

Creative Leaders

What distinguishes the kind of leadership we want to follow?

I wasn't sure I would get a newsletter out this month, with the myriad of things to do surrounding such a move. But then I came across this brilliant article which I thought was a great antidote to last months' "Incompetent Leaders". See what you think....

Creative Leaders by Richard Rohr

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I'm sad to report that in the past few years, ever since uncertainty became our insistent 21st century companion, leadership has taken a great leap backwards to the familiar territory of command and control. —Margaret Wheatley (b. 1944), researcher of organizational behavior [1]

There is no greater training for true leadership than living in the naked now. There, we can set aside our own mental constructs, receive input and ideas from all directions, and lead even more creatively and imaginatively—with the clearer vision of one who lives beyond himself or herself. This is surely why some of Christianity's great mystics, such as Catherine of Siena (1347-1380), Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), and Teresa of Ávila (1515-1582), were also first-rate leaders, motivators of others, and creative reformers of institutions.

Here are some insights into what every good, servant-hearted, nondual leader knows and practices, whether in community, in the workplace, or in the classroom. Creative leaders:

are seers of alternatives.

move forward by influencing events and inspiring people more than by ordering or demanding.

know that every one-sided solution is doomed to failure. It is never a lasting solution but only a postponement of the problem.

learn to study, discern, and search together with others for solutions.

know that total dilemmas are very few. We create many dilemmas because we are internally stuck, attached, fearful, over-identified with our position, needy of winning the case, or unable to entertain even the partial truth that the other opinion might be offering.

know that wisdom is "the art of the possible." The key question is no longer "How can I problem solve now and get this off my plate?" It is "How can this situation achieve good for the largest number and for future generations?"

continue finding and sharing new data and possibilities until they can work toward consensus from all sides.

want to increase both freedom and ownership among the group—not subservience, which will ultimately sabotage the work anyway.

emphasize the why of a decision and show how it is consistent with the group’s values.

In short, good leaders must have a certain capacity for thinking beyond polarities and tapping into full, embodied knowing (prayer). They have a tolerance for ambiguity (faith), an ability to hold creative tensions (hope), and an ability to care (love) beyond their own personal advantage.

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[1] Margaret Wheatley, “How Is Your Leadership Changing,” 2005, <http://www.margaretwheatley.com/articles/howisyourleadership.html>.

Adapted from Richard Rohr, *The Naked Now: Learning to See as the Mystics See* (The Crossroad Publishing Company: 2009), 156-158.

Quote Unquote

"The answer is trust. Trust is the litmus test. Trust is to servant leadership what profit is to a business. It's the outcome. It's the core measure. The scoreboard." Stephen Covey

Your thoughts determine your character. Be careful of your thoughts; they may break into words at any time. Don't waste your thoughts on those who don't hunger for them. The first person you lead is you, and the first organ you master is your mind. John Maxwell

"Through the process of coaching, clients deepen their learning, improve their performance, and enhance the quality of their lives" International Coaching Federation

"Life isn't about finding yourself. It's about creating yourself." George Bernard Shaw

<http://www.richardmarshallcoaching.com>

Richard is an APECS accredited Executive Coach