

The Art of Leadership- In Your Career, In Your Business, In Your Life Toolbox Teleclass Transcription

By Debra Russell



Foundation Program

**Track 5: Be the Captain of Your Career: The
Artist As Business Owner, Leader and
Entrepreneur**



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Be the Captain of Your Career: The Artist As Business Owner,
Leader and Entrepreneur

The Art of Leadership – In Your Career, In Your Business, In Your Life

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Welcome to the toolbox Teleclass for May 2009, the Art of Leadership. So that's some voice I just heard?

John: Yeah, Debra, good evening.

Debra: Good evening. Has anyone else joined us while I went off to turn on the recording?

Okay. So, I'm going to dive right in. A couple of other people are registered. Hopefully they will show up.

The...tonight's call, the Art of Leadership, is probably one of my least structured classes that I designed in the recent past. I've done a lot of thinking about it, and I think it's somewhat less of a "how-to" lecture, partly because it's a little off the track of the majority of what I'm doing on the Artist's EDGE.

You know, how to run your business, how to manage your finances. This is more around character and who you're being in the world.

It just seems to me that it's been coming up really for the last year or so, you know, very much with the presidential election, but I'm also seeing with the economy, changes that people are really kind of checking in and trying to figure out who they intend to be, who they're supposed to be in the world, and I think that that is a question of leadership.

And so the format for tonight's call is going to be somewhat less of a lecture and a bit more of conversation, perhaps a bit of a brainstorming; really looking at this question of what is leadership and what does it mean for me in my own personal individual life? So we're not so much going to be looking at the leadership of our country or world as much as I'm interested in the conversation of who are you as a leader in your life?

DEFINE LEADERSHIP

So I'd like to start with defining leadership, which is actually, could be a class all by itself, but I found a couple of cool quotes that I want to share with you guys.

MANAGEMENT IS DOING THINGS RIGHT; LEADERSHIP IS DOING THE RIGHT THINGS. PETER F. DRUCKER

The first one comes from Peter F. Drucker, who's big in the corporate world, and he says, "Management is doing things right. Leadership is doing the right thing." So when we're talking about leadership in our individual life, I think that we are trained from a very young age to worry about doing things right.

You know all through school you get points for doing things right, and unfortunately, I think we're very much not taught how to choose, how to examine, how to question what the right



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thing are? What would be best? What's the best choice in these circumstances? What action is going to lead me down the right path?

I know in Buddhism they talk about right action a lot, and I think that people misunderstand and think that that's some moral question, but I think it's more of an ethical question. So it's about what's right or wrong according to our particular set of dogmas, and it's more about what's going to create the result I'm after. What is the action that's going to take me where I want to go? And what's the action that's not just right for me but it's right from an ecological stand point? Meaning is it right for me? Is it right for my family? Is it right for the people around me? Is it right for my country? Is it right for the world? Is it right for the planet?

So it's not just will I get people's approval? But is it really, truly the right thing? And I don't think that that is nearly as black and white as the morality would want to say.

LEADERSHIP CAN BE THOUGHT OF AS A CAPACITY TO DEFINE ONESELF TO OTHERS IN A WAY THAT CLARIFIES AND EXPANDS A VISION OF THE FUTURE. EDWIN H. FRIEDMAN

The next quote is "Leadership can be thought of as a capacity to define oneself to others in a way that clarifies and expands a vision of the future."

Well, I found that quote from Edwin H. Friedman and what I found really interesting about that quote is that it's about how you define yourself and how you communicate that definition of yourself to others, and communicating that in a way that clarifies and expands a vision of the future, not just for you, but for them as well.

So it's really about what's the impact that you have on the world around you? But I also think it's about who are you? And when we talk about leadership, very often, we're talking about a role that people play within a particular set of circumstances.

You know, the President is the leader of the country or someone said "a leader of the free world." Well, I don't know if I can certainly agree with that. That's topic for another conversation.

But I would say that leadership isn't about fulfilling a particular role or fulfilling a particular set of activities. That leadership is about who you're being. It's more of a character question and who you're being moment to moment, and whether or not you're being true to yourself, to your own vision of the future, because when I'm with someone who's really being true to themselves and being true to their vision of their future, that always clarifies for me--my vision and who I'm being. So, it's a leadership through example.

IF YOUR ACTIONS INSPIRE OTHERS TO DREAM MORE, LEARN MORE, DO MORE AND BECOME MORE, YOU ARE A LEADER. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

The last quote is from John Quincy Adams, "If your action inspires others, dream more, learn more, do more, and become more. You are a leader." And notice he said action, not word.



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So again it's who are you being? How are you showing up? What's the impact to your making in the world? And is who you're being allowing, inspiring, teaching others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more?

So that's I think a very interesting set of quotes to define leadership, and for me, leadership has to do with being willing to do the uncomfortable thing. It has to do with being willing to say the unpopular thing, and it has to do with striving for excellence and asking for excellence in the people around you, and that's not doing things right. It's doing the right thing.

John, you have any thoughts from this? This is going to be a bit more of a conversation I think than my usual class, so if you want to stay off mute that's fine, as long as you're in a quiet place.

John: ...

Debra: You're in a windy place.

John: I un-muted in a windy place. I know it's a whole lot of stuff there, Debra.

Debra: Leadership's kind of a big topic.

John: Well, something that came up...this is too windy. I can take the headset off maybe.

Debra: Whatever you're doing right now, it's working.

John: Okay, good. It really sounds though you know a lot of these thoughts and concepts can work both leadership in yourself and your life, but also leadership with those around you. I've really kind of struggled with that with my band.

Debra: Uh-huh.

John: How do I prove, lead, and inspire it. Keep it from each other's' back and make them want to do the next horrible process before they get on stage, and after they get on stage, all level up once we're up there, but it's all the other stuff around, you know.

Debra: Right, so being a leader in your band, being a leader with your...now building a team in your business, so being a leader with you band.

Welcome, who's joined us?

Kathy: It's Kathy.

Debra: Hey Kathy, welcome.



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Kathy: I'm going to mute myself. Sorry about that.

Debra: That's okay. You may want to be popping in and out of mute. This is going to be much more of a conversation than most of these calls. So we've already started, but yeah.

So that's a really good point, and it's a question that I think there's a two sides of that, which is who are you being, but also what are you asking for? And how are you communicating when it comes to being, you know, creating a leadership, you know, "herding cats" is a phrase I use a lot of times.

"I hear you" is a lot of times in reference to musicians, and you know, and artists in general, but I also think in humans. So it's a question of communication, which is actually a segway to the next section, which is What are the Success Principles of Leadership?

WHAT ARE THE SUCCESS PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP?

I thought about, boy, I could put a list of resources of, you know, books for this, and oh my god! There are so many of them. One of the things that I found really interesting in my own personal studies on leadership are biographies—biographies and books, written by leaders that I really respect.

There's a book by John F. Kennedy, got something of courage, acts of courage (I'm blanking on it) that talks about leaders in the senate over two hundred years of history.

Kathy: Profiles in Courage.

Debra: Profiles in Courage! Thank you, Kathy.

And it to me that book told me as much about John F. Kennedy and his belief around leadership as it said about the leaders that he was profiling. Very interesting book.

So I would say that the success principles of leadership, and this is not a comprehensive list, there's more to this, but I think this gives us a good start.

100% RESPONSIBILITY

The first one is 100% Responsibility meaning that you as a leader in your life, in your business, in your relationship, take 100% responsibility for everything.

THE PRICE OF GREATNESS IS RESPONSIBILITY. WINSTON CHURCHILL

There's a quote from Winston Churchill, "The price of greatness is responsibility," and I think a lot of people struggles with this. You know, the initial instinct when things go wrong is to find someone to blame, but I think the more powerful question is how did I create this?



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And I don't know if I've told the story before in the Membership, but when I was 19, I was actually hit by a van while I was walking across the street. First of all, I was a 19 year-old kid. I was walking across the street in a crosswalk, and this van hit me going 40-45 mph.

And so I survived, which is an astonishing thing actually, but what's really important about it...I mean, I spent the first six weeks in the "why me" place--why did this happen to me? Blaming the driver of the van, obviously, blaming the cops who weren't on the scene first. You know, blaming, blaming, blaming whose fault is it? And really kind of miserable.

And I remember I was lying in bed, I had be forced to move back in with my parents, which is at 19 a horrible thing (as much as I love my parents), and my brother, David, came down from the city to visit with me, and he sat down next to me at by bedside, and he said, "So, what did you go and do that for?"

And I have to tell you, my initial response was, "Screw you! Just get out of my room." He really pissed me off. I'm really angry, because here I was a victim, but what I really started thinking about what he was saying, "What did you go and do that for?" was actually a useful question, and it was a question that I spent a long time answering and has very much color the rest of my life, because it is a question that is, "So this thing happened, what did I create that for?"

It assumes that I am creating my world. It assumes that on some level there is purpose to it, and it assumes that there is something to be gotten out of the experience. There's learning. There's growth. There's a silver lining, and let me tell you. When I was laying there in pain, I needed a silver lining, you know, it was actually a very helpful thing.

So how are you creating the circumstances that you're currently in? What are you getting out of it if it's not what you think you want? How can you take responsibility? In other words, the ability to respond, because as long as you're being the victim and you're blaming other people, you are powerless.

True leaders do not blame. They don't look for whose fault it is. They look for how to respond. That doesn't mean you don't hold people accountable. It's not the same thing, because as long as you're in the blaming place, you are also in the victim's place.

THE VERY ESSENCE OF LEADERSHIP IS THAT YOU HAVE TO HAVE VISION. YOU CAN'T BLOW AN UNCERTAIN TRUMPET. THEODORE M. HESBURGH

The next quote I want to talk about is from Theodore M. Hesburgh, says, "The very essence of leadership is that you have to have vision. You can't blow an uncertain trumpet," which means that in order to be a leader in your life, you need to know what you're creating and you need to be able to communicate what you're creating with certainty, with confidence, and loudly, because not only can't you blow an uncertain trumpet, but I don't know about you, I've never known anyone who can blow a quiet trumpet. Trumpets are meant to be loud.



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A lot of people go around with the secret goals, the secret dreams, and I think that you cannot be a leader unless you're willing to take the risk of putting your vision out there, being public with your intention.

YOUR WORD IS YOUR BOND

The third success principle is your word is your bond. Say what you're going to do. Do what you say.

The whole idea kind of being the flaky artist, you kind of throw the show up, and you know, do what you say, say what you're going to do, be transparent, and be accountable, and I'm going to get this a bit more—be excellent. So it's not just that you do what you say you're going to do. You do it with excellence.

ASK FOR WHAT YOU WANT – NO SERIOUSLY!

The fourth one is to ask for what you want. No, seriously! Ask for what you want. One of the key principles to this though is if you're going to ask for what you want. You have to be okay if someone says “no” to you, which means if you ask for a gig, it needs to be okay if they say “no.”

And the way to get to that place is, first of all, to notice what you make rejection mean. So if you're making rejection mean that somehow you're not worthy or whatever, you just need to get over that, because that's not what it means. It's just no. You ask for what you wanted. You've got a “no.” It doesn't mean anything. Must you say it does?

What's really more important is that your vision is bigger than this one request. Your goals are bigger than this one gig. Your expectations are bigger than this one opportunity, and so if you ask for this opportunity or you ask for this gig, and you are told “no,” so what? Move on. Who's next?

If you are not willing to take the risk of asking for what you want in your relationship, in your work, in your career, in your health and wellness, in every aspect of your life, then you cannot be a leader because a leader knows what they want, and they're willing to risk asking for it and possibly getting a “no” because, boy, if you get a “no” at least you know where you stand, and you can move on to the next thing.

Kind of what may seem diametrically opposed to that, you know, being willing and okay with getting a “no” is to expect good things and trust your expectation. A lot of people in fact up until (really) up until my accident, I used to say that I would rather be pleasantly surprised than unpleasantly disappointed. So I didn't expect much and the truth is I didn't get much. I didn't expect much. I didn't get much.



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After my accident, I figured, "What the heck. I probably should be dead. So what have I got to lose?" And I started being a lot riskier in not...a lot, actually, a lot less risky in how I was treating myself and a lot more risky in what I was asking for, what I was going after, the goals that I set for myself, I took a lot more risks, because I figured I'm alive for something. There must be a reason I'm here.

EXPECT GOOD THINGS AND TRUST YOUR EXPECTATION

So, you know, expect good things and trust your expectation and take disappointment or things not turning out the way you think they're supposed to. It's not the same thing. See, expecting that you will get your goals is different than expecting that your goal is going to show up in this exact way.

I'm going to try out for American Idol. I'm going to get on there, and I'm going to win and become a star. That's how I'm going to have a prosperous living doing what I love. The key is to choose what you want, and then have lots of different strategies and also really allow the universe to create its own strategies for you getting your expectation.

Very often, when I've had an expectation, the way it shows up is so not how I thought it was going to. It ends up looking completely different. But it was what I expected in its essence, in its energy.

Very often, when you try to be really specific about how it's going to show up, you're getting in the way of manifesting it. So let go a bit of the "how-tos" and really focus on "what" specifically you intend to create.

What's really cool about that also is that you start to interpret circumstances differently. You know if you're expecting great things and you get a flat tire, then it's going to start meaning something different than if you expect that thing when you get a flat tire.

I've two more, and then I definitely am going open this back up for questions and comments.

ALWAYS BE A STUDENT

The next one is to always be a student.

I AM A MAN OF FIXED AND UNBENDING PRINCIPLES, THE FIRST OF WHICH IS TO BE FLEXIBLE AT ALL TIMES. EVERETT DIRKSEN

I have a quote from Everett Dirksen on this. He says, "I am a man of fixed and unbending principles, the first of which is to be flexible at all times." The key is to always be a student.



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IN TIMES OF CHANGE, LEARNERS INHERIT THE EARTH, WHILE THE LEARNED FIND THEMSELVES BEAUTIFULLY EQUIPPED TO DEAL WITH A WORLD THAT NO LONGER EXISTS.

ERIC HOFFER

Another quote from Eric Hoffer, "In times of change, learners inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists."

That is so true in the music business. In fact, I'm in the middle of this whole conversation or it could be termed an argument, but I'd like to term it in our conversation on LinkedIn in a music group about, you know, really about the music business and what it takes to be successful, and what it's looking like, and yeah, the structure of the music business and what it looks like to be successful and how you get there. It's just blown up in the last 10 years. It is not what it was and all of the rules have been thrown out and no one really knows what the new rules are, yet.

And yet, people are finding success from a music business. So while there may not be any rules like hard-and-fast, written in concrete, and everything you know is probably wrong, that actually is an enormously wonderful opportunity to create your own rules, to create your own success and career that matches your values.

The only way to do that is to look at every circumstance from a learning perspective; to look at every experience, to look at every conversation, you know. I am learning as much from this argument that I'm having on LinkedIn as I am contributing, and you know, the guy I'm having the argument with, I mean, there is some things that he said that I could easily have taken offensively and I could have had my feelings hurt.

I chose not to. I chose to come from learning and offering learning. So he's teaching me. I'm teaching him, and it's been very interesting.

GREAT SPIRITS HAVE ALWAYS FOUND VIOLENT OPPOSITION FROM MEDIOCRITIES. THE LATTER CANNOT UNDERSTAND IT WHEN A MAN DOES NOT THOUGHTLESSLY SUBMIT TO HEREDITARY PREJUDICES BUT HONESTLY AND COURAGEOUSLY USES HIS INTELLIGENCE. ALBERT EINSTEIN

Albert Einstein says, "Great spirits have always found violent opposition from mediocrities. The latter cannot understand it when a man does not thoughtlessly submit to hereditary prejudices, but honestly and courageously uses his intelligence."

And it is a tremendous risk to walk through your life as a student, to not know the answer, to try stuff and not know if it's going to work, to test stuff, to experiment, and not know what's the right answer to this question.



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It's a huge risk to be willing to ask questions and not need a right answer; to just be asking the questions for the sake of asking them. So, always be a student.

STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE IN ALL THAT YOU DO

And finally and I said this earlier, but strive for excellence in all that you do.

THIS IS NOT ABOUT PERFECTIONISM

No, I want to be really clear about this. This is not about perfectionism. This is not about never making a mistake. In fact, I encourage you to make mistakes with excellence, with passion, with fervor.

I saw Mayor Gavin Newsom, who is one of my heroes, speak a few years ago on one of the things he said about his administration is that he falls, he fails forward fast, and that he subscribes to the Ready, Fire, Aim method of government.

It's not doing it perfectly. It's not about doing it right. It's about doing it to the best of your ability in this moment and always driving to learn, so that you may continually be improving, because if you are always only striving to do it right, then there's no room for growth. There's no room for risk, and all you're looking at are your failures.

If you strive to do it excellently, then you are about the process, not results, because it's doing with excellence, not the end result being excellent. It's being complete within an action and doing it so that it feels complete, and complete it before moving on to the next thing.

And boy, that's a challenge in a busy-busy world, but what that could mean is that you're working on a project and you get to a place of completion for now, and then you complete it in a way that you will easily be able to take it back up again, and you have cleared your desk for the next thing. So striving for excellence in all that you do.

So do you guys have any comments or insights from that or questions? Go ahead and take yourself off mute, and by the way, to anyone who is listening to this recording, I really encourage you to use the comment boxes, because I do want this to be a conversation and you can also use the Yahoo group for conversational messages.

Either you guys want to chime in?

John: There's just the two of us?

Debra: Yup. You and Kathy.

Kathy: Hi Debra.

Debra: Hey.



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Kathy: I'm sorry, I'm really tired but I want to just check in and catch the conversation tonight. I definitely like the idea of the difference between perfectionism and excellence, you know. I definitely...because there's some stuff I'm not doing, because I can't see how to do it particularly, but that doesn't mean I couldn't do it--fail forward fastly, you know. Yeah, so that's a definite...I definitely need to hear that part.

Debra: Good. John, you want to add anything to that or pick up a different one of the things...because I covered, you know, 6 or 7 different things in that bit so...

No? Okay.

Okay, I'm going to move on.

HOW DO YOU BECOME A LEADER?

So I guess the question is how do you become a leader? So first of all, you already are, and the good news is you're a leader. The bad news is you're a leader, and if you aren't happy with the results that you're getting in your life, that's because you're doing...you're not leading well.

So you know...and it comes back to the 100% responsible in, you know, for your result, but how do you develop these characteristics of leadership? And I think that this again is a big-big topic and a big conversation, and I don't think it will be the last call about this, and in fact if there's an area that I've touched on in this initial exploration of leadership that you would like to see much more fully developed in a call, I'm really open to the suggestion, because I think this is a topic that I'd like to do quite a bit of work on over the next year or two.

LEADERS AREN'T BORN THEY ARE MADE. AND THEY ARE MADE JUST LIKE ANYTHING ELSE, THROUGH HARD WORK. AND THAT'S THE PRICE WE'LL HAVE TO PAY TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL, OR ANY GOAL. VINCE LOMBARDI

So, Vince Lombardi the famous football coach said that "*Leaders aren't born; they're made, and they are made just like anything else—through hard work, and that's the price we'll have to pay to achieve that goal or any goal.*"

Now, the essence of this, I think a lot of people and I say this from having coached literally 100s of people privately, as well as, you know, doing in groups or speaking through the Artist EDGE at conferences, that there is this belief out there, this myth out there that if you're not born with the charisma or the leadership qualities, that's it. You're just too bad. It's not something you can change.



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But that's not true and I think that it's been shown over and over again where someone in terrible circumstances makes the decision and steps up and becomes a leader within those circumstances.

I think of the story of Schindler's...the movie Schindler's List, based on this man who really, you know, I mean he kind of was out for himself. He had a pretty nice company. He had a nice life. He really wasn't looking to, you know, make any way or fight the good fight. He really just wasn't that interested, but the fight came to him, and he sought and he realized that it was so much bigger than him and that he had to step up, and it's really just, you know, I'm always amazed at this story because he was able to do so much more than he ever thought he could do, just by choosing to do something.

Someone like Helen Keller, who used her disability which she fought and resented and struggled with, but then she shifted and she used her disability to become a leader and there are a lot of examples like this. People who have just, in a moment, made a decision to step up.

So I would ask you how are you stepping up in your life now, and how are you not stepping up? And I'm not saying this to make you feel guilty or bad. I am saying this for you to become conscious in a way of your choice moment to moment to say something, to take action, to represent in the circumstances that you're in.

Very often, that means actually standing up for yourself as much as it means standing up for other people or standing for what you think is right or whatever. Very often, it's just not allowing yourself to be treated in a way that is...it doesn't honor you and doing it in a way that is not defensive or aggressive, doing it in a way that is just simply being a leader, and bringing consciousness and awareness to the other person.

One of my favorite concepts around this is that you train people how to treat you, so if you don't like how you're being treated then you need to teach the other person differently, not from an arrogant standpoint, but from a "No, I'm sorry. That's not okay. This is how I'm treating, This is what I expect."

IDENTIFY YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

You want to, in this process, identify your strength and your weaknesses around leadership. And, you know, very often our tendency is to focus on our weaknesses, focus on our shortcoming, focus on the ways that we didn't stand up from ourselves, or focus on the ways that we didn't take a risk or whatever, but I actually think it's more useful in a lot of ways to focus on your strength, because who you are as a leader is unique to you. No one else can be the leader that you can be.

No one else can touch the people you can, touch in the way that only you can touch them. One of my teachers as a speaker, and you guys have heard me mention her before, Andrea Lee, who came up with the Multiple Streams concept that I teach you guys for your



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business, she said something in one of the first times I saw her speak, she said something that made an enormous impact and really cleared an obstacle for me.

She said as a speaker, as a writer, as you know, someone who's a leader—right as leader, you may be saying to yourself, "What have I got to offer that you know a million other people aren't already doing, aren't already saying, possibly even saying better than I ever could?" Because that's something that came up for me like, you know, all of my wisdom or whatever, I mean I've gotten it from other people.

It's not...they said there's nothing new in the world, right? But what she said that made such a big difference is that there will be someone in the audience, someone who reads your blog, someone who reads your book, someone out there who could not have gotten that insight any other way at any other time from any other person, that you will touch someone in a way that only you could touch them, and if you don't do that, if you don't stand up there, you don't put yourself out, then you are ripping them off. You're cheating them of that insight because you're the only one who can deliver it.

And the funny thing is as I've seen it happened, I've had people come up to me after a talk and now say something like, "You know you've said something that I've heard a million times before, but there was something different about it this time." – This time, this place in a way that I said it made a difference for that person.

BUILD ON YOUR STRENGTHS

So when you're building your strength, when you're, you know, stepping out there, trust that, trust that you are the right person, at the right time, in the right place to make that impact for someone; and that when you don't stand up, when you don't speak up for yourself, then there's some way in which, you know, you're not...there's something lost there. So identify your strengths and build on them.

INVEST IN YOURSELF – IF YOU WON'T, NO ONE ELSE WILL.

As far as your weaknesses go, invest in yourself, because if you won't no one else will. You can always strengthen your weaknesses, but one of the best ways to strengthen your weaknesses is to apply your strength to that area of weakness.

Perhaps, your method of communication isn't through words it's through images. That's okay if you're clear about what you're looking to communicate. Your images will communicate that, and there are people out there who are visual and for whom words don't do it. Only images will communicate for that.

So invest in yourself, be willing to spend the time, the energy, the money to be the best that you can be, because that's how you most...that's how you can make the biggest impact in the world.



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BE RESPONSIBLE IN YOUR TIME MANAGEMENT AND MONEY MANAGEMENT

Be responsible in your time management and money management, and this is about...earlier I said about, you know, your word is your bond, keeping your word, but it's not just about keeping your word to other people, meaning you show up for the appointments that you said you're going to show up for on-time and you pay your bills on time, right? That's how you're being responsible in your time management, money management for other people.

But how are you being responsible in your time management and money management to yourself? How are you keeping your word to yourself? And when it comes to money management, how are you paying yourself? How are you saving so that you have 6 to 9-months worth of expenses saved up in case you need it? How are you saving for your retirement, and how are you saving for the goals that you want to create, keeping yourself out of debt, clear of debt?

How are you setting up your time management so that you are taking care of your health, your well-being, your spiritual-self? How are you building in downtime, quiet time, creative time, because being a leader is also about taking care of yourself?

It's not about being a martyr and only taking care of everybody else. It's about leading by example. You want other people to take care of themselves. The best way to have other people take care of themselves is for you to take care of yourself and to create strong, powerful boundaries, so that people take care of themselves, which leads me to the last one which is clean it up.

CLEAN IT UP!

Clean it up. Now, that's a statement that could mean a lot of different things in a lot of different circumstances. So what do I mean? Clean it up means if you have a relationship where there's some things that's not said, where there's a grudge or resentment, where you hadn't forgiven them for something, clean it up.

If there's some communication that you've been withholding from someone that you love, clean it up. If you have disorganization in your space, clean it up. If you unhappy with your environment, clean it up. If you are unhappy with your environment in your city, in your ocean, clean it up.

Find the ways that your little behaviors, like using paper napkins instead of cloth napkins, like not recycling your plastic bottle. Notice, you know, like leaving lights on that you don't need to leave lights on, like being in a conversation with someone where they say something that offends you, and you don't say something about it. You swallow it. Clean it up. Take the risk. Be the leader. Be bigger than they're being.



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I think a lot of times in a relationship that's a hard thing, right? Well, you know they're being a brat. I'm going to be a brat too! Be bigger. Be bigger if they're never going to be bigger. Forgive. See them as bigger than they are.

Expect to be treated the way you deserve to be treated, and don't tolerate less. Ask for what you want and let it go. Clean it up. That's really the action to be taken.

What are you tolerating? What are you letting yourself get away with? What are you letting other people get away with? And that's the note that I'm going to leave this on.

OPEN IT UP FOR COACHING AND CONVERSATION.

I just heard someone ring off, but I don't if we lost someone...but I'm like to open it up for conversation, for questions, for laser coaching.

John, Kathy are you guys still on the call?

John: Yeah, I'm here.

Debra: Okay, so I think Kathy rung off; any comments, questions?

John: Oh yeah, lots of great stuff. It's yeah--continue learning in mind of my back and forth between you know the outward and the inward. So far you know, your examples of speaking to somebody in an audience is one sort of style of putting it out there, and the other one is internally, like you say, finding your strength and or putting up from that...

Debra: Yep. Yeah, it's a...I think you can't have one without the other, because if you just do...and we all know people who do this in the public eye. You know if you just do the "Look at me I'm a leader!" and your behavior at home, in your personal life, in your relationships, in your business don't substantiate that, then you're a fraud and people get that intuitively, you know, even if they don't know it.

And I think it's interesting because it's one...I think it's one of the reasons why, you know, we have such scrutiny for politicians. It's because we become, as a society, we become so jaded, because so many politicians are saying, "Follow me. I'm a leader," but they're not being a leader in their lives.

And you know, whereas, I might say that I don't say...that I don't expect my leaders to be perfect. I do ask them to be in pursuit of excellence. I don't care that someone makes a mistake. I want them to stand up and say, "You know what? I screwed up and I'm sorry, and this is what I'm doing about it. This is how I'm going to clean it up."

John: So here's something you might be able to help me with, you know. You noted about expect good things and trust your expectations, and you had a...the thing you had before your accident, I had the same. It did me very well for 20 years in the film business for what I



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was doing, which was, you know, in the arts department. It was, "Expect nothing. Anticipate everything," and that just meaning I just kind of have to cover all of my bases all the time and never expect something was going to go the easy way, but seems like kind of a flip.

Debra: Yeah, it is and it isn't. You know, it's kind of one of those weird esoteric things that it's like, you know, on the one hand--actually the best way to answer that is from a Zen Koan. I don't if you know what a Koan is---I'm sorry?

John: I am familiar with Zen Koan.

Debra: Well, I'm going to explain it for also the other people who might be listening to it. It is basically a story with a moral to it. It's got a bit of a lesson in it. So this student climbs to the top of the mountain and he...to talk to the master and he climbs all the way up, and you know, for hours and hours, and he finally gets to the top of the mountain and the master sitting there, crossed legs, you know, meditating, and the student says, Master, Master, should I trust in God or should I tie my camel?"

And the master looks at the student and he nods wisely and he says, "My son, trust in God and for god's sake tie your camel!" You know. It's both. You want to expect good things, and you want to behave responsibly and do everything that you can to create the best outcome that you can, and one of the ways to do that is to anticipate stuff that might go wrong. It doesn't mean you expect things to go wrong, you just know that you know stuff happens.

John: I guess you know the way I was using that in that environment repetitively was that I didn't expect things to go right, just because that wouldn't have served me well in that environment. We can't expect them to go right.

Debra: But I think you can expect them to go right and plan for the options if they go wrong. I don't think those things are mutually exclusive, and I'm wondering if your experience would have been different, had you expected the things to go right and be ready with the backups for when they didn't? It's just a fact.

John: ...just thought...It's very different I mean that was a very specialist kind of situation which was kind of a fine line and...

Debra: Yeah, and I mean if...when you design a budget, you always want to design a budget where the income, you underestimate the income, you overestimate the expenses. That's a good business right? But that doesn't mean that you expect that you'll never be able to make a living.

John: Yeah, now it's in broader terms.



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Debra: Right, but do you see my point? You know, you expect that the sun will shine then. You bring the rain coat because you just never know. Trust in God, tie your camel. Is that helpful?

John: Yeah, I guess so. I'm just kind of trying to see how I can relate that to my new existence but...

Debra: Well, I mean it's like you would never go on tour in the van without a spare tire or without car insurance.

John: Oh absolutely. I mean I am anticipating everything, but its expectation aspect of it and I think that the expectation is supposed to be a microcosm where it serves to me-- I needed that edge. I mean without that edge of financial disaster it's very hard to anticipate everything, but in this situation, not microcosm, but in the macrocosm and without expecting it to work, what is the point in the first place?

Debra: Right.

John: I mean how can you get yourself to drag so hard every day and do it?

Debra: And so many people don't expect good things because they're like protecting themselves from disappointment as if they're not already disappointed, as if that framework isn't the definition of disappointment.

John: Yeah.

Debra: You know. I do think you've got to expect good things, because if you don't expect them, you won't recognize them when they come up and smack you upside the head, because you're not looking for them, you're looking for all the things that are going to go wrong.

And my point, John, is that I don't think they can be (they have to be) mutually exclusive. I don't think to have to expect things to go wrong in order to prepare for things to go wrong. Don't think you have to. In fact, I'm betting you made yourself more miserable and more stressed than you had to because of that.

John: Potentially. I can tell you stories.

Debra: I said!

John: ...I know we're almost done here, but something that relates to actually are worth earlier today in other word, it's done, but it was very interesting when you said when you're talking about discovering your strength, trust you are with the right person in the right time. I can't remember the third aspect of that.



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Debra: The right person at the right time in the right place saying the right things. Yeah, saying doing the right things. What was it about that?

John: It just struck me. I think it's sort of great definition of confidence. It's a great definition of confidence, and it is, you know, I think looking at your writings on what it's going to be, how can you turn around, and make this work, kind of develop these skills, it is the little things you can do, not a lot really get your handle on all it...Little push up then. I'll be a better leader you know.

But I think for me, this struck me quite strong. I have other training on self-confidence, but or sort of-- general confidence, but just the right person, the right time, and the right place. They really relate to. you know, I trust that it will reach the right person at the right time.

Debra: Right... that I'm going to make, you know, if I'm not getting through right now, that's because this isn't the right person or the right time.

John: Yes, and that kind of lightens the whole aspect, which allows for each other things which you talk about as far as, you know, put it out there, you know, if the answer is "No," that's fine. But to internalize in these ways really interesting. I just want to mention I thought that was a good strength in your presentation.

Debra: Excellent. Thank you. So I think the question going forward is, you know, to just be asking yourself these questions: how am I being 100%...am I being 100% responsible for my life in this moment? What am I tolerating? What do I need to clean up? How am I being a leader right now in this conversation?

You know, I see this a lot in just kind of casual conversation. People can say stuff off the cusp, and you know, I'm like a coach to the very marrow of my bones, and it's not always appropriate to say, "Oh wow, do you realize how negative you're being in this moment?"

You know like if you're at the grocery store...it might not be, you know, an appropriate thing to say, but it might be the perfect thing to say and it's a huge risk. It's always a risk because the other person might be like, you know, "Go away. I didn't give you permission to say that to me."

So there is an aspect to this of pick your battles, but there's also an aspect of this of how can you be a leader today in this moment? And then it's really not about the really big stuff, you know, running for president. It's not like...that's leadership is really the little stuff.

It's not going to war in Iraq. It's choosing the right dog for your kids. It's not always the big, big, big stuff. Very often the big stuff happens as a result of having done all of the little stuff with excellence, and then all of a sudden, it shows up and people are like, "Oh my god, look what a leader you are!"



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And I have this experience, you know people say that to me, and I'm like, "Really? Why? What did I do?" But what I did was in the little stuff in the moment to moment, doing my best to clean my stuff up, and trust me...you look at my office, you know I'm not perfect. Trust me on this. I am not perfect. I am always, however, striving to be a little better today than I was yesterday. I am always striving to be more excellent in this moment than I was in the moment preceding, to take a slightly bigger risk here than I took yesterday, and that's all you can do. That's all anyone can do.

So, excellent.

I look forward to lots of really interesting and intriguing comments and Yahoo discussion about this. I think this is just the beginning of this topic for Artist's EDGE, because leadership is a big piece of what gives you an edge. So, embrace it big.

That's it from me. Anything else you want to say, John?

John: Very good, Debra. Thank you. Yes, tons. We'll save that for later.

Debra: Write it up, post it on the comment.

John: Yeah. No, I think this is great and I would appreciate if you chunk me down a little bit and broken into--.

Debra: More detail?

John: Yeah!

Debra: Yeah. Cool.

Alright, have a great rest of the month. The next call is the Ask Coach Debra Call, which is on the second Thursday in June and I'll be scheduling the Toolbox Teleclass for June shortly. You'll be getting an email about that. So, have a great couple of weeks, everybody, and we'll see on the next call.

John: Talk to you later, bye!

Debra: Bye.