which the leader must work is meditation. Meditation does not necessarily start from below; it may start from above. The leader works for radiation and service or creativity. He starts with contemplation and goes toward meditation, concentration, and formulation.

In contemplation we contact energy and change it into concepts, then into ideas in meditation, and thought forms in formulation. Formulation is the stage of expression in any form according to our ray. Thus the form through which the idea will be presented to the world is progressively formulated.

In the basic meditation process, we eliminate obstacles and hindrances and let the light coming from the higher mind or intuition pour down, nourish, and energize our threefold nature with ideas, aspiration, and vitality.

In basic meditation there is no imposition. You are not imposing anything on yourself, but you are increasing your light to see more, to realize more, to be more. Through meditation you expand your space in which your influence and creativity grow.

A leader is one who leads himself to higher levels of consciousness, to new dimensions of sincerity, solemnity, dedication, honesty, and renunciation. When you lead yourself, people will know that you are a leader and they will join you with their efforts to form a group leadership.

A leader conquers the subjective fields first and proves himself to be a leader in his consciousness and in the subjective side of his

life. Any victory achieved on subjective levels reflects itself on objective fields, and a subjective leader becomes a reality on the objective field. You do not need to make yourself be elected. You will be accepted as the leader because a true leader opens the sense of recognition in others.

Leading as the Soul

When you decide within your heart to serve people without expectation and without reservation, no matter how the life tempts you to escape, to exploit, you turn into a leader because whatever a man thinks in his heart, so he is.

Leaders are magnets because they are led by the fire of their soul, by the fire of their ashram, by the fire of the Hierarchy. Once you are in tune with these centers you turn into a magnet. People, subjectively first and then objectively, are attracted to you, not to worship you or to obey you but to take part in your great labor of helping the Hierarchy to restore the Plan on Earth.

No one can be magnetic if he has no contact with his soul; this is the first charge of magnetism.

When the guilt feeling or feeling of failure starts to descend upon you, reminding you of the chain of your failures, withdraw yourself into the self and say:

*More radiant than, the sun,
Purer than the snow,
Subtler than the ether,
Is the Self;
The Spirit within my heart.
I am that Self:
That Self am I.*

Try to work from the level of Self because the most effective technique of the dark forces is to discourage leaders with their own failures and blow them out of proportion so that the leader misjudges himself and quits the battlefield of service. Those leaders who are protected by the shield of their Teacher always

try to act and serve as souls and not as personalities.

1 See also *Challenge for Discipleship*, Ch. 57, "Hierarchy."

2 Note: The Plan is the formulation of the Purpose or Will of God into a workable program for this planet.

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Torkom Saraydarian's life goal was a zealous effort to help people live healthy, joyous, and successful lives. He was an accomplished pianist and violinist, a teacher, lecturer, composer, mechanical engineer, meteorologist, writer, and philosopher. His books cover a wide spectrum of human existence and offer insights and explanations to anyone interested in applying spiritual guidelines to everyday life.