



Principles of Leadership: Excerpts from The Tao of Leadership

By John Heider

- ❖ Emphasizing material success is the same: those who have a lot become greedy and those who have little become thieves.
- ❖ The wise leader pays respectful attention to all behaviors. Thus the group becomes open to more and more possibilities of behavior. People learn a great deal when they are open to everything and not just figuring out what pleases the teacher.
- ❖ The leader shows that style is no substitute for substance, that knowing certain facts is not more powerful than simple wisdom that creating an impression is not more potent than acting from one's center.
- ❖ The students learn that effective action arises out of silence and a clear sense of being. In this they find a source of peace. They discover that the person who is down-to-earth can do what needs doing more effectively than the person who is merely busy.
- ❖ Natural law is a blind, its justice evenhanded. The consequences of one's behavior are inescapable. Being human is no excuse.
- ❖ Silence is a great source of strength.
- ❖ True self-interest teaches selflessness.
- ❖ The wise leader, knowing this, keeps egocentricity in check and by doing so becomes even more effective.
- ❖ Enlightened leadership is service, not selfishness. The leader grows more and lasts longer by placing the well-being of all above the well-being of self alone.
- ❖ The wise leader is like water.
- ❖ Consider the leader: the leader works in any setting without complaint, with any person or issue that comes on the floor; the leader acts so that all will benefit and serves well regardless of the rate of pay; the leader speaks simply and honestly and intervenes in order to shed light and create harmony.
- ❖ Like water, the leader is yielding. Because the leader does not push, the group does not resent or resist.
- ❖ The leader does not take all the credit for what happens and has no need for fame.

- ❖ A moderate ego demonstrates wisdom.
- ❖ Can you be gentle with all factions and lead the group without dominating?
- ❖ Can you remain open and receptive, no matter what issues arise?
- ❖ Learn to lead in a nourishing manner. Learn to lead without being possessive. Learn to be helpful without taking the credit. Learn to lead without coercion.
- ❖ You can do this if you remain unbiased, clear, and down-to-earth.
- ❖ If you measure success in terms of praise and criticism, your anxiety will be endless.
- ❖ In order to do good work, you must take good care of yourself. You must value yourself and allow others to value you also. But if you make too much of yourself, you will become egocentric. Egocentricity injures both self and work.
- ❖ If you can live with the fruits of success and care for yourself properly, you will be able to foster success in other people.
- ❖ When you do not understand what a person is saying, do not grasp for every word. Give up your efforts. Become silent inside and listen with your deepest self.
- ❖ When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be. When I let go of what I have, I receive what I need.
- ❖ By yielding, I endure.
- ❖ When I give of myself, I become more.
- ❖ When I feel most destroyed, I am about to grow.
- ❖ When I desire nothing, a great deal comes to me.
- ❖ The leader who is centered and grounded can work with erratic people and critical group situations without harm.
- ❖ Being centered means having the ability to recover one's balance, even in the midst of action. A centered person is no subject to passing whims or sudden excitements.
- ❖ Stick to the yin-yang principle. Then you can do good work, stay free from chaos and conflicts, and feel present in all situations.
- ❖ All behaviors contain their opposites.
- ❖ If you want to prosper, be generous.
- ❖ When the leader gets too busy, the time has come to return to selfless silence.
- ❖ Selflessness gives one center.
- ❖ Since all creation is a whole, separateness is an illusion. Like it or not, we are team players.

- ❖ Power comes through cooperation, independence through service, and a greater self through selflessness.
- ❖ Do you want to be a positive influence in the world? First, get your own life in order. Ground yourself in the single principle so that your behavior is wholesome and effective. If you do that, you will earn respect and be a powerful influence. Your behavior influences others through a ripple effect. A ripple effect works because everyone influences everyone else. Powerful people are powerful influences.
- ❖ If your life works, you influence your family. If your family works, your family influences the community. If your community works, your community influences the world. If your world works, the ripple effect spreads throughout the cosmos.
- ❖ Remember that your influence begins with you and ripples outward. So be sure that your influence is both potent and wholesome. How do I know that this works? All growth spreads outward from a fertile and potent nucleus. You are a nucleus.
- ❖ The leader's integrity is not idealistic. It rests on a pragmatic knowledge of how things work.
 - *Definition of Integrity: adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty.*
- ❖ Demonstrating or modeling behaviors is more potent than imposing morality. Unbiased positions are stronger than prejudice. Radiance encourages people, but outshining everyone else inhibits them.
- ❖ The wise leader knows how to act effectively.
- ❖ Have respect for every person and every issue directed at you. Do not dismiss any encounter as insignificant. But neither should you become anxious or afraid of being overwhelmed or embarrassed.
- ❖ If you are attacked or criticized, react in a way that will shed light on the event. This is a matter of being centered and of knowing that an encounter is a dance and not a threat to your ego or existence. Tell the truth.
- ❖ If you are conscious of what is happening in a group, you will recognize emerging situations long before they have gotten out of hand. Every situation, no matter how vast or complex is may become, begins both small and simple.
- ❖ Neither avoid nor seek encounters, but be open and when an encounter arises, respond to it while it is still manageable. There is not virtue in delaying until heroic action is needed to set things right. In this way, potentially difficult situations become simple.
- ❖ What we call leadership consists mainly of knowing how to follow. The wise leader stays in the background and facilitates other people's process. The greatest things the leader does go largely unnoticed. Because the leader does not push or shape or manipulate, there is no resentment or resistance.

- ❖ Group members genuinely appreciate a leader who facilitates their lives rather than promoting some personal agenda. Because the leader is open, any issue can be raised. Because the leader has no position to defend and shows no favoritism, no one feels slighted; no one wishes to quarrel.
- ❖ These three qualities are invaluable to the leader: - Compassion for all creatures - Material simplicity or frugality - A sense of equality or modesty
- ❖ A compassionate person acts in behalf of everyone's right to life. Material simplicity gives one an abundance to share. A sense of equality is, paradoxically, one's true greatness".
- ❖ Compassion, sharing, and equality, on the other hand, sustain life. This is because we are all one.
- ❖ The greatest administrators do not achieve production through constraints and limitations. They provide opportunities.
- ❖ Good leadership consists of motivating people to their highest levels by offering opportunities, not obligations. That is how things happen naturally. Life is an opportunity not an obligation.
- ❖ The leader demonstrates the power of selflessness and the unity of all creation.