



01 Leadership Spot Check

A Leadership Development Journey

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





"The art of leadership is saying no, not to those who follow you, but to your own self-interest for the greater good."

— Anonymous

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.

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.



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WHO & WHAT Leadership Spot Check

Podcast Episode 1 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

Leadership Spot Check

Podcast Episode 2 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

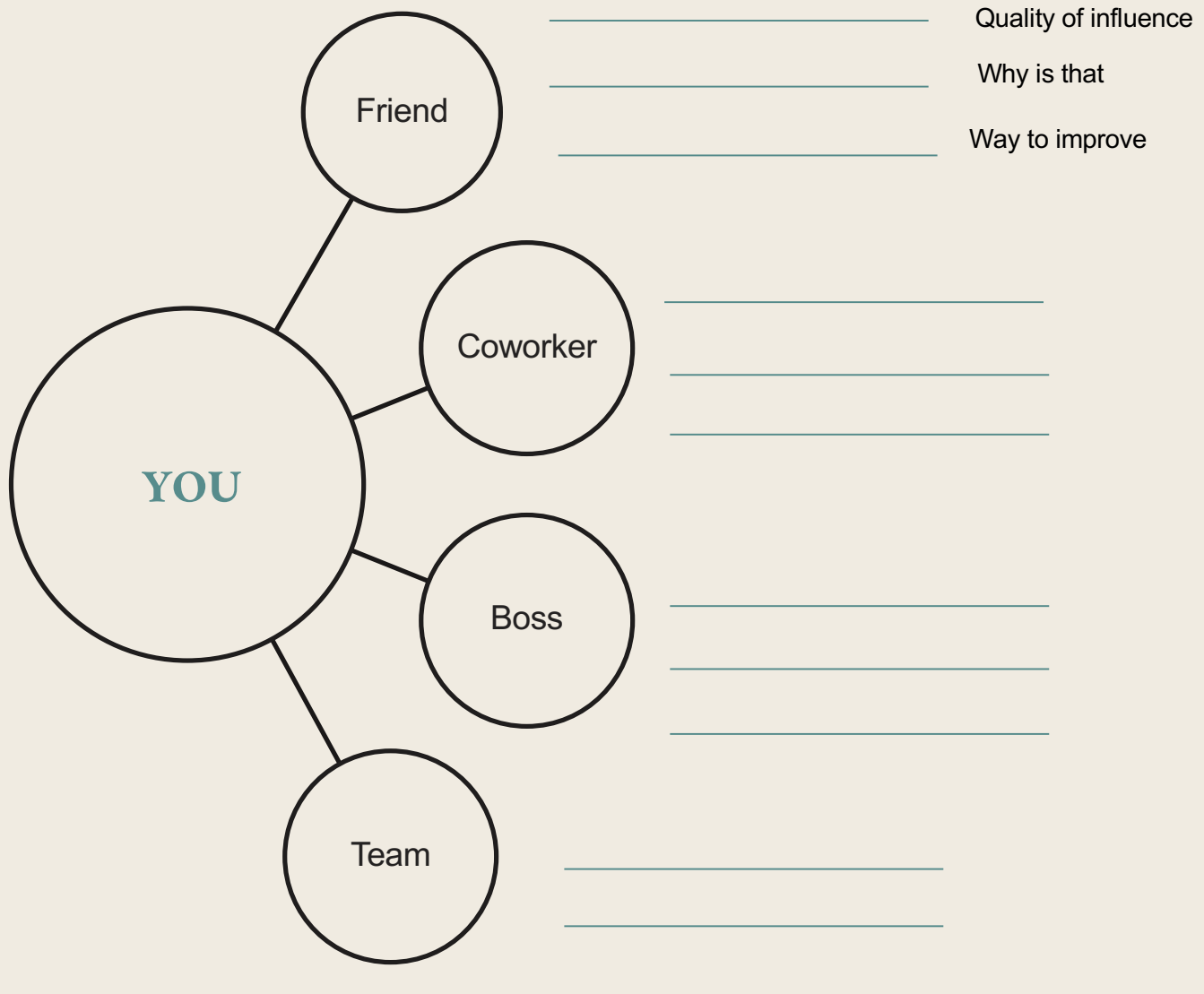
How do you feel about your answers? The goal here is only to start getting you thinking along these lines. It's ok if you don't like your answers or feel stuck. Remember this is a process. As we continue through this series, more clarity and conviction will develop.



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.



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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