

WITH A
NEW PREFACE
BY THE
AUTHOR

TOTAL LEADERSHIP



Be a Better Leader, Have a Richer Life

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The Revolution Is Here

IT HAS BEEN almost six years since the publication of *Total Leadership*, and so much has changed in our world. Indeed, we are in the midst of revolutionary changes in the leadership landscape: social, cultural, political, technological, and economic shifts that make the concepts and methods described in this book even more relevant today.

Since June 2008 we've experienced the Great Recession, rapid acceleration of the dominance of digital connectivity, undeniable changes in our global climate, the election of the first African American U.S. president, powerful new voices in the conversation about gender and the workplace, Millennials rising to bring an urgent sense of social responsibility to their careers (it's now harder to get a job at Teach for America than at Goldman Sachs), and a near-universal feeling of being constantly overwhelmed—to name just a few. People, young and old, are hungrier now than when this book first appeared for useful knowledge to

help them achieve higher levels of performance and fulfillment, not just at work, but in all aspects of their lives. And that hunger is a good thing, in my estimation, for we're all capable of growing our leadership capacity and having a richer life, throughout our short time on this beautiful earth.

So it's perhaps not surprising that, after its national best-seller launch, *Total Leadership* continues to draw a wide audience, not just in the United States but worldwide and in many other languages. My new MOOC (massive open online course), available on coursera.org and based on this book, has over fifty thousand students enrolled worldwide. I've brought the concepts and tools described in *Total Leadership* to many different kinds of organizations—UnitedHealth Group, Target, the U.S. Army, the U.S. Departments of State and Labor, General Electric, eBay, Deloitte, Google, Citibank, and GlaxoSmithKline, among others—in Europe, South America, Asia, and the Middle East and built a privacy-protected social learning site where thousands of people can work in small groups to coach each other as they progress through the exercises.

Most heartening has been the response by students, not just at The Wharton School, where I've had the privilege of teaching since 1984, but at the many colleges and universities around the world where the book is now part of the curriculum. So many more women *and* men are now eager to invest their attention and effort in the process of diagnosing what matters most to them, engaging in meaningful dialogue with the people who matter most in their lives, and then discovering through creative experimentation new ways to live that are consistent with their core values and personal aspirations. They want to be part of a community of like-minded people who are finding ways to achieve what they truly want while also making the world better in some way.

I have worked with and heard from thousands of people who, with the help of this book, have gained greater competence and confidence in creating change that is truly sustainable in their lives. As an

organizational psychologist, I have been very gratified to see how this systematic series of exercises can transform the way people think about what's possible. My hope is that with this paperback edition, more people will find practical ideas for action that they can use to pursue four-way wins—to improve their performance at work, at home, in the community, and for the private self (mind, body, and spirit) by finding mutual value among these disparate pieces of their lives. The world needs you to lead.

Stew Friedman
May 19, 2014

How Total Leadership Came to Life

BY THE MID-1980s, my professional life was humming. I had finished my graduate work in organizational psychology, begun research on leadership development, and landed my dream job at the Wharton School. But my wife, Hallie, and I had been trying unsuccessfully to have a child for some time.

Then, finally, at 5:30 a.m. on a beautiful autumn morning, our first child, Gabriel, arrived. In a warmly lit room in Pennsylvania Hospital I stood transfixed, holding this practically perfect being for the first time. Wrapped in a yellow blanket that covered him entirely except for his calm face, Gabriel looked at me and around the room, taking it all in. I wondered, What must I now do to make our world a safe and nurturing one for him?

I could not get this thought out of my head. A week later, I arrived back in my Wharton MBA class on organizational behavior and set aside the

topic for which we'd all prepared that day, on motivation and reward systems. Instead, I told the story of what had just happened to me. I tried to extract the meaning my story might have for these talented students and incipient business leaders. "What responsibility do you have," I asked, "for creating work environments that help to cultivate the next generation? What will you do, as a business professional, to weave the strands of work, family, community, and self into the fabric of your own life?"

I don't remember much of the details of that class session—it's a blur—but I do remember the vehement reactions it evoked. About half the class scoffed, unwilling to see personal life as a relevant topic in a business school. The other half thanked me for raising such questions and for bringing more of myself to our collective dialogue.

I didn't know it then, but that moment changed my career. By giving voice to my feelings about what was important in my own life, and connecting them to the interests of others, I began a new journey. I saw how my professional role was *enhanced* by who I was in other aspects of my life, and I refocused my research to reflect the importance of bringing the whole person to work. I saw more clearly that, for me, understanding the interplay between work and the rest of life wasn't just personal, it was my calling.

Some years later, in the early 1990s, I spoke on the topic of careers at a meeting of the Academy of Management, a scholarly organization for faculty in business schools. I talked about how fatherhood had changed my career. I spoke about decisions such as giving up opportunities for tenure-track positions in favor of staying in Philadelphia for the sake of my family. Again, I found that in telling my life story I was enriching my work, this time by giving voice to similar themes in the lives of my colleagues. I made some friends that day, people who appreciated hearing about an alternative to the standard academic career model. I was learning lessons first-hand about the value of authenticity, integrity, and creativity.

At this time, I was immersed in the chaotic world of large-scale organization change. As the first director of the Wharton Leadership Program,

I was trying to create a new model of business education for Wharton, one that encouraged students to question their assumptions about career success. Students kept journals and provided feedback to each other. It was challenging—sometimes uncomfortable—for everyone involved. We at the Leadership Program felt our initiative was significant not just because it was new, but because it took an approach to leadership that responded to a real need and that attempted to integrate “telling your story” into the learning process.

We explored the intersection of career and life interests, using data we were generating through the Wharton Work/Life Integration Project, an initiative that gathered information from thousands of students and alumni. We were making connections between leadership development and personal-life challenges. Sparks flew. Students had to think about ways of forging careers that fit with their deepest values. In workshops I ran for business professionals on how to integrate work and personal lives—and how to find solutions that worked for individuals as well as for their businesses—I found an unquenchable thirst for useful knowledge, especially (but not only) among women.

At the same time, I was also consulting with companies committed to leadership development. The business world was embracing the idea that learning leadership was not just possible, but imperative to fostering organizational vitality. My work included designing educational experiences for nascent leaders and blending these experiences into a company’s career-advancement system.

As an outgrowth of these activities, I was invited to create a leadership academy for a major American manufacturer. In 1999, I left academia to test my ideas in a corporate setting. The new CEO wanted to connect leadership development with the need to help employees find better ways of integrating work with the rest of life. Such integration was essential to attracting and retaining the best people. Our programs were dedicated to learning leadership by doing it, and we had to ensure that each of our participants produced value for the company while at

the same time growing as leaders. We wanted them to think creatively about enhancing the company's value to consumers, but we also wanted participants to see themselves in a new light—as reinvented, more confident leaders.

One program for high-potential middle managers focused on what was then called the “new economy”; it needed to prepare people to lead in the burgeoning digital world. As this program's purpose crystallized, it dawned on me that we could imagine new technology in the service of developing leadership capacity for *all of life*. *Total leadership* became my shorthand for a new way to think about leadership, from the point of view of the whole person.

Participants in all our programs were required to undertake some form of creative challenge, some new initiative. For this program, the initial goal we set was to *improve business results by enriching lives*. We would, as this apparently paradoxical purpose suggests, produce improved performance at the company by integrating work more effectively into the whole life of the developing leader. That leader would, in turn, create opportunities for others to do the same in the company, and beyond.

We created something new: a program that starts and ends with the person—not the business person, but the whole person. Since returning to Wharton in 2001, I've refined this program while offering it to business students and professionals in a variety of settings around the world. I have come to see that the point of the Total Leadership program is to create what I now call “four-way wins”—better results at work, at home, in the community, *and* for your self.

My purpose in this book is to bring the possibility of four-way wins to you, showing you step-by-step how to be a better leader by having a richer life and how to have a richer life by being a better leader.

Introduction

The Total Leadership Experience

TOTAL LEADERSHIP is a novel synthesis of ideas that have emerged from two traditionally separate fields: the study of leadership and the study of how individuals can find harmony among the different parts of their lives. This book presents a fresh approach for developing leadership *and* it offers a new method for integrating work, home, community, and self.

It is designed to work for anyone, at any organizational level and in any career stage, whether college student or CEO, insurance salesman or PTA president, bakeshop owner or investment banker. The Total Leadership program is for you if you sense that you are succeeding in one aspect of life while underperforming in the others, or failing to capture value from one part of life and bringing it to bear in others, or living with too much conflict

among your different roles. Instead, with Total Leadership you seek “four-way wins”: results that are meaningful not only for your work and career, *or* for your home and family, *or* for your community and society, *or* for your self, but for *all* these seemingly disparate domains of your life.

This book is based on many years of research as well as real-world, practical knowledge. I have coached thousands of people using the Total Leadership approach. If you’re like the people I’ve worked with at Wharton and elsewhere, this book will help you *perform better* according to the standards of the most important people in your life, *feel better* in all the domains of your life, and have *greater harmony* among the domains because you will have more resources at your disposal to fit the parts of your life together. You’ll achieve more and more four-way wins because you’ll be a more inspired, effective leader.

Learning the Total Leadership method and producing four-way wins is possible for anyone willing to practice *being real* (acting with authenticity), *being whole* (acting with integrity), and *being innovative* (acting with creativity). Leadership can—indeed must—be learned. It is learned by taking action toward a direction you choose, gaining support, exercising skills, reflecting on your experience, and then coaching others. Each of these steps is outlined in this book. And you can always get better at leadership, much as a master musician is always perfecting the tools of her craft. Right from the beginning, then, and through each successive chapter, I will show you how to practice the Total Leadership method and so enhance your skills and your impact.

But first let me introduce you to a couple of the people you’ll meet throughout the book, most of whom were students in my course at the Wharton School, ranging from a twentysomething Asian American marketing professional in San Francisco to an over-fifty CEO who emigrated from the Middle East to Washington, D.C., to start a technology company. These characters (all of whom are disguised) will guide you on each step along the journey you’re about to begin.

How Total Leadership Helps

“I like my work,” wrote Jenna Porter at the beginning of a workshop she took in 2005. “It gives me a sense of purpose, an opportunity to encounter and influence people in ways that make me feel good about the world I’m living in. But spending so much energy on my career has made other areas of my life fall short of my expectations.”

A forty-eight-year-old mother of three children, Jenna worked at the time as a manager at a small real estate consulting firm in Philadelphia. She enjoyed considerable success. And yet, like many people who pick up this book, she wasn’t satisfied with how things were going in her life. She reflected further: “Work infringes completely on the quantity and quality of the time I spend with my family. I’ve missed out on too much of my children’s lives. And I’ve allowed other areas of my life to suffer. I’m too busy to read, go hear live music, or do other things I love, and I’ve only managed to promote my physical health—like walking in the woods—for short periods of time. I can’t help thinking that my work suffers from the dissatisfaction I feel elsewhere.”

Jenna had numerous responsibilities beyond work. She had many people who mattered to her and to whom she mattered, starting with her partner of twenty years and their adopted children, who were seventeen, thirteen, and nine. But her sense of overwhelming responsibilities and pinched satisfaction had been growing, and was exacerbated by the fact that Jenna’s father was dying of pancreatic cancer. She wanted to change her work situation to free up time to care for him with her sister, with whom she had always been close, without sacrificing precious time with her partner and children. In the old days, the only way she knew to achieve some satisfaction in her life at work and in her life away from work was to trade off one area for another, in a chase after some kind of *balance*. But that search—with the demands of employees, kids, partner, sister, and father—seemed more and more futile.

After her four months of practicing my Total Leadership program, though, Jenna changed. She exchanged her frequent feelings of being distracted and irritable for feelings of being more fully engaged both at work and in her life beyond work. She no longer felt passive. She reduced the internal conflict that had been weighing her down, and began to focus on things that really mattered to her.

Most importantly, Jenna began to think of herself as a leader, in *all* parts of her life. How did Jenna so transform herself in such a short time? She discovered, in a frank conversation with her boss, that he cared for her and her desire to attend to her father. He was also concerned about *her* health. This emboldened her to take steps to reconfigure her work arrangements in ways she had never before considered. She came to see for the first time that because her coworkers depended on her, she could depend on them in ways she hadn't thought of before. Jenna created new freedom for herself at work by delegating to those who not only *could* take on new responsibilities but who *benefited* from doing so, for their own growth and success. She adjusted her schedule so that she could focus on the most important aspects of her job, help her sister care for their ailing father, and find time for taking a few long walks each week. In short, she became a better leader—more real, more whole, and more innovative.

Jenna works fewer hours today than she did in 2005, but she's more productive. Not only do her boss and coworkers benefit, but her family does, too. Her physical and emotional well-being has improved. For Jenna, the Total Leadership program provided a way to create small changes at work (delegating more and spending less time at the office) that produced better performance all the way around—four-way wins. She learned how to work with colleagues and connect with her family and community in new ways, enlisting support by ensuring that others benefited also from changes she was making. She's a new kind of leader.

André Washington, a thirty-three-year-old from Seattle, came to my Total Leadership course with a different set of frustrations. A product man-

ager at a major technology firm, he was seen by higher-level executives as someone with a bright future in the company. At six feet, André projects confidence without being intimidating. He has a balding pate and close-cropped hair. His alert eyes focus intently on audiences large or small. He listens well, and when he speaks, he does so with a voice that conveys authority.

I see myself as introspective and self-aware, and also open to change. I feel a strong pressure to achieve and succeed, especially financially. It's not an overburdening pressure; I welcome it. I feel capable—even, in some ways, destined—to achieve exceptional success, to contribute and to make an impact, particularly within my community.

But something is missing. Yes, I'm successful, but I just don't feel as if I've reached my full potential. I like my job, but I sense stagnation creeping in. I'm leaving a lot on the table in terms of both my ability to contribute as well as the quality of my contribution. I'm underperforming, and that cheats me, my family, and other people I care about. I need to make some changes, not just to feel better but to do things that genuinely benefit all the areas of my life.

At the start of his Total Leadership experience, André wrote about a future that was consistent with values in which he believed strongly but by that time had gone “largely unexpressed.” He set out to share with others this image of his desired future in order to test his ideas and win their support. He started with his wife, who had long wished that André had more time to spend with her and their two rambunctious girls, ages six and two. He also conveyed it to his mother and sister, who were financially and emotionally dependent on him.

Then André tried some experiments that would establish a greater “sense of true purpose.” He took a first step toward realizing his “ultimate

career objective”—a chain of upmarket salons predominantly serving black women—by working with his wife to research both the market potential and how to raise seed capital. He experimented with using technology to communicate more efficiently with his current work team, which helped him to be more effective in his current job and gave him valuable experience that he might apply when, in the future, he founded the new business with his wife. He began to take swimming lessons, along with his two-year-old daughter, which fulfilled a long-held wish, gave him a practical skill, boosted his confidence, and enhanced his relationship with his younger child.

André's Total Leadership journey brought marked results. "I not only perform better overall, but I feel better," he says, four months after starting out. In using his time more intelligently, he's now a more valuable asset to his current employer. He took the steps toward his new career goal with his wife. Their relationship improved, as did hers with her family and friends far away. He's doing things that make him happier; he's inspired. Perhaps paradoxically, his energy at work is greater now than it was before because he's looking forward through a new lens.

Jenna and André are very different people, of course, yet they are typical of those I meet every day in classes and workshops. What they have in common is that they are successful by some standards, but want to perform better and do more of the things that matter most to them. They want to be better leaders and have richer lives.

People like Jenna and André—and you—try the Total Leadership program for a variety of reasons. Some feel unfulfilled and unhappy because they're not doing what they love. Some don't feel genuine. Too many of their daily responsibilities and activities are inconsistent with what they value and who they really want to be. They're unfocused and so they lack a sense of purpose, infused with meaning and passion.

Some have a sense of being disconnected; they feel isolated from people who matter to them. The parts of their lives don't seem to fit

together into a whole, so they're overwhelmed and pulled in too many directions. They feel stressed and unable to accomplish important tasks on time because they're distracted or overextended. They resent doing what others want, not what they want; or, on the flip side, they feel guilty for not doing enough for others. They despair that people at work don't see them as leaders who contribute to others' success. They crave stronger relationships, built on trust, and yearn for enriched social networks beyond those that now seem narrow. They want to feel more connected, to belong.

Some are in a rut. They want to find something new that taps their creative energy and engages them, but they lack the clarity—and the courage—to do so. They feel as if they're not moving forward. They lack the skills to manage the torrents of information flooding their everyday lives, making it impossible to realize the promise of new media for greater freedom. They feel out of control and lack the kind of flexibility they need to fit it all in.

Despite such frustrations, many of us feel compelled to make our world better—to lead more effectively in all aspects of our lives. The concrete steps laid out in this book show you how to do this, to tap your energy for creating meaningful change and enjoy the fruits of your own transformation.

Total Leadership Yields Real Results

Total Leadership came to fruition when I was recruited to head up a leadership development program at a *Fortune* 50 company. We started with thirty-five high-potential managers from across the globe. They followed all the steps in the Total Leadership program and, in the span of about four months, implemented changes that touched work and the other parts of their lives. Their experiments produced a combined \$5.8 million in cost savings, \$0.7 million in new revenue, and \$0.5 million in productivity gains.¹

In addition to the quantifiable dollar results, these business professionals improved their relationships with customers and colleagues, and felt more satisfied with their jobs. They felt more deeply connected to their families and their communities, especially since they had drawn them into the process of change. They reported feeling healthier and less stressed. They were making better use of leisure time. And they were feeling better about the company and more excited about tying their futures to its future.

They accomplished these results not by instituting lean manufacturing or quality-control programs like Six Sigma. They did it by reframing the idea of business leadership, by applying new skills and insights at work, at home, in the community, and within the self.

By now many more people have tested my Total Leadership method in classes at the Wharton School and in workshops around the world. They find that by proceeding through a guided series of exercises and experiences, they can make changes that allow them to focus their time and energy better. Their core values surface, allowing them to transform the way they allocate their attention, skills, and resources. As a result, their daily actions become more closely aligned with their values. They work smarter, with greater focus and commitment. They achieve the results that matter to them most, in *all* areas of their lives.

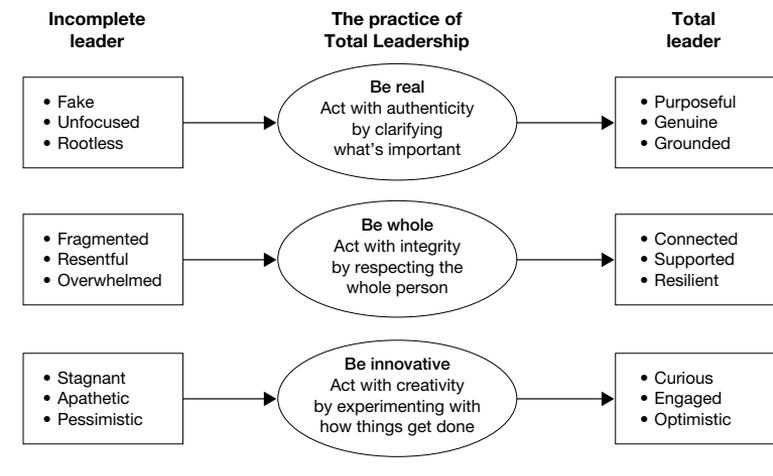
I have asked hundreds of participants to compare how they assess their satisfaction before and after they've taken themselves through Total Leadership. Their levels of satisfaction increase by an average of 20 percent in their work lives, 28 percent in their home lives, and 31 percent in their community lives. Perhaps most significantly, their satisfaction with their own interior lives—physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual—increases by 39 percent. Similarly, they report that they believe their own performance at work, at home, in their communities, and within themselves has improved, respectively, by 9, 15, 12, and 25 percent.

Both satisfaction *and* performance get better.

Total Leadership is not an abstract idea: it is a structured method that produces measurable change. You become more focused on the things that matter, and so you feel more grounded, more like the person you want to be. You generate more support and feel more connected to the important people in your life. You become more resilient in response to the vagaries of our turbulent world. And you become more open to discovery and so feel more hopeful, indeed enthusiastic, about the future and your power to shape it.

FIGURE 1-1

Becoming a total leader



Learning the Practice of Total Leadership in This Book

Through the exercises you'll do and the guidance I'll provide, you will improve your leadership ability and impact by practicing these principles, to which the three parts of this book correspond.

Be Real: Act with Authenticity

Acting with authenticity gives you the strength that comes from doing what you love, drawing on the resources of your whole life, knowing that you're creating value for your self, your family, your business, your world. Effective leaders articulate a vision—a compelling image of an achievable future—that inspires them and the people around them. Their everyday actions fit not only with their personal values but also with the values of the groups of which they are a part. Through continual observation and reflection, they know their priorities, their strengths and weaknesses. They increase commitment to common goals by genuinely talking and listening to the people they care most about. And they hold themselves and others accountable for pursuing valued goals.

In part 1 you'll explore what it means for you to be real, to clarify what's important. You'll start, in chapter 2, by writing about how crucial events in your past have shaped your values and about your aspirations for your life in the future. In chapter 3, you'll take what I call the "four-way view" by assessing the relative importance of work, home, community, and self; how much you actually focus time and attention to each of these parts of your life; how satisfied you are with them; and how well the goals you pursue in them are aligned with each other. This is the foundation for authenticity and for everything that follows: knowing what really matters to you.

Be Whole: Act with Integrity

Acting with integrity satisfies the craving for a sense of connection, for coherence in the disparate parts of life, and for the peace of mind that comes from adhering to a consistent code. Effective leaders take responsibility for recognizing and respecting the value of all aspects of life. They align the interests of different people in gaining support for common goals. They maintain the boundaries that enable value to be

created at work as well as in other aspects of life. They nurture social networks and partnerships that provide the support needed for achieving meaningful results.

In part 2, then, you'll explore *who* really matters to you. First, in chapter 4, you'll identify the most important people in your life and what you expect of them as well as what they expect of you. You'll think through how these performance expectations affect each other, looking perhaps for the first time at these central relationships in your life as an interdependent system, and asking whether this system has integrity, whether and how the pieces fit together as a whole. Then, in chapter 5, you'll think about how you use different forms of communication to connect with these "key stakeholders," as I call them, and then you'll prepare for and conduct dialogues with each, to verify your assumptions and to see what things look like through their eyes. This is often the most challenging part of the Total Leadership program, and the most rewarding, as you gain new insight about what really matters to your most important people.

Be Innovative: Act with Creativity

Acting with creativity allows you to adapt to fit new circumstances, gives you confidence to try new ways of doing things, and keeps you vital. Effective leaders continually rethink the means by which goals are achieved; they keep a results-driven focus while providing maximum flexibility (choice in how, when, and where things get done). They have the courage to experiment with new arrangements and communications tools to better meet the expectations of people who depend on them. They don't rely on face time for getting things done, but use it wisely while taking advantage of the flexibility and control afforded by new media.

With a new, clearer perspective on what and who matters most, you've set the stage for what is the usually most enjoyable part of the process: part 3, on being innovative, in which you'll design and implement smart

experiments—based on all that you’ve learned in the process so far—to produce better results in all parts of your life. As I describe them in chapter 6, there are nine types of Total Leadership experiments. In taking well-considered action to create meaningful, lasting change, you’ll discover in chapter 7 invaluable lessons about how, as a leader, to bring others along with you in the direction you’ve chosen by serving their interests as well as your own—by making them win while you win.

Finally, in chapter 8, you’ll carefully review what you’ve done to distill the lessons you’ve learned. You’ll assess the impact of your experiments on your performance and ask what worked, what didn’t, and why. You’ll take a fresh look at the expectations of your key stakeholders and at your values and aspirations. And you’ll see for yourself what these insights mean for what you can do to continue your growth as a successful leader intent on having a rich life.

But before we embark on this journey, let me explain what I mean when I’m talking about leadership, then very briefly review the intellectual and historical roots of the Total Leadership program and why I think it’s an approach that makes sense in today’s business world.

Redefining Leadership—Bringing the Whole Person In

A common definition is that *leaders mobilize people toward valued goals*.

This book focuses on valued goals in all domains of life—four-way wins—as opposed to the traditional view of understanding leadership in one domain at a time, in isolation of the others. Valued goals in any one domain are more likely to be achieved to the extent that all four domains—work, home, community, and self—are addressed as an interdependent system. You are more effective as a leader, better able to mobilize people toward a goal, if you view that goal in the context of other goals in other domains. This does not mean that you *must* address multiple

domains in order to mobilize people toward valued goals; only that you will be more effective if you do.

And who are those we call leaders? There is growing recognition in leadership theory and practice that (a) the potential for expressing leadership—for doing what leaders do—is not the sole province of managers and executives but is, rather, universal and, furthermore, that (b) groups and organizations benefit—that is, their aims are more likely to be met—when all members feel like leaders, seeing themselves as capable of mobilizing people toward valued goals. Leadership is a limitless resource: the more the better.

Being a leader, therefore, is not the same as being a middle manager or a top executive. Being a leader means inspiring committed action that engages people in taking intelligent steps, in a direction you have chosen, to achieve something that has significant meaning for all relevant parties—to win, in other words. Individuals can do this whether they are at the top, middle, or bottom of an organization or group. And they can do this in businesses, families, friendship networks, communities, and social associations.

This is not to say, of course, that the range of discretion, available resources, and breadth of impact are the same for individual contributors with no one below them, as for top executives. At different levels a leader's discretion, resources, and impact vary:

- **Individual contributor:** me and my world (work, home, and community)
- **Middle manager:** me and my world, including my direct reports
- **Top executive:** me and my world, including my organization

But four-way wins can happen at any level. The term *leader* refers to any individual who chooses to try to mobilize people toward valued goals. Everyone has the potential to lead, and to do so in all aspects of life. *Leader* in its most important sense means being the agent of your own

life, influencing the things you care about most in the world to make it a richer life.

Total Leadership challenges—and changes—the way you think about yourself as a leader. This book teaches a method for enhancing the capacity to be real, to be whole, and to be innovative—the essential qualities of a total leader—that is customized to the individual. So, for example, a fifty-four-year-old senior manager’s experience in reading it will be very different from a twenty-two-year-old student’s. Yet both will learn about what being real, being whole, and being innovative means for them; both will learn how to achieve four-way wins in their own lives.

Like other alumni of the Total Leadership program, you will see the connections between every area of your life, knowing that the best rewards come from integrating them rather than trading off between them. And you will perform *better* at work because it fits in a more meaningful way with your family life, your role in society, and your needs for health and fulfillment. As a leader, you’ll find new ways to make things better. Leadership in business, after all, isn’t just about business. It’s about life.

Redefining Work/Life— Individuals Pursuing Four-Way Wins

The Total Leadership method is about having a richer life, but it is *not* about “work/life balance.” An image of two scales in balance is the wrong metaphor. First, it suggests that we need equal amounts of competing elements to create a constant equilibrium, and for many people, equality in the importance of and attention to the different parts of life makes no sense.² Second, it signifies trade-offs: gaining in one area at the expense of another. Even though it is sometimes unavoidable, thinking about work and the rest of life as a series of trade-offs is fundamentally counterproductive. When the goal is work/life balance, you’re forced to play a zero-sum game.

The quixotic quest for balance restricts many of us. A better metaphor for our quest comes from the jazz quartet: becoming a total leader is analogous to playing richly textured music with the sounds of life's various instruments. It is *not* about muting the trumpet so the saxophone can be heard. Unless you seek ways to integrate the four domains of your life and find the potential for each part to help produce success in the others, you cannot then capitalize on synergies in places most of us don't see or hear.

It's certainly true that over the past few decades work/life advocates have produced major gains with social policies and corporate programs designed to make it easier for working men and women to lead full and productive lives.³ Unfortunately, though, work/life programs are often viewed as pitting the interests of business against those of other parts of life. We need to drop the slash and look instead to four-way wins. If we pursue four-way wins, we clarify from the start that all constituents must gain for any one of them to gain.

Many work/life policies and programs are driven from the top down and standardized, for the sake of equality. But one size can't possibly fit all. Individuals (at all levels) must act to create meaningful change, whether or not supportive policies are in place. Individuals—in their different ways, in their different circumstances—must integrate work with the rest of life. Total Leadership represents a new step in the evolution of the work/life field: it is a systematic method for producing four-way wins that is tailored to fit the lives of individuals.

Roots: Twentieth-Century Sources for Total Leadership

Since the dawn of human consciousness, people have been trying to understand the twin interests of this book: how to mobilize people to produce meaningful change and how to live a good and complete life. A survey of source ideas might start with the mythic Gilgamesh and

take us through Moses's trials in the desert, the education of Plato's philosopher-king, the transcendentalism of Emerson and Thoreau, and Karl Marx's theses on power and the means of production.

The immediate intellectual roots of the Total Leadership approach were formed more recently, by twentieth-century scholars who explored such fundamental questions as: What is leadership and why does it matter? How does work fit with the rest of life? How do organizations cultivate productive people? How do people and organizations learn and change? Let's review each very briefly.⁴

What Is Leadership and Why Does It Matter?

An early thrust in leadership studies focused on traits, arguing that good leaders exhibit certain qualities, like initiative, optimism, confidence, persistence, self-awareness, a willingness to make paramount the needs of others, a sense of purpose, the ability to encourage others, the ability to delegate, and an understanding of others' points of view. Researchers focused on how to match different leadership styles to fit the demands of different situations. In the 1990s, theories of emotional and social intelligence emerged as researchers sought models of leadership that encompassed the personal: leadership studies began to focus on the person within the leader and the value of connecting with the basic humanity of others.

What is it that leaders do that's so important? They inspire commitment to produce results that matter to the collective, whether through the "path-goal" model of leadership, in which a leader clears the path toward the goal of the group by meeting the needs of subordinates, or through the experimental model, in which leaders bring people together to improve a group, an organization, or society.

The "human potential movement" of the 1960s, with its emphasis on empowering the individual, challenged the notion of the leader as one man on high exhorting the troops below. Leadership is no longer just

about people at the top of the pyramid. In the last four decades, moreover, new approaches have increasingly focused on values that run deeper than one's performance at work.

How Does Work Fit with the Rest of Life?

While research on leadership was evolving, organizational psychologists and sociologists were rethinking the different roles we fill and how they affect each other. In the 1960s, scholars began to apply role theory and systems analysis to understanding organizations and the lives of the people in them.⁵ Other researchers in the 1970s wrote about the connections between work and family life in society and in organizations.⁶ The field of “work/family” developed, as researchers focused attention on child-rearing as an issue for business and children were reimagined as “the unseen stakeholders at work.”⁷

In the last two decades this field—now called “work/life”—has expanded to include researchers not only from child development and organizational psychology but also from labor economics and law, business strategy, cultural anthropology, public policy, family systems, and international management. Researchers have developed new models for understanding how people and organizations manage the dynamic tensions among different roles in life. The focus until very recently, however, has been on models that presume conflict between work and the rest of life. Increasingly, we are learning about how we must not view any particular part of life in isolation but, rather, as part of an interdependent system of roles with potential for both mutual enrichment and depletion.

How Do Organizations Cultivate Productive People?

Another body of ideas evolved to reverse the industrial trend toward dehumanized and dehumanizing work that resulted from the assembly line and bureaucratic organization structures. Business leaders came to

realize that the economic model of the worker as a mere extension of the machine was destructive—and it reduced motivation and productivity. By the 1960s, people in all fields were discovering new means for the expression of individual initiative and talent in the service of collective ends. The fields of human resources and organization development grew, focused on improving conditions at work in order to increase both job *and* life satisfaction. Current practices such as workplace flexibility reflect theories that emerged then about how to design work so that it makes sense for the individual and the organization.

The 1990s saw a growing number of researchers study what's now called "human capital"—the value individuals bring to business enterprises; not only technical skills, but intangibles like passion and teamwork. The idea that investment in people means investing in "whole people" has gained currency. Analyses of the new worker increasingly focus on both work and other parts of life, and on fresh conceptions of what "good work" means. Authors rooted in spiritual traditions have contributed by emphasizing the importance of meaningfulness in work and organization life.

How Do People and Organizations Learn and Change?

Thought on the nature of leadership and the pursuit of happiness inside and outside of work has been profoundly shaped by scientists of the mind—from Sigmund Freud to Carl Rogers—and by researchers who began to apply ideas about psychology and the capacity for personal growth to leaders in organizations. John Gardner wrote eloquently about what he learned from his experiences as an executive in business and government, emphasizing how the lifelong pursuit of self-knowledge is *the* leadership imperative, for it is the basis of self-confidence.

Others advanced useful models to show how knowledge gleaned from experience can produce personal change that in turn strengthens indi-

viduals aiming to effect organizational renewal. Scholars and practitioners have designed tools to systematically promote intentional change and therefore enhance leadership in organizations through a combination of real-world challenges, assessment, and social support (coaches who help extract meaningful lessons).⁸

Much has been learned about change in human systems from authors writing about the forces of resistance and the dynamics of organization culture. Organization theorists advanced the idea of “small wins” as a means for creating large-scale change.⁹ Management gurus like Peter Drucker argued that “an innovation, to be effective, has to be simple and it has to be focused. Effective innovations start small.”¹⁰ More recently, managers have been exhorted to adopt an experimenter’s scientific point of view, to equip themselves with the skills needed to engineer change.¹¹

Total Leadership in the Twenty-First Century

The Total Leadership program grows directly from these roots and responds to particular features of our present moment, the first years of a new millennium. The following sections briefly note the most critical.

Social Change

The single-earner father and stay-at-home mother have been replaced by diverse models of “the standard home,” demanding a radical revision in the expectations for time devoted to work, by men and women. Gender equity, while not yet achieved, is gaining ground in all spheres of society, creating new expectations and opportunities. In the wake of recent corporate scandals, the status of business is low, and citizens demand greater corporate accountability and ethical action. New public policies oblige business executives to find firmer moral ground and to avoid the temptations of greed.

Demands of a New Workforce

People want to do work that has a positive impact on a world in which conflict seems pervasive. The best companies to work for are those in which employees work hard while having fun with people they see as their friends. Yet loyalty to a single organization is gone.

Technological Shifts

The digital revolution is forcing everyone to learn how to exploit new communication tools that promise freedom (allowing us not to be bound to a particular time or place) but often lead to a new kind of slavery (24/7 connectivity). New media require that *we*—as leaders of our lives—choose where, when, and how to get things done, to manage the boundaries between different parts of life. This sets us apart from all prior generations, whose work routines were determined by the turning of the seasons and the rising and setting of the sun.

Changes in Organizations and Markets

The torrid pace of change is compelling everyone in business to adapt to new situations, all the time. Ever-increasing demand for better productivity stresses and fragments our lives, causing health problems and burnout. At the same time, businesses are competing in the “war for talent” as labor shortages continue in critical sectors of the economy. Flatter organization structures mean a greater sense of responsibility for all, while globalization and the increasingly diverse pool of employees require new approaches to motivating people from different backgrounds.

How to Use This Book

The Total Leadership program draws on these sources and responds to the demands of today’s world. But it starts and ends with the indi-

vidual, with *you*, in the context of your whole life and the relationships that matter most. Social structures and management practices shape the contours of what's possible in our everyday lives. The most powerful changes, though, are driven locally, by people who believe in themselves and who know how to get the support they need to make new things happen.

It takes leadership to drive change and make it so.

You've got to choose to lead, no matter what your position, no matter what the stage of your career, no matter what your life circumstances, no matter how much you are being buffeted by changing conditions. If you're going to make a difference, thinking of yourself as a leader will make it more likely that your legacy—not your fantasy, but the real impact of your life, today and in the long run—turns out to be the one you really want.

People are attracted to the Total Leadership method because they want to solve certain problems, but by going through its process, they usually discover solutions to problems they didn't even know they had. This book will take you through realistic steps so that you can become the leader you want to be.

The Total Leadership experience requires only that *you* take a realistic look at the big picture of your life and then use tools designed to help you lead more effectively. You'll decide on what changes you want to make and how you want to make them. You will be doing some serious introspection. But you'll also be reaching out to others. You'll have intensive, productive conversations with people in your inner circle. Because it involves other people, this program builds in accountability that makes changes stick.

While you may be tempted to skip around in the book, there is a well-honed logic to the process, and I encourage you to go through it in order, in its entirety. Take your time and be thoughtful about your responses to the assessments and exercises, as they set the stage for future actions.

If you are interested in a deeper exploration of the research underlying the Total Leadership approach, appendix C, Further Reading, will familiarize you with the best relevant literature and research. And if you want tips on how to implement these ideas in a group or company, read appendix B, Scoring Four-Way Wins with Total Leadership in Your Organization.

How to Use the Exercises

The exercises here will change how you think and act. I've tried to make the instructions straightforward so that you'll find them doable. Except in a few instances, I don't expect you to write things down in this book, so find a place to keep the things you write, whether it's in a hard-copy notebook or a digital file. You might even want to make audio or video recordings instead of literally writing.

The investment you're making in your growth as a leader takes time. A useful time frame for reading this book and doing the exercises—some of which will take place in minutes, others hours or days, and still others weeks—is about four months, start to finish. But you control the pace. This investment will be just the beginning of a new way for you to grow as a leader.

How to Create a Coaching Network

While it is possible on your own to apply the basic principles of this book, you'll get more from it if you find companions in the process. Completing this program with others on your side is smart because it prevents your resolve from waning when no one's looking. Other people push you to do what you say you'll do, think more deeply, and see things differently to sustain real change. And you learn more by helping others with what they're trying to make happen.

Consider enlisting someone you know as your coach. A coach can provide another vantage point to help you refine what you learn through

the early exercises, and then, later, to encourage intelligent risk taking in your experiments. A coach can help you to interpret your results, to crystallize the lessons you'll take away. He or she can also enhance your confidence by providing emotional support, and can give you specific ideas for achieving your goals.

The simplest approach is to find one other person to be both your coach and a client whom you'll coach. But better is to form a trio: a small network of friends, family, or colleagues. Let's say you've got Ali, Barb, and Charles. Ali coaches Barb, Barb coaches Charles, and Charles coaches Ali. This way, when you're coaching you're really focused on the other person, and vice versa. Coaching doesn't have to be complicated. It involves reading and commenting on what your client writes and talking with him about his actions. I'll let you know when, as a client, it's a good time to speak to your coach and, as a coach, to your client. I'll also give you suggestions for questions that will be useful for you to ask your client. See also appendix A, Your Total Leadership Coaching Network.

www.totalleadership.org

You're not the only one wrestling with the challenges of becoming the leader you want to be and integrating work and the rest of life. I've created an online network to serve as a gathering point for a community of people dedicated to supporting each other's efforts to produce meaningful, sustainable change. At www.totalleadership.org you can have access to others who have taken the Total Leadership journey and who are eager to serve as coaches, share ideas, and promote innovation. You'll also find resources there, such as performance tools, further reading, interviews with thought leaders, examples of great experiments, stories about total leaders in action, and blogs and links on topics of interest.

Getting Started: Your Goals

People who have gone through the Total Leadership program, like Jenna and André, report that they're living closer to the lives they want to lead, seeing their work as producing value not only for them but for others, and so they feel more connected and have a greater sense of purpose.

The Total Leadership process helps you develop your capacity for choosing the best direction. And while everyone takes the Total Leadership course for a different reason, most are eager for some sort of constructive change. Now, find a convenient place (notebook, electronic file, blog, audio or video recording—whatever suits you) to write briefly about your initial thoughts on why you're reading this book. Use the following exercise as a guide. Stating your goals explicitly will help you customize your experience throughout this book and will make it more likely that you reach them.

This initial exercise is both a starting point and a reference point. Assessing your goals establishes a baseline, which will make it easier to see how you've changed—how your performance has improved and

YOUR GOALS FOR THE TOTAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

In a paragraph or two, describe what led you to read this book and what you hope to get out of it. Take a few moments to let your responses surface; then write your response in whatever place you've chosen to record your work for Total Leadership.

what you've learned about yourself as a leader—as a result of the work you will do throughout this book.

Yet your reasons for reading this book might shift over time. This happens often. Goals change. This is actually a good thing, because it shows that you're thinking about what's important and that you're adapting as new opportunities arise and as you see things from new points of view.

Now let's move on to learning about what it means to be real.

PART I

BE REAL

Act with Authenticity

Clarify What's Important to You

THE ESSENCE OF BEING REAL, of acting with authenticity, is in knowing what you care about and then doing your best to be true to these values and aspirations. The exercises you'll do in this chapter will help you articulate these most important aspects of your life's purpose, and so provide the foundation for everything else you'll do in the rest of this book.

You can't help but like Kerry Tanaka right from the start. She works in marketing for a pharmaceutical company, for which she travels a lot, especially to Europe. At twenty-seven, she's single and keeps her five-foot-four-inch frame fit by running in marathons. Kerry is a first-generation American, born in the United States to parents who were both from Japan. "Growing up as a Japanese American in an upper-middle-class, white community—looking different on the outside—forced me to focus on shaping the type of person that I am on the inside," she said. She lives alone in the pastel-colored condo she bought recently in San Francisco.

Her perky enthusiasm for everything she does makes her a real pleasure to be around.

When I asked Kerry, at the beginning of her Total Leadership journey, to describe in the best case what her future would look like, fifteen years hence, she wrote:

Fifteen years from now, I look back with some amazement on the growth of the ten-year-old company I am running, having overseen its expansion from seventeen people at the start to the nearly one thousand employees today. The executive team has fostered a culture of belonging. People feel like part of a family, and all employees know their contributions to the bottom line are essential. They look forward to coming to work each day and are committed not only to the products we are developing and marketing, but also to the people they work with. We are proud of our portfolio of innovative products, which makes a real difference to the physicians who prescribe them and the patients who use them.

People see me as a leader with integrity, humility, and compassion. They know I don't forget my roots. I remember my employees' names and know them as people, not just as workers. I know their families and they know me. Many women think of me as their mentor. I recognize the potential and abilities of the future stars of my company and care about cultivating the next generation of leaders.

I have a family of my own. My kids are in grade school. I have the type of relationship with them that I have had with my mom. I am involved in their lives—going on field trips, supporting them in their extracurricular activities, and being a friend, teacher, disciplinarian, and caregiver. My kids are growing up to be kind, compassionate adults. Helping to make this happen is the most important thing I've done.

Let me take you back from Kerry's imagined future to the present. Kerry typically puts in an eleven-hour day. Her hectic travel schedule doesn't get her to where she would most like to go: to see her parents and brother. They live far away; she misses them. She makes up for the absence of family, in part, with her diverse circle of friends, a few very close ones and many casual ones. Outgoing and social, Kerry loves to join her boyfriend and other friends for dinner, movies, and concerts. Yet, despite all of her activities, something's missing.

When I asked her to say why she wanted to try the Total Leadership program, Kerry answered that "being a single woman, I tend to focus like a laser on work and professional development. Ultimately, this has left me feeling empty. I want to make time for my close friends, so we can just have fun and chat about the things that are important in our lives. People at work are fairly supportive, but I don't think they understand my desire to better sync my home life with my life at work."

You just read excerpts from Kerry's responses to some of the exercises in this chapter, all of which are designed to help you to pay attention to yourself and your world—to see things in a new light. Clarifying what's important lets you identify gaps between what you value, how you're acting in your life, and how you are interacting with the people who matter most to you. This then enables you to imagine meaningful change.

By the end of this chapter, you'll have done some introspection about your life's important events, your heroes, your desired future, and your core values. All told, these exercises should take about three hours. (Some people spend more time and some less; you certainly don't have to do it all in one sitting.) My main advice is to take the time—don't rush it—and be honest with yourself. You'll get the most out of this important foundation building if you write openly and candidly. Keep in mind that the versions you produce in these exercises, for your own private use, need not be the same as the versions you might choose to show others.

Where Have You Come From?

To deepen your awareness—of who you are and who you want to be—look back and assess what events and people have shaped you, and then write about them. You are addressing big questions here: Who am I? Where do I come from? Doing this will make it easier and more meaningful, in the following exercises, to write about where you're going and what you care about most. And this, in turn, makes it easier for you to talk about these things in a comfortable and engaging way with the people who matter most.

WHERE HAVE YOU COME FROM?

For this exercise, find a comfortable place to reflect, and then compose your responses—in a journal, in a blog, on an audiotape, or anywhere—to the two questions below. Give yourself ample time to do both, in one sitting or in multiple sittings.

Your Story: Critical Events in Your Life

Think back over your personal history and identify the four or five most important events or episodes in your life, the moments that have defined who you are today. Tell the story of these events, in chronological order, and for each one, briefly describe the impact the event had on your values and on your direction in life.

Your Hero: Someone You Admire

In a paragraph or so, describe someone you admire. Think of this person as someone you see as heroic in an important way. It might be someone whom you know personally or someone you only know about but have never met. After you describe him or her, write a sentence or two about what makes this person admirable to you.

To convey a story that inspires others, you have to find a way, somehow, to make sense of your personal history and then connect it to the collective—whether that collective means people at work, your family, or friends and community members. Thinking through these connections starts with the events that have influenced the ideals you hold most dear.

Martin Luther King Jr. wove the strands of *his* own life into our collective history and passionately communicated an image of what an entire nation could achieve in his “I have a dream” speech—a call to action in 1963 that moved a generation of Americans to produce lasting change. It’s the best example I know of the power that comes from connecting a personal story with a collective narrative. When, at the start of that speech, he recounted the litany of historical injustices, we knew he had suffered them personally. And when he spoke about the future, it was his vision for *his* family, but also for *our* country: “I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” None of us can be King, of course, but we can all emulate him, in our own way, because we all have the capacity to relate our own story to the larger one of which we’re a part.

I really do mean for you to tell a story. “The story is a basic human cognitive form,” writes Howard Gardner in *Leading Minds*. “The artful creation and articulation of stories constitutes a fundamental part of the leader’s vocation.” Gardner adds, “Narratives that help individuals think about and feel who they are, where they come from, and where they are headed . . . constitute the single most powerful weapon in the leader’s literary arsenal.”¹

When you tell your leadership story, you articulate your “defining moments,” as leadership scholar Joseph Badaracco calls them. They often involve choices you’ve made in your life in which your values are revealed, shaped, and put to the test. These episodes create clarity about the things that matter to you, about your abiding commitments. Steve Jobs, cofounder of Apple, spoke at Stanford University’s graduation in

2005 and told a story about when he was fired at thirty years old from the company he'd created in his parents' garage ten years earlier:

It was a very public failure, and I even thought about running away from the Valley. But something slowly began to dawn on me—I still loved what I did. The turn of events at Apple had not changed that one bit. I had been rejected, but I was still in love. And so I decided to start over.

I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.²

Jobs told this story to teach a lesson, to illustrate the importance of staying true to yourself, of authenticity, and choosing to pursue work that is meaningful. His story speaks volumes about persisting in the face of rejection to find the freedom to be the leader you want to be.

I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle.

Roxanne's Story

When you meet Roxanne Pappas-Grant in a work situation, you are struck by her focus and the degree to which she is in control, and takes

control, of any situation. In her early forties, she has well-coiffed hair, perfect teeth, and subtle makeup that enhance the natural beauty of her soft eyes and nose. She's every inch the consummate business manager of the twenty-first century: strongly driven to succeed, Roxanne is an engineer heading up sales development for a division of a multinational chemical company. "I have always been incredibly focused on my career," she said about herself, "and on accomplishment through career progression."

Roxanne, though, has another side. She's also a wife and mother who, when I first met her, had been growing less and less satisfied with her life as she felt increasingly disconnected from her family, especially her children. Work is really important to Roxanne, but it's not everything: "I have learned through hardship that my career accomplishments do not define who I am, and I've discovered that I have a lot to offer in ways that are not always rewarded in the work world." When asked about her goals for Total Leadership, she said, "I believe that I should have a clearer vision of what I want to accomplish in my life, not only in my work life, and uncover what constitutes success in this arena. It is this journey to uncover what is most important to me—I am not sure I yet know—that has led me here."

Early in her Total Leadership experience, Roxanne came to see that the person she is at work—the values and interests she pursues in that area of her life—is not the person she wants to be outside of work. This disappointed her, and she looked to find ways to be her true self at work to build her relationship with her children, which would also enhance her sense of self and, she hoped, make her more effective in her career.

To begin the process of redefining her work persona, Roxanne wrote about the critical events in her life:

My father has had a strong impact on my life. He has very high standards for performance, believes there is no substitute for hard work, and believes one should always look inward to discover how

to improve. My birth was his last chance for a son—there was even a boy's name picked out for me. Instead of being disappointed, he decided I would be “the son he never had” by transferring a lot of his own hopes and dreams to me. He came to the United States as an immigrant from Greece and trained as an electrician's apprentice. He guided me to become an electrical engineer, to learn how to think and to have more opportunity than he had.

In school, I wasn't one of the popular kids, and I studied more than socialized. I found it liberating not to be part of the “cool crowd.” I could take actions that I thought were more principled; I didn't have to concern myself with what my friends would think or do. This led me to value being respected over being liked—a value I've found important as a leader. I must admit, though, that it's nice to be liked.

In college, I did become a “popular kid.” While I still valued being respected over being liked, I discovered that I had a knack for motivating people. In my senior year, I was president of four campus organizations and very active in four others. I found that I had a genuine desire to work with people, and although I was strongly pursued by the engineering school for the doctoral program in electrical engineering, I opted for a role in managing people and teams.

Writing about critical events in her life helped Roxanne see more clearly how she came to be who she is and what matters to her. For one thing, it reinforced her sense of being on the right track in her career. And it helped her to understand why she tends to focus on work in a way that detracts from achieving other important goals in her life.

Everyone has a story to tell, and each one is different. Everyone's leadership journey is, and must be, a unique one. Further, the more you're able to draw on the actual story of your life, and tell it, when you're trying to convey what's important to you and where you're headed, the more the people around you will know, understand, and relate well to you.

I urge you to practice so that you can become a good storyteller. Learn to tell inspiring stories about who you are and where you are going. As Noel Tichy explains in his classic, *The Leadership Engine*, “The most effective leaders are those who are in touch with their leadership stories . . . When we know our stories, we know ourselves.” Your stories, though, are not just for you. They are important because, as Tichy writes, “they allow other people to know us. Stories create real, human connections by allowing others to get inside our minds and our lives.”³

Heroes of Kerry and André

It's also useful to explore the people you have admired and their stories. Describing a hero of yours and explaining what you admire about him or her helps you visualize a real person who embodies qualities you'd like to emulate. It's another window on the leader you want to become. Kerry chose as her hero her younger brother, Dan.

At the age of twenty-four, Dan enlisted in the U.S. Army. Throughout his tour of duty, he has shown incredible resolve and discipline. Since enlisting, he has been completely focused on two things: finishing up his college degree and becoming a Green Beret. He is well on the way to accomplishing both goals. After researching the details of the strenuous Green Beret/Special Forces qualifying course, he trained for several months to prepare himself both physically and mentally. Dan was selected and begins his Green Beret/Combat Medic training in three weeks. I have no doubt that he will successfully complete the rigorous two-year training program. Dan is my hero because he has relentlessly pursued his objectives. But more importantly, I have a great deal of respect for how he has pursued them. He has demonstrated character and passion throughout.

Kerry's choice reflects not only the importance of her brother to her, but the value of perseverance, pursuing goals that matter, and doing so

in a way that generates respect. Describing her brother as her hero led her to see more clearly that these are important values for her own life.

André Washington chose his mother as his hero.

She was born in the segregated South, and is the third of ten children. Her mother died from a respiratory illness resulting from poor working conditions, and at the age of sixteen my mother moved to Chicago, where she was then raised by her aunt. After marrying my father and moving west—and after suffering several years of spousal abuse—she divorced him and found herself alone raising two children. Over the next several years, working for wages below the poverty line, she successfully sent her two children to college and, following their graduation, earned her own BA in social work. All personal, professional, and spiritual growth I have achieved over my lifetime I owe to the selfless dedication and determination of my mother. Her life continues to inspire my every motivation to achieve.

André sees his mother as a model for how to persevere in the face of adversity. Reflecting on people you admire taps into strong emotions, because people we admire usually demonstrate a dramatic triumph of resolve over harsh realities. Everyone can relate to this kind of struggle and, in itself, it's useful as a reminder that the achievements of most leaders—people who aim to change things, to make things better—are hard won.

Telling the story of people who matter to you, and why they matter, is also a powerful means for conveying your values to others. It's a way of revealing things about yourself in an authentic way—in a way to which others can easily relate. You'll see just how useful this is as we move along in the Total Leadership process, when you talk with the people closest to you about what's most important to you.

Your Leadership Vision

The next step in clarifying what's important is to write what I'll refer to as your *leadership vision*—a *compelling image* of an *achievable future*. It is an essential means for focusing your attention on what matters most to you—what you want to accomplish in your life and what kind of leader you wish to become. A useful leadership vision must be rooted in your past and address the future while dealing with today's realities. It represents who you are and what you stand for, and it inspires you, and the people whose commitment you need, to act to make constructive change toward a future you all want to see.

It's important that this story of the future you're inventing is indeed a compelling image of an achievable future. Let's examine each of the four key words.

- A *compelling* story of the future is engaging; it captures the heart, forces you to pay attention. Those who hear it want to be a part of it somehow. And they are moved. Think of King's stirring language and the ideas—freedom and justice—that appeal to our highest aspirations.
- And if others could travel into the future with you, what would they find? What does your future look like—what's the *image*? A well-crafted leadership vision is described in concrete terms that are easy to visualize and remember. Think of King again: “One day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.” Everyone can picture that and know what it means.
- Your vision, the story of your future, should be a stretch, but it must be *achievable*, too. If it were not achievable, you would have little motivation to even bother trying. Again, King: “With

this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.” It’s not a pie in the sky. It is possible.

- Finally, *future* simply means out there—some time from this moment forward, but not so far away that it’s out of reach. In his sensational conclusion, King calls for sounding the chimes of freedom *now* so that a new, changed world arrives, faster: “When we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day.”

While you may want to write the story of your future in the form of a detailed plan that charts specific milestones for the road ahead, don’t get so hung up on particular targets that if you fail to hit them, you’ll be disappointed. This isn’t meant to be an exercise in project management but, rather, an opportunity for you to dream, with your head in the clouds *and* your feet on the ground. So, while you should say a few things about how you’ve gotten to where you are fifteen years hence—the journey, that is—write as much in this story about the destination, what your everyday life actually looks like once you’re there.

Also, understand that inspiration is a function of great aspirations. What contributions to our world do you dream of making? Try to focus part of what you compose on how you will, in the future, be making the world a better place in some way, for other people. You might think of this as your legacy. If, in other words, fifteen years more is all you have, what you will leave behind after you’re gone? What will your life have meant to others?

Like all the exercises here in this first part of the book, describing your leadership vision in writing raises your awareness of what is important to you. It will likely give you new ideas for what you might do to better align your actions with your values. It should provide inspiration

YOUR LEADERSHIP VISION

In this exercise, describe the kind of leader you want to become by writing a short story of your life between now and fifteen years in the future.

Take your time to think about it and start writing as soon as you're ready. Write vividly. Make it come alive and don't hold back. The more of yourself you can pour into this, the more valuable it will be to you as you progress through this book.

What if you don't even know where you want to go with your life or what you want it to look like? Give it your best shot. Open your mind to your imagination, and try not to be constrained by what you think others want and need from you. (In the next part of the book, we'll deal with the expectations of others.) Take the leap.

Ideally, your finished draft will be about one page. It will be a compelling image of an achievable future. It will also describe the journey, how you got there, and the destination, what a typical day looks like. Finally, it will show how you're making the world better in some way.

for the choices you're making now—and in the long run—about how to spend your precious time.

It's natural to have some trepidation about writing the story of your future. (In fact, it's natural to have some anxiety about many of the exercises in the Total Leadership process.) There are risks involved when you articulate your leadership vision: what if it doesn't come true? Another possibly inhibiting thought is what others might make of it. How much of what's inside—your goals and aspirations—can you trust other people to respect? Don't worry about that for now. I'll get to the subject

of how to communicate your vision to others after you've written your first draft. Remember that throughout this whole process, you control your information, and you need not reveal anything to anyone if you don't want to.

Some people find it difficult to write a story about the future because they do not want to make the choices it requires. A leader chooses goals, after all, a purpose that establishes something to aim for and move toward, even if it's only to help focus on what matters most right now. The aim of doing this exercise here, at the start, is to build your foundation: a story of your future is a point of departure and, as you'll see later, a point of return.

This leadership vision is not fixed or immutable. You will adjust it as you change and as things change around you. New information, new opportunities, new obstacles will compel you to revise it. And when you put the story of your future out there for others to comment on it, you might hear some things you don't want to hear. People might say you can't do it or that it's foolish. But if you don't let others know about it, then the likelihood of achieving it is reduced.

The more genuine your story of your future and the more people that know it, the more others will want, and know how, to contribute to making it come true, even if they may not value it now. A real leadership challenge is to show how *your* vision is the one that *others* also want, need, and will find real value in. Indeed, what is the essence of leadership if not in finding creative ways of describing a vision that others see as what they are trying to achieve?

Victor's Leadership Vision

Victor Gardner wrote the story of his future when he was in his midthirties. A classic Englishman, Victor is reserved and inscrutable, with a wry sense of humor. His wire-rimmed glasses and sharply parted blond hair give him an air of thoughtful authority, befitting his role as direc-

tor of an information technology unit in a major investment bank in New York, where he resides with his wife and two children—a six-year-old boy and three-year-old daughter.

Victor's job involves important responsibilities: he comanages a group that is building a new trading software system, he coordinates the interactions of this group with users at the executive level, and he is responsible for driving this team of twenty high-performing engineers while nurturing their careers. Yet he doesn't always feel stretched. He yearns to do something that allows him to "be able to build new things—computer systems, houses, companies, anything." Further, he wants to feel that his work is "making a meaningful difference to something or someone." He wants to "spark the passion" he once felt.

Some of Victor's leadership vision appears below. This was his first draft, less important as a model of what a "good" leadership vision *should* be, than an illustration of what it *might* be.

Fifteen years ago, I turned the corner in my working life. I climbed out of my "going through the motions" rut and rediscovered what I liked about working in technology. I also managed to crack the code of how to inspire people by making them feel good about themselves and the work they were doing. I actually learned this by working with my kids, teaching them to read and to play their first musical instruments.

The team was very successful, and its software went on to become my company's dominant desktop platform . . . [Its success] gave me freedom to focus on working in a more entrepreneurial way within the bank, building and delivering systems for many of our new business ventures . . .

I continued to work at the bank for the next five years, but I was able to embark on a couple of side ventures with colleagues

and friends. In one I was able to leverage my interest in real estate to put together a syndicate that purchased an old warehouse building, renovated it, and turned it into upscale residential apartments. Each member of my family was involved in these ventures, and this was one of the ways in which I managed to teach the kids that they could do pretty much anything that they choose to, if they set their mind to it.

I finally moved from the large corporate world to a smaller entrepreneurial situation. I had been tinkering with some artificial intelligence applications and had built a prototype of software I believed had real market value. I set up shop with a small group of people who had complementary skills, and we built a company that revolutionized how new technology is constructed.

A couple of years ago, I felt that it was time to step aside from day-to-day operations. I love gardening and began overseeing restoration projects in my local park. I also started fund-raising efforts for local botanical gardens.

Victor's leadership vision says a lot about what mattered to him at the time he wrote it. And it shows that he was beginning to see new ways of applying resources gained from his experiences in one life domain (teaching his children) to get things done in another (inspiring his employees). Writing the story of his future transformation—from working in a senior managerial position at a large bank to being his own boss, working with friends in non-bank-like settings—helped propel him faster in that direction. In reflecting about it afterward, he began to see that the task of integrating the domains of his life is an ongoing challenge and that he need not wait until he's retired to do the things he enjoys in life. And he came to see new meaning in, and opportunities for, contributions to community and society. Most importantly, writing his vision, and

then talking about it, encouraged Victor to make constructive changes in the present.

When it comes to communicating your leadership vision, you've got to have some passion. And when you paint an image of the future for others to see, you want your excitement to be contagious. It takes practice to do this in a way that is natural for you. And you will get better at it, if you try, even if you're not a gifted speaker.

The source of passion about the future you're creating is in your past. The trick is to tap into feelings about the past, which people spontaneously do when they talk about the most meaningful incidents in their lives. When you tell the story of your future, to yourself and to others, it's useful to include a story from your real past. Doing so makes the story of your future authentic, grounded as it is in the truth of your own real experience.

The answer to a common question, "What if I don't feel passionate about my career?" is to think back on our lives and focus on what has been most meaningful—and, preferably, enjoyable—so far. This leads to fruitful ideas about how to create a future in which talents and passions find outlets.

As a leader in all areas of life, you've got to look back in order to move forward.

Your Core Values

Just as every organization has its own unique set of values, so does every person. Your values—what you hold most dear and are willing to strive or even fight for—determine your actions as a leader and how you view the world around you. In order to act in a way that is consistent with your values—to be authentic, that is—you have to be conscious of what those values are. You'll describe yours in this next exercise, which can be done quickly but merits enough time to be done completely.

YOUR CORE VALUES

On one page, list the values (between five and nine is ideal) that are most important to you. For each one, explain why it's important to you in one or two sentences. To spur your thinking, here is a list of values excerpted from Robert Lee and Sara King's *Discovering the Leader in You*.^a Of course, you may choose terms that don't appear on this list.

Achievement: a sense of accomplishment or mastery

Advancement: growth, seniority, and promotion resulting from work well done

Adventure: new and challenging opportunities, excitement, risk

Aesthetics: appreciation of beauty in things, ideas, surroundings

Affiliation: interaction with other people, recognition as a member of a group, belonging

Affluence: high income, financial success, prosperity

Authority: position and power to control events and other people's activities

Autonomy: ability to act independently with few constraints, self-reliance

Challenge: continually facing complex and demanding tasks and problems

Change and variation: absence of routine, unpredictability

Collaboration: close, cooperative working relationships with groups

Community: serving and supporting a purpose that supersedes personal desires

Competency: demonstrating high proficiency and knowledge

Competition: rivalry with winning as the goal

Courage: willingness to stand up for beliefs

Creativity: discovering, developing, or designing new ideas or things; demonstrating imagination

Diverse perspectives: unusual ideas and opinions that may not seem right or be popular at first

Duty: respect for authority, rules, and regulations

Economic security: steady and secure employment, adequate reward, low risk

Enjoyment: fun, joy, and laughter

Family: spending time with partner, children, parents, extended family

Friendship: close personal relationships with others

Health: physical and mental well-being, vitality

Helping others: helping people attain their goals, providing care and support

Humor: the ability to laugh at myself and at life

Influence: having an impact on attitudes or opinions of others

Inner harmony: happiness, contentment, being at peace with yourself

Justice: fairness, doing the right thing

Knowledge: the pursuit of understanding, skill, and expertise; continual learning

Location: choice of a place to live that is conducive to a desired lifestyle

Love: involvement in close, affectionate relationships; intimacy

Loyalty: faithfulness; dedication to individuals, traditions, or organizations

Order: stability, routine, predictability, clear lines of authority, standardization

Personal development: dedication to maximizing potential

Physical fitness: staying in shape through physical activity and healthy nutrition

Recognition: positive feedback and public credit for work well done; respect and admiration

Responsibility: dependability, accountability for results

Self-respect: pride, self-esteem, sense of knowing oneself

Spirituality: strong spiritual or religious beliefs, moral fulfillment

Status: being respected for a job or an association with a prestigious group or organization

Trustworthiness: being known as reliable and sincere

Wisdom: sound judgment based on knowledge, experience, and understanding

a. Adapted from Robert J. Lee and Sara N. King, *Discovering the Leader in You* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001), 60–61. Reprinted with permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Most people don't change their values during the course of the Total Leadership program. Core values spring, indeed, from your *core*—they are usually long-standing and resistant to change. Like all the work you've done so far in this chapter, what you just wrote is a unique list, particular to your constitution, background, and experience.

I'm sure it's different from Victor's. Here's the list of his most important values, with his reason for each entry.

Authenticity—I must believe in what I am doing. Without that, people can see the lack of passion, and leadership becomes ineffective.

Honesty and trust—With honesty comes trust, and without trust, the only effective leadership style is coercion. Conversely, I think it's also important to trust others: to get their job done, to do the right thing.

Inspiration—The most effective leaders can make people feel that they want to show up every day and give it their best shot. They make people feel good about who they are and the work that they are doing. They inspire the best out of people.

Respect and being respected—It is important to respect others, from all walks of life. Everyone has something worthy of respect; it's important to find that.

Courage—Too many leaders avoid the hard questions, avoid the groundbreaking moves. Courage and the willingness to be wrong is a must-have.

Family—Work is work, but your family is your life. When all is said and done, my wife and kids are the most important things to me. Apparently, this is not a credo I live by every minute of every day, but when the chips are down, they are the most important.

Your distinctive values are an important part of what will make your own particular brand of leader. At this point it's useful to think about how your everyday life squares with what you said was important to you here, and what you might try to do that would result in a better fit than currently exists.

Pause and Reflect

Having completed the exercises so far, you have taken important steps in building your leadership capacity, improving your performance, and integrating the different parts of your life. You've spent time clarifying your motivations for reading this book, depicting important events in your life and their meaning to you, characterizing someone you've admired and what you've learned from him or her, inventing a story of your desired future, and identifying your core values.

You've become familiar with terms that might be new for you and that I'll be using the rest of the way—like leadership vision—and you may have started to think about things you can do now to make changes that will strengthen your sense of yourself as a leader who acts with authenticity, integrity, and creativity. Jot down any such ideas as they're percolating. Some people find it useful to keep a file, "Ideas for Action," that will become especially useful when you're designing your experiments.

You've met others who, each starting from a different place, have taken a journey of their own. (You'll meet the rest of the group in coming chapters.) You might think of these fellow travelers as making up a virtual learning community. They are people from whom you can learn by comparing your thoughts and reactions with theirs.

And if you're working on Total Leadership with people you know—with a coaching trio or with another person—now is a good time to speak with them about what you've been thinking and writing. Ideally, you'll have two conversations. First, find a mutually convenient time, about an hour, to review the material you've produced in this chapter with your coach. Then find another time to serve as a coach for someone else who's just completed the exercises so far. Appendix A is a guide for how to get the most out of your Total Leadership experience through serving as both a coach and a client.

PAUSE AND REFLECT ON WHAT'S IMPORTANT

Whether you pause and reflect on your own or supplement your thinking with coaching conversations, in person or online at www.totalleadership.org, here are things to keep in mind as you synthesize what you've done in chapter 2 before moving on to chapter 3.

Read through your responses to the previous exercises in this chapter. Consider the following questions. Write about them and then, if possible, talk about them with your coach.

1. What are the main ideas you take away from what you've just read?
2. Tell the story of your critical events and your leadership vision to someone. What do you learn from how they react?
3. What are the main connections between your past and your vision for the future?
4. What changes might you make to live more closely in accord with what really matters to you?

