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An Integral Perspective of Peace Leadership

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4/7 – An Integral Perspective of Peace Leadership

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Peace leadership is the mobilization of action for just change. When people are motivated to act individually and function collectively for the benefit of humanity and the planet, peace leadership is present. Central to peace leadership is a desire for inclusion and cohesion whereby individuals are enabled to live in liberty to their fullest potential, free from the oppression of powers who seek to wield dominance. Peace leadership therefore is focused on creating a positive peace, while including essential elements working against forces for violence and aggression, or negative peace (Galtung, 3). It is an integral process to understand individual leadership capacities, relationships with others and representatives groups, and the interrelated systems underlying interactions around the world (Wells, 111-113). In this respect, peace leadership is much more than, what Einstein referred to as the “mere reduction of violence,” as it requires proactive, intentional practices to shift patterns of thinking, knowing, and doing in the face of strongly held beliefs and cherished ways of being.

Review of Literature

Peace leadership is a new area of leadership studies, and therefore the existing literature is quite limited and often quite narrow in scope. For the purposes of this review, literature was gleaned from the peace studies and leadership studies fields, and looked at articles and books discussing peace leadership narrowly defined. Literature reviewed for these purposes can be divided into four overarching categories: literature around traits, characteristics, and roles; skills and practices; work with groups; and connection to system and place. Each of these categories will be discussed below.

Traits and Characteristics of Peace Leaders

Several authors have considered peace leadership in terms of individual traits, characteristics, or examples of individual leaders. Chappell, throughout his book, discussed peace leadership in terms of

nonviolence and building one's capacity to embrace the principles of nonviolence. Boyer reviewed the *Biological Dictionary of Modern Peace Leaders* and determined that of the 701 biographies, peace leaders were those that were involved in a peace movement or in other ways connected to pacifism, but faced difficult political decisions in order to be successful in their endeavors.

Lieberfeld discussed reconciliation-oriented leadership through the lens of Lincoln's work during the United States of America's Civil War, Mandela's role in the South African conflict, and Chile's Michelle Bachelet. Findings revealed that important traits for peace leadership were emotional self-control and forgiveness, empathy, optimism about change potential, and propensities toward reconciliation. Reychler and Stellamans review of texts on various leaders revealed that there are 16 traits and characteristics of peace building leaders that are not seen in non-peace building leaders. Some of these include personality, flexibility, positive ethics, and adaptability.

In addition to a leader's traits, a person's position to affect change may be critical in peace leadership. Sarsar envisioned two kinds of peace leaders; the peace makers who work to end conflicts, and the peace builders who focus on long-term peace. It was Sarsar's belief that some of each of these types of leaders can come together and become peace actualizers, or those who have a vision and strategy for peace, but are also positioned to be successful in their endeavors.

The literature around traits and characteristics tended to look to charismatic leaders such as Gandhi or King as examples of how peace is brought forth. While such literature does acknowledge the role of the masses in such movements, the primary attention is given to a "leadership as person" model that leaves absent the interrelated importance of other aspects of such peace processes. These leader-focused discussions also occurred in the literature in terms of peace leadership skills.

Skills and Practices for Peace Leadership

Some researchers focused less on the traits, characteristics, and roles of peace leadership, but more on the skills and practices that could help a leader thrive to engage in and promote peace. In discussing the concept of peace leadership, Ledbetter assumed that if the purpose of leadership is for peace, then there must be a moral element for leaders, and they must utilize the techniques of resistance to succeed in peaceful progress. Ganz discussed more specifically the leadership practices necessary for leading social movements including building relationships; crafting a public narrative that facilitates purposeful action; engaging in creative strategizing to challenge those with power; and catalyzing action.

Reychler and Stellamans' work on peace building leaders also revealed some theories and practices that were beneficial to the peace building leaders; these were: strategic approaches to peace including communication, negotiation, creating peaceful and integrated structures; engaging in adaptive work; and having relational and mediation skills. As with the focus on traits and characteristics, focus on skills and practices still puts the primary interest on the leaders themselves, rather than on a broader understanding of any such movement.

Peace Leadership in Groups

One author argued that it is important to focus on leadership in and among groups in order to build peace. Sprietzer believed that organizational units have a role to play in peace leadership, particularly business organizations. She posited that in addition to the more traditional ways businesses can help build peace, they can also create a peace-based organizations with participative leadership and employee empowerment in order to mirror peaceful societies and help affect peace in their communities. This work begins the discussion of moving peace leadership out from an individual leader to a broader community.

Peace Leadership on a Global Scale

Lastly, some peace leadership research has been conducted around a broader role of peace leadership—one that understands the broader concepts and systems that are in place around obtaining and maintaining peace. Chappell's work around nonviolence focused not just on the individual qualities necessary for peace leadership, but also on broader social movements, as the same nonviolent techniques used at the individual level, can be also used at the broader social movement level—understanding that the movement must work together under the connection of nonviolence in order to be

successful.

Ganz, in his discussion of leadership for peace movements, also discussed the broader social movements and the challenges housed within, including: leadership organization, process for deliberation and decision making, and ways to ensure accountability. He believed in the power of leadership development to address these gaps in social movements. Adler posited that in order to truly live in peace, we must understand that the world is indivisible and peace is for everyone or for no one. In fact it, Adler argued it will take a new kind of leadership to create a more peaceful world in the 21st century- perhaps, she argued, there is a role for the female leader in that space.

The broader-scope literature also gave attention to negotiations, especially at the international scale. Leadership for peace in this sense is in the form of the effectiveness of individuals and teams to forge agreements that meet mutual interests. Interest based negotiation, multi-track diplomacy, and similar efforts are rightly credited in bringing an end to escalation of tensions in global hotspots.

The existing research on peace leadership focuses on only one or two particular facets of the leadership experience. Some authors spend time discussing unique characteristics of peace leaders, some focus more on the theoretical underpinnings of peace leadership, others focus on the sense of community that must be present to move peace forward, and finally a group focuses on the larger systems and their influence on peace. While some authors do focus on two of these themes, to date no peace leadership literature focuses on all of these important facets to peace leadership. Therefore, the greater complexity of what is involved in creating and sustaining peace is largely absent from these considerations. Peace leadership that is more integral in nature honors these traditions of theory and practice and amplifies the thinking to include more of the interplay of what may have previously been seen as disparate elements. It is the goal of the model presented below to create a theory where each of these various facets of peace leadership can be held in a collective space.

The Integral Model

Wilber's integral theory All Quadrants, All Levels, All Lines (AQAL) Model offered a perspective that allows one to place the complexities of leading and living in peace into a single framework. The AQAL Model, built as a square with four quadrants, provides four distinct yet inter-related representations of the human condition. Two quadrants, at the left, represent the interior conditions. The quadrants at the right are the corresponding exterior representations. The top quadrants also relate to the individual level of the framework. On the bottom, time is the collective expression.

The top left quadrant is known as the I-Quadrant and is characterized by individual interior experience. How we perceive the world from our subjective realm of experience is mapped in this section of the AQAL model. At the bottom left is the WE-Quadrant. While it also corresponds to interior experience, it is linked to community and the collective nature of human interactions. How we operate and give meaning to the groups closest to us are represented by this quadrant. The top right, known as the IT-Quadrant, corresponds to an individual level of experience from a more objective perspective. It is the province of theory, conceptual models, and behaviors. The quadrant shows how we describe and categorize our experience. Finally, the bottom right is the exterior-collective level. Known as the ITS-Quadrant, it is the location of our orientation to systems, larger macro processes, and our collective relationship to the environment (Integral Naked, "Introduction to Integral Theory and Practice").

An Integral Perspective of Peace Leadership

When AQAL is applied to peace leadership, the four quadrants of practice and experience are revealed. The first is the practice of inner-work represented in the I-Quadrant. The nature of this quadrant calls leaders to begin with an examination of their readiness to engage peace by determining the degree to which they embody peace themselves. The WE-Quadrant is characterized by a collective engagement oriented towards peace. It is experienced in the nature of community interactions, and relationships in the community. The IT-Quadrant in peace leadership is the theories, behaviors, and practices that provide visible evidence of peace in action at the individual level. When these actions move to the collective, whereby systems of interaction are engaged and societal structures are challenged, the ITS-Quadrant of peace leadership is brought into view. Though mapped as distinct elements, each process in peace leadership is a part of a nested and interwoven whole. The AQAL model provides a way to hold the whole in consciousness and study the practices needed to bring forward just action.

It is an empirical question of where the most effective engagement of peace leadership begins. It is likely dependent on the context of which of the four quadrants is most required as the dominant means through which action begins. From a theoretical perspective, peace leadership is likely a developmental process whereby fractals of the known elements are concurrently present. Historically, the focus has primarily either been on individual charismatic leaders who are the symbolic models of movements or on the larger movements themselves. 21st Century expressions of such movements such as Occupy Wall Street and the Arab Spring tend to be characterized more by the actions of the collective enabled by their use of social networking media. The instability of these mobilizations may be, in part, because the dominant cultural, economic, and political systems being challenged are accustomed to confronting forces with distinctly identifiable leadership. In that the structure of the movements are themselves unfamiliar, the messages and practices of peace may be lost in translation.

Such formulations leave out the catalytic nature of the theoretical orientation and the communities of practice needed to bring the dramatic nature of mobilizations to greater societal consciousness. Similarly, the quiet inner work necessary to bring disciplined action, especially of a nonviolent nature, is also invisible to the collective observing eye. Peace leadership becomes noticed when there are culminating events that confront some area of injustice. The level of preparation necessary for such action is seldom fully known. Our effort here is to create a more complete picture of what peace leadership entails so that actions can be more fully replicated and applicable knowledge can be better accessed.

The Inner Work of the Top Left Quadrant

In peace leadership, inner work may be an essential element that is not fully recognized as foundational to the efficacy of the process. At the core of this top quadrant, we look to the examples of peace leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Mohandas Gandhi, and Mother Teresa. Their individual models, as symbol and as person, give a means to understand what kinds of presentation are needed to be effective in peace leadership. The use of them as exemplars, however, creates a gap in the sense of responsibility that the general population has about its own role in peace leadership. While these figures had great skills and talents in peace leadership, through time and lore they have been raised to greater heights that seem unattainable by those who may be interested in following their lead. As such, relatively few may be able to recognize their own capacity to become embodiments of the inner work that characterizes peace leadership.

There are particular practices that are known to be related to this kind of inner work. Some of the most import to peace leadership involves meditation, reflection, and moral exploration. Peace leadership also has, at its core, the practice of respect and compassion for oneself and for the other. As recovery from violence, denigration, and self-deprecation may be a part of the human condition, a sort of moral inventory may be essential to this kind of inner work. Such exploration is likely linked to creating the conditions for individual capacity to take just action. The empathy to discover “the other” in and as one’s self involves an embrace of our common humanity and sets as the standard our individual and collective responsibility to one another.

Inner work, as such, involves specific practices. These are grounded in practices that can be learned. Peace leadership involves developing accessible means for greater populations to have ways of engaging and experiencing these practices. Doing so may be related to accelerating the shifts of consciousness in the human condition needed for sustainable just action. Essential to this quadrant is developing the skills and practices of mediation, reflection, building empathy for self and others, and forgiveness.

The Peace Theories and Processes of the Upper Right Quadrant

Peace leadership requires one to move outside of the inner work to make connections with others through that identified self. It is the space of this quadrant that peace leaders exert energy from self to other, where the work of creating peace with others begins. The notions of peace building stems from the many theories and processes that have been constructed through the years. Essential to these theories and processes are: conflict resolution, negotiation techniques, restorative justice, and reconciliation processes.

It is in this quadrant that the peace leader is able to build upon an external practice of building peace through interactions with others. Kouzes and Posner discussed that one of the functions of a leader is to model the way. Peace leaders need to be such an example to those with whom they are working to build

peace. This example comes in the way they interact to address issues of violence, power, and dominance, and how they, as Kouzes and Posner argued, encourage others to act. In this quadrant, the peace leader must be masterful at the skills of inner work and relate those to the processes that build peace among and between individuals. The peace leader must also be adept at the skills and practices of peace efforts and movements, including negotiation, communication, and mediation. Building upon these skills in relationship with the other will help with the building of like-minded groups.

Engaging the Communities of Practice of the Bottom Left Quadrant

Communities of practice are often characterized by an affinity around a given topic. Used extensively in various professional contexts, especially colleges and universities, communities of practice bring together collective knowledge and seek ways to disseminate it. In terms of peace leadership, a community of practice is one that has deep understanding and/or resonance with the principles of nonviolence, empathy, and respect for others. Such communities need not to begin with having these qualities. In taking up the role of peace leadership, one works to build these principles into the community of practice. Communities of practice may also be broadly defined to include the various groups and organizations with which a peace leader is engaged.

An added challenge to building peaceful communities of practice is that often these communities are subject to conflicts with some other group. Efforts to bring about just action are a function of the perception of imbalance in power whereby one group acts to oppress, subjugate, discriminate, or otherwise diminish the dignity of another human group. Linked to inner work, communities of practice provide a forum in which collective knowledge can be shared and practices of nonviolence can be deepened. It is the work of the peace leaders to provide the space for their own community of practice to build these skillsets— including building social and human capital— and to model the practice to those groups that may be having quite different experiences. It is this building peace out to other groups and organizations that connects to the fourth quadrant.

The Globality of the Field of the Lower Right Quadrant

The notion of globality of the field brings our concept of peace leadership beyond a leader and work with others and communities to the larger scale of the systems that operate throughout the globe. In this quadrant we see the work that must be done in order to mobilize others to build peaceful systems. We exist in a world that has many functioning systems of war, violence, and discrimination. Set in this broad context, the peace leader has much work to do in building peaceful systems. The use of several of the techniques discussed in the upper right quadrant, such as nonviolence, negotiation, and conflict resolution, on a larger scale can bring about this systemic change. In fact, as Chenoweth found, in many ways these nonviolent movements are those most effective in bringing about change for a more just world.

History has revealed that mass nonviolence movements have some of the most effective ways to bring about a cultural shift to positive peace. Classic examples of these movements include the American civil rights movement, the Indian movement for independence, and more recently the events of the Arab Spring. Although criticism has been leveled against it, movements for reconciliation, including Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, could also be seen as providing the space to build positive peace in previously violent systems.

Perhaps this last quadrant provides some of the broadest challenges to peace leadership, as it requires many mobilized in the effort to create peaceful change. This quadrant may also require multiple peace leaders working on the variety of pieces that build systemic peace. Crucial to this quadrant is the skill of systems thinking and implementation of some of the peace building theories and processes on a broader scale.

Dr. Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement

In order to fully explore the notions of an integral perspective of peace leadership, it may be helpful to

introduce a case study to highlight its principles. Many are likely somewhat familiar with the work of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Dr. Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement (GBM) in Kenya. Below is an abbreviated account of the movement and an analysis of Dr. Maathai and the movement utilizing the integral perspective of peace leadership.

Dr. Wangari Maathai was a native-born Kenyan who received her university education in the United States, earning degrees in biology prior to completing her doctoral work in Germany; becoming the first woman in Eastern and Central Africa to earn a doctoral degree. She taught veterinary anatomy at the University of Nairobi where she also became the first woman in the region to become an associate professor and to chair a department. Dr. Maathai took an active role in the National Council of Women in Kenya, and in this role she began a campaign of community-based tree planting. This work spread into the independent organization the Green Belt Movement (GBM), which she founded. The GBM focuses on poverty reduction and environmental conservation through tree planting (Greenbeltmovement.com, "Wangari Maathai").

Founded in 1977, the GBM was designed to help rural Kenyan women whose community streams were drying up, food supply was lessening, and were having to walk greater distances to collect firewood for fuel and fencing. The GBM worked to provide a small stipend for women to work together to grow seedlings to plant trees, store rainwater, and share resources (Greenbeltmovement.com, "Our History"). Dr. Maathai reported that in the first fourteen years of the organization, over 1,000 nurseries were established, where up to 80,000 women grew seedlings and then sold them to small farmers and public institutions for planting. Also, roughly ten million trees were planted and still surviving—a 70-80% survival rate. In 2004, at the time of Dr. Maathai's Nobel Peace Prize award, over 30 million trees had been planted (Africanmag.com, "Kenyan Ecologist") and over 6,000 nurseries were in place (Lappé & Lappé 30).

Not long after the GBM began, Dr. Maathai began to see that the everyday hardships the organization was addressing were actually stemming from deeper issues of "disempowerment, disenfranchisement, and a loss of the traditional values that had previously enabled communities to protect their environment, work together for mutual benefit, and to do both selflessly and honestly" (Greenbeltmovement.com, "Our History"). It was this realization that began the advocacy stage for Dr. Maathai and the GBM. Through participation in seminars on civic and environmental education, the women began to see that their abilities to enact political, economic, or environmental change were being limited by the country's leaders, as these leaders were not working for the common good and misusing natural resources. Dr. Maathai and the GBM began to protest land grabbing and the utilization of public land for private purposes. They also called for the release of political prisoners in the country, and initiated a national 'reduce, reuse, and recycle' campaign. The GBM has also focused internationally on issues of climate change, salvaging rainforests in Congo, and is working with the United Nations Environment Program on its Billion Tree Campaign (Greenbeltmovement.com, "Our History").

The GBM was more than just a political and civil activist group that engaged women in development efforts through planting trees. The GBM provided a space for local solutions to global problems. It also allowed for women who had been oppressed by autocratic patriarchy to take action together to help themselves by planting trees and controlling their own supply of firewood. Their connections with public forests shifted and they could fight back against an oppressive regime that took advantage of the country's resources (Lappé & Lappé 30-31). In essence, Dr. Maathai and the GBM allowed the space for a shift to occur in Kenya- bringing more empowerment to women, a recognition of the importance of the environment in the daily lives of these women, and the capacity to develop strong communities willing to stand up to oppressive leaders and their actions of power.

The Green Belt Movement and the Integral Perspective of Peace Leadership

As peace leadership is defined as action for just change, it is clear that the efforts of Dr. Maathai and the GBM meet this characterization of peace leadership. The work of Dr. Maathai on a personal level to attend to the inner work to feel driven to lead the movement, the collection of women she built around herself who were equally supportive and engaged in the cause, the skills and practices that enabled Dr. Maathai and the GBM to provide education and motivation to the women with whom they worked, and the culminating efforts that led to a shift in the thinking of the broader systems of Kenya all demonstrate the integral perspective of peace leadership at work. Below we will unpack each of the quadrants to truly understand the element of each in terms of Dr. Maathai and the GBM and discuss how each element was crucial to

the success of the overall process.

The I Quadrant: The role of this quadrant is the inner work of the individual, in this case, Dr. Wangari Maathai. While we cannot fully know the inner workings of her process, it is clear to see that she had the moral awakenings and drive to take a stand against oppression and make a difference to the impoverished communities and the environment in Kenya. Her inner work led her to a place where it was clear that she could no longer sit idly by and needed to move her reflection and understanding into action. It is this full development of the I that encourages the a peace leader to engage in the broader practice of peace leadership- or to move out of solely the space of the I to engage in the other quadrants of the integral perspective of peace leadership.

It is important to note, however that Dr. Maathai is in actuality just a representative of the upper left, or I, quadrant in this case. While she was the individualized face of this movement, each of the women involved in the work of the GBM reached some level of capacity and space in their own inner development journeys in order to join and embrace the movement. We often focus on the powerful faces of movements as the sole representation of the I Quadrant element, while in truth, it is each of the individuals involved in the movement that have done some level of inner work in order to feel their connection with and responsibility of the movement. It is the connections of these women together that form the collective force of the WE Quadrant.

The WE Quadrant: The WE Quadrant is formed when communities of practice are created around an issue or movement. In the case of the GBM, these were women who were initially involved in the movement with Dr. Maathai and then the more and more women who joined as the movement reached their communities and they formed their own nurseries. These were the women who engaged in the training courses and began to bind together not only over the issues of environment and community, but the larger desire to see a shift in the oppressive forces of the country.

The GBM, as with many other communities of practice, found strength in developing their commitment to building peace through the conflict with a group, namely Kenya's national leaders, who were at odds with their ideas and movement. The women were able to gain strength and further develop their practices and efforts as they strove to take collective action against oppression. It was this unity that built a strong community of practice that continues its efforts today, despite losing their strong leader, as Dr. Maathai died in 2011 (Greenbeltmovement.com, "Wangari Maathai").

The IT Quadrant: In order for any movement to be successful, those in the individual and collective spaces must utilize the tools, behaviors, and practices that are present in the IT Quadrant. Common to the tools of this quadrant are mediation and negotiation techniques, nonviolence principles, and mechanisms of community building. Also, present is the knowledge of theories and practice needed to inform your work, such as environmental knowledge and civic engagement in this case. Dr. Maathai and the GBM were able to understand the needs of the women in the communities and utilize their own community and community building skills to address the desired needs of the impoverished women. By utilizing civic responsibility courses and sharing information about deforestation and community development, the interactive theories and behaviors of this quadrant were used to help build the capacity for the movement within the organization itself, and for the women whom it represented. It is the knowledge in this section that is able to take the movement to a larger systemic change. Engagement in the I, WE, and IT Quadrants allows space for the development of the ITS Quadrant.

The ITS Quadrant: The engagement of the ITS quadrant is what shifts a movement from action to just change. Once the efforts of the three categories are in place in a powerful and constructive way, elements can align to build the capacity of the larger systemic focus of this lower right, ITS quadrant. The efforts of Dr. Maathai and the GBM built such a sustainable model for connection among women in the communities that their efforts served as a rally cry to others around the country. The pressure put on the government around land grabbing and privatization allowed for a new dialogue to enter country. This is when the movement shifted from being solely a movement to an instrument of just change.

In fact, the GBM was such a success in Kenya that it became a model on a larger, global scale. Their work expanded its environmental mission and supported major global environmental causes. Dr. Maathai was recognized for her work by receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, among many other awards. It was this last push in shifting the space of the ITS Quadrant that enabled a small movement to address issues of poverty and environmental degradation to become a major, national, and even international, charge for peace.

It was this final transition that allowed the GBM to truly be a demonstration of the integral model of peace leadership. The GBM and Dr. Wangari Maathai were able to facilitate such a change through the development of all four quadrants. Once all four pieces were in place- a strong, moral need from the inner work to address an issue; the collective space to move forward the issue; the practices and skills to inform the movement; and the larger impact to the systems in place- a shift occurred in the nature of Kenyan society. When all four quadrants are embraced and developed, tremendous shifts can occur resulting in a more peaceful, just world.

Conclusions

The integral perspective of peace leadership described herein is, without a doubt, a noble endeavor. Engaging in the work of each quadrant requires dedication and perseverance. The efforts described in each are not easy, nor is there a clear path to when one has reached the capacity of each quadrant individually or in the collective. Peace leadership takes time and commitment. It requires a movement beyond the self to the larger community utilizing theory and practice to make systemic change.

In many ways our society still focuses credit for movements and initiatives for just change to certain individuals. It is the notion of the integral perspective for peace leadership that peace leadership exists beyond a single peace leader, to a broader movement or effort. Although what is described herein is a look at the integral perspective for peace leadership from a social movement point of view, it may be that an individual leader could also use the integral perspective in a more personal way to enact their own just changes before broadening up to the wider community. Understanding this model from a more personal perspective is a challenge beyond the scope of this paper.

Further exploration of the integral perspective of peace leadership is needed to determine its fit to other social movements and efforts at just change. It would be beneficial to explore the role that the integral perspective for peace leadership plays in the individual processes of those engaged in a movement for just action, or those preparing to embark on such a journey. In sharing this integral perspective of peace leadership we hope to engage others who are thinking about the new and burgeoning field of peace leadership and engage in a dialogue that helps to improve the nature of leadership practice by including an integral peace lens. Perhaps it is the work of each of us, within a community of like-minded people, who strive to see the world through a lens of creating and sustaining positive peace, to take the just action in order to make this peace a reality.

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Zachary Gabriel Green, Ph.D. is an [Associate Professor of Practice and the Associate Director of the Leadership Institute at the University of San Diego's \(USD\) School of Leadership and Education Sciences](#). Prior coming to USD, Dr. Green was a senior scholar at the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership at the University of Maryland, as well as the co-founder of Group Relations International. Dr. Green is trained as a clinical psychologist and specializes in systems analysis and strategy, organizational transformation, negotiations of identity based-conflicts, leadership development,

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