

LEADER LESSONS – BOOK CLUB COMPANION GUIDE

By Diane C. Gaa



Simply Innovative
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ABOUT THE BOOK

Leader Lessons is a reflective exploration of leadership through personal stories, setbacks, and triumphs. Diane C. Gaa challenges the traditional view that leadership is about control or titles, instead framing it as a daily choice grounded in authenticity, visibility, trust, and compassion.

KEY THEMES FOR DISCUSSION

VISIBILITY VS. INVISIBILITY

Many leaders begin by hiding—whether through fear, self-doubt, or imposter syndrome. Gaa's journey emphasizes that you cannot lead if you remain invisible. Visibility is not about spotlight or ego, but about being present and authentic.

Discussion Questions:

- Have you ever experienced “professional invisibility”?
- What are small steps someone can take to become more visible without feeling inauthentic?

AUTHENTICITY OVER PERFECTION

Leadership is messy. The book reframes mistakes not as failures but as lessons that shape stronger leaders. “Progress over perfection” becomes a guiding principle.

Discussion Questions:

- How do you personally balance striving for excellence with showing vulnerability?
- When has a leader's authenticity mattered more to you than their expertise?

TRUST AS THE CURRENCY OF LEADERSHIP

Trust is slow to earn, quick to lose, but essential for team success. Gaa's stories of lost and rebuilt trust highlight honesty, transparency, and compassion as key.

Discussion Questions:

- Have you seen trust broken in a workplace? What repaired (or failed to repair) it?
- How do you personally decide when a leader is trustworthy?

FAILURE AS A TEACHER

Gaa highlights failures that shaped her career, showing how setbacks often plant seeds for future growth. She models vulnerability by sharing when things didn't go as planned.

Discussion Questions:

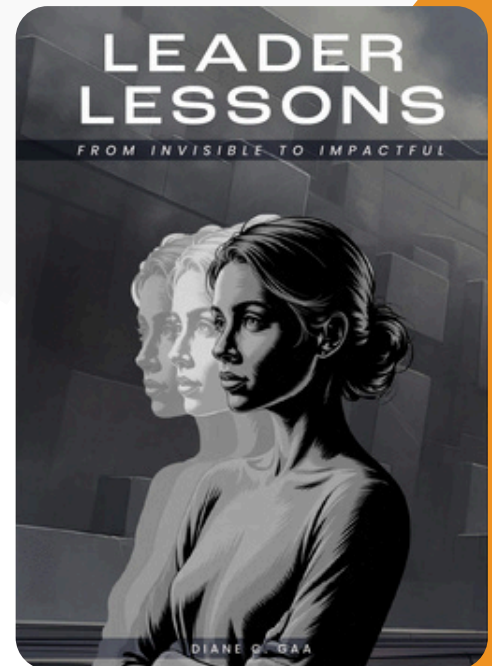
- What is one failure that taught you more than success ever could?
- How can leaders create safe spaces for their teams to “fail forward”?

LEGACY BEYOND TITLES

Leadership legacy is measured not in promotions or accolades, but in the lives you impact and the growth you enable. Gaa reminds us that your legacy is being written every day.

Discussion Questions:

- How do you want to be remembered as a leader, parent, colleague, or friend?
- Think of a leader who left a positive legacy for you—what specific actions made the difference?



COMPANION ACTIVITIES

Personal Reflection Exercise:

Write down one leadership lesson you've learned the hard way. Share with your group: What changed because of it?

- **Legacy Mapping:** Imagine it's 10 years from now and a colleague is describing your leadership. What do you hope they say? What actions today will make that true?
- **Failure Reframe Workshop:** Each member shares a time something didn't go as planned. As a group, brainstorm: What lesson or growth came out of that?

FAVORITE QUOTES TO SPARK DISCUSSION

"You cannot lead if you are invisible."

"Trust is the currency of leadership—it takes years to build and seconds to lose."

"Failure is not the opposite of success. It's part of it."

"A leader's legacy isn't in titles held, but in the lives lifted."

CLOSING THOUGHT FOR THE CLUB

Leadership is not a title you earn once—it's a choice you make daily. This book invites us to step into visibility, embrace imperfection, and build trust so that our legacy is defined not by what we achieve, but by the people we empower along the way.



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