

# Leadership Map

George Bernard

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## **0 Executive Summary: One Page Leadership Map**

### **1 Introduction**

### **2 My Story**

#### **2.1 Childhood: Setting The Stage**

When I was born, my mom was scared to give me up. She was deeply worried that the world would hurt me, that she needed to protect me. Her doula (a birth assistant similar to a midwife) said to her, “No, he will protect you”.

These are the words that still echo in my life, the guiding perspective that I should take care of my friends and neighbors, that I should live a life of service to others.

##### **2.1.1 Establishing Norms**

In primary school, my parents placed me in an international school in Houston, specifically the British School of Houston. There I came to learn and incorporate the community values there.

- Extreme Politeness
- Self Deprecating Humor
- Penchant for the absurd
- Family loyalty

These norms carried me through my childhood, with a special focus on humility. I was (and still am to be clear) overweight and out of shape. This lack of physical fitness could be seen in my chubbiness and my terrible performance in physical education classes. I was consistently the last person in every test of strength or endurance. This is not to say you should pity this child, as I only bring it up to suggest how radically okay I was (or learned to be) with the state of things. I had the worst times in any running event, being forced to run and doing terribly in front of the entire school on sports day (an all school competition day). I was by no means traumatized by this, it’s more that I learned firsthand I would not excel in all things.

This is the essence of my humility. I will not be the best in all things. I will not even be the best at any one thing. There are always people who are better. The key is in understanding yourself as imperfect. Radically accepting who you are, and striving to do better in what ways you can. It just took this fat kid “running” a 100 m sprint in several minutes to learn it.

#### **2.2 Adolescence: Building Character in “The Woods”**

At the age of 14, with both of my older sisters having started their college journeys. My parents wanted to move us to Colorado to better help with their quality of life, deeply improving my Dad’s allergies.

### 2.2.1 Antifragility: Resilience built through Adversity

I was enrolled in *Colorado Rocky Mountain School*, and that August I started in the Wilderness Orientation program. This was without a doubt the hardest physical challenge of my life. For wilderness orientation, we are taken out in groups of 7-9 incoming students and 2 faculty members and 1 student leader. The first three days were spent doing trail maintenance. The last 7 were spent backpacking in the remote colorado wilderness.

Keep in mind, I was an out of shape fat kid from Houston Texas. I had never been challenged physically like this at all. I could count on one hand the hikes I had done before this. To this day, I am deeply ashamed of how the leaders needed to ferry my pack so that I could simply make it up the hill unweighted. On the last day of the trip, water had dripped through the tarp (that I had poorly set up myself) onto my chest as I slept. I woke up cold and broken. We were then promptly forced to get out of our sleeping bags, wake up and tackle the new and final day of the trip. When I finally got out of my bag, I was bawling. My group was visibly worried for me, crying as I laced up my hiking boots. I balanced out again, and this same story played out a few more times in my outdoor experiences. Later that semester, I was in a canoe with a classmate failing miserably to ferry our boat across only the most moderate of rolling river. I cried out that I was trying my hardest, and it wasn't good enough.

The thing is, after you are broken so many times by intensely difficult experiences, you learn to handle it. You learn to roll with the punches. After enough of roughing it in the woods, you learn to get rougher. Nassim Nicholas-Taleb writes about the concept of **Antifragility**, when a system performs better under stress. I feel like this is what controlled discomfort did for me. I have felt at my best in a stressful moment on a backpacking trip. I have felt clarity when I have to make our team not lost, administer aid for a hypothermic trip member, or cook dinner for my crew so they can get in the tent and warm up. There is a unique energy to these make or break moments. In a modern world of absolute luxury (at least for those with my privilege) you break out of the "first world problems" by leaning in to the uncomfortable and difficult in the woods. These experiences calibrated what I view as truly stressful, and made into a more emotionally stable person.

### 2.2.2 Lessons from Antiquity: Lao Tze and "The Way"

Over the summer before my sophomore year, my dad handed me a translation of the Tao Te Ching, a work of chinese poems that worked as a textual basis for the Taoist tradition. The rough translation of the title is the "Book of the Way".

The primary themes are all about stepping back, listening to the world, and acting along the path of least resistance. There are amazing sections which still give me chills to this day.

Excerpts like this from Stephen Mitchell's translation,

8

The supreme good is like water,

which nourishes all things without trying to.

It is content with the low places that people disdain.

Thus it is like the Tao. In dwelling, live close to the ground.

In thinking, keep to the simple.

In conflict, be fair and generous.

In governing, don't try to control.

In work, do what you enjoy.

In family life, be completely present. When you are content to be simply yourself

and don't compare or compete,

everybody will respect you.  
and,

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Success is as dangerous as failure.  
Hope is as hollow as fear. What does it mean that success is as dangerous as failure? Whether you go up the ladder or down it, your position is shaky. When you stand with your two feet on the ground, you will always keep your balance. What does it mean that hope is as hollow as fear? Hope and fear are both phantoms that arise from thinking of the self. When we don't see the self as self, what do we have to fear? See the world as your self. Have faith in the way things are. Love the world as your self; then you can care for all things.

made me focus inward and critically examine my self. You can feel the humility and presence in this. This book inspired me to be more humble, to listen first to understand then to speak. To see my own path in this period of change that is puberty. This narrative is fundamentally different than the mainstream western ideals. Seek not success, or, better yet, seek not, for you may find success as a side effect of living the good life.

There may yet be faults in the gentle approach, but as a growing boy, with culture that leans towards trying to be a **Big Man**, it was a deeply useful moral reference text for me.

### 2.2.3 Lessons from Antiquity: Ancient Greece

The liberal arts program at my school had a deep love for the classical period. I've included some of the lessons from then that have most served as guiding models for my behavior.

#### 2.2.3.1 Arete: Fulfilling Your Potential

The pre-socratics had this beautiful idea of measuring virtue. They knew that people were born in fundamentally different circumstances. They knew that an enslaved serf could not rise to the same heights as a landed gentry. They defined Arete as this proportion of your own potential that you achieve. If you have less potential than someone with more privilege, but you actualize all of your potential and they actualize half of theirs, you have cultivated more virtue.

This was a great introduction to concepts of privilege and inequality in the modern world. It allowed me (a white cis-het male) to avoid the pitfalls of wondering why other people weren't doing as well as I did. It was much like Ben Sands spoke at the 36 hours at Duke event. He said that he would much prefer someone to work their way out of an impoverished slum and change the world, but the barriers to that are so fundamentally high, that we do a disservice to those people by not capitalizing on our own potential.

I interpret this now as a call to action for those who won the birth lottery to be placed in my socio-ethno-political class. If we do not actualize our potential in the service of others, if we do not lower the barriers so that others may actualize their potential than what good can we say we have done with our own potential.

### 2.2.3.2 Socrates' Moral Imperative: When To Be The Biting Fly

We come to the trial and death of Socrates. In his defense, before the court of Athens, he said that he himself was the biting fly on its rear end. That he was spurring the people of Athens to be better, by asking the hard questions, by being a deeply annoying person, by questioning and laying bare their fundamental beliefs. He was so stubborn, that rather than apologize and pledge to bother people less, he leaned in and took the death penalty, a glass of hemlock.

Sometimes I feel like the biting fly, and sometimes I feel like the Horse's buttock. I'm no Socrates. He alienated so many of his countrymen. To this day I still wonder when to bite down on someone's idea and when to let it go. Lao Tze got to me first, teaching me to be gentle and bend rather than steadfast and bite. Yet sometimes I wish I had the moral courage of Socrates to so stand by his principles as to throw his life on the line.

### 2.2.4 Lessons from Antiquity: Roman Stoicism

The hip new thing in Silicon Valley is Roman Stoicism. I don't want to pull a bearded hipster and say "I liked it before it was cool", but I was lucky that my high school education included reading and interpreting texts from that period. Hopefully some of these anecdotes will elucidate how I learned my behaviors.

#### 2.2.4.1 Life Is Long If You Know How To Use It - Seneca

In his work, Seneca makes the connection that just in the way that money, when spent wisely and frugally, lasts longer so too does the time in our days. We must wisely and deliberately spend our time throughout our days so that we may do the most with them. It seems obvious now, but to sophomore year George, these words were gold. He wanted so much to improve, and so he learned to seize the day and do that which he would most benefit.

This had a shadow side however. Living deliberately is not cost free. It takes great effort to keep yourself accountable and taking advantage of every moment. And when I made it to University this proved to be unsustainable. There were simply too many things. I was splitting my time so widely that I lacked depth in doing any one thing well. I needed to reign in and take a deeper look at this lesson. Just in the same way that we only have so much influence, we should focus on what our time is valued at, and fill it not only with the most *productive* but the most *fulfilling* activities. Choose to spend your time with friends knowing the impact of your choice. Live with presence, i.e. awareness of the present, to maximize your time here on earth.

#### 2.2.4.2 Wake and Do The Work of Man - Marcus Aurelius

My history teacher, Dave Meyer, would often read a passage from Marcus Aurelius' "Meditations".

I. In the morning when thou findest thyself unwilling to rise, consider with thyself presently, it is to go about a man's work that I am stirred up. Am I then yet unwilling to go about that, for which I myself was born and brought forth into this world? Or was I made for this, to lay me down, and make much of myself in a warm bed? 'O but this is pleasing.' And was it then for this that thou wert born, that thou mightest enjoy pleasure?

We learn that even Marcus Aurelius, leader of the Roman empire, had trouble getting out of bed every morning. Questioning his purpose and why he would struggle to cast off his blanket. He contends that it is his nature to work, and that failure to work in the morning is a failure to retain integrity (self alignment with his own nature).

Often when I am procrastinating an assignment, or hesitant to get out of bed, the motivation I need to here is not that my day will be easy, but that it will be truly difficult but I must complete it anyway. That day I woke up wet and weary on my Wilderness Orientation, what got me out of bed was knowing that in order to end the trip, I needed to get up and get going.

### 2.2.5 Lessons from Modernity: Positive Existentialism

### 2.2.6 Lessons from the Community: Friends That Promote You

### 2.2.7 Lessons from the Community: Accountability To The Collective

## 2.3 University: A Sobering Climb towards Maturity

### 2.3.1 Moral Development

### 2.3.2 Being Criticized: The Importance of Community Call Outs

### 2.3.3 Duke Men's Project

### 2.3.4 Success At Duke

### 2.3.5 Failure in Success: Losing Humility

### 2.3.6 Defeats and Failures

## 3 Life Mission

### 3.1 Establishing the Ripple

I am not a spiritual person. It's not immediately clear to me what happens to us when we die. If we are judged for our actions, how am I to live such that Anubis measures my heart lighter than a feather? If we are not judged, then what drives me to live the good life. If there is no judgment, then I should pursue my own goals ruthlessly and selfishly. I am reminded of the words of Rabbi Hillel the Elder

If I am not for myself who is for me? And being for my own self what am I? If not now when?

We tread a fine line with our time in this world, between acting in the service of ourselves and acting in the service of others. My actions, if they are ethical, should not be because of a fear of judgment or desire of heavenly reward. My actions in the service of helping others and being true to myself must be justified by a consistent goal.

The key to all of this is in my **ripple**. The benefits I make on this world, I hope, will last in the signal of kindness of others. There will come a day when my name will be forgotten, everyone I know long dead, but the people I help and the people they help and they help will continue. My benefit to the world, my *raison de etre* is in the ripple of goodness that I will create to my highest ability in my own sphere of influence.

#### 3.1.1 Focus on Community

I live in the domain of the practical and the human. I want to be realistic about the benefit I can make in the world. This does not mean I should artificially limit the scope of my benefits, but that I focus on helping those within my sphere of influence.

One of my life goals is to have a deep connection with my tribe. I don't mean this in a self secluding way. The connotation of focusing on your community can come across as a dogwhistle for putting your own people first. When I say tribe I mean a responsibility to my people across ethnic, class, religious, and political lines. I want to seek out those who challenge me to be better and think better. I want to make a place in my life for those people, and I want to help them achieve their goals and to feel loved by their tribe in turn.

### 3.1.2 Effective Altruism

Tempering this focus on the immediate community, we must see our ability to act on the global scale. Our world is incredibly connected, and this has been amazing for seeing the way that people around the world live. This has also shown us the dire straits that many people in this world live in. We often lose our will to act, to overcome the bystander effect, when we are so far away from the problems that people face. Simply put, we cannot live in our progressive western democracy, go to work in literal towering crystal spires, and constantly think about “starving african children or whatever”.

There is huge cognitive dissonance here. If it meant getting our shoes dirty, we would save a drowning child. If it meant getting on a plane and flying across the world, we would still save a drowning child. From both of these toy examples we see that the duty to act is always there, regardless of moderate personal damage (ruining clothes) or distance (flying there). How do we get from the high level ethical breakdown in which we are honorbound to act, to what is implemented as fundamental apathy?

Don’t get me wrong, I am not condemning the very human focus on the local over the global, but one of my personal goals is to act efficiently in the service of global issues. Ergo, my life mission adds two intertwined goals. First, I want to donate large amounts of money to extremely effective charities (malaria and schistosomiasis initiatives), and, second, I want to share this approach to charity, that we should prioritize giving to extremely effective charities and that we have a duty to act in what ways we can.

## 3.2 Becoming a Craftsman

My last main goal is more amoral. I get pleasure out of making cool things. I take pride in the things I make. I have that peculiar affliction that I am good at, and deeply love, being an Engineer. It comes back to that Greek idea of Arete, I want to maximize my potential in this direction. I want to be the best Engineer I can be. Solving cool problems for smart people.

I am a toolmaker. I seek to build the tools that enable others to maximize their potential. In this way, I also establish my ripple. I want to smash the barriers that people have by enabling them to take advantage of humankind’s shared incredible computational power. A life of service as a humble toolmaker, is a life I will not regret.

## 4 Success, Happiness, and Meaning

### 4.1 Why are these separate?

With so much discussion of the fundamental problems of being human, it is easy to focus on semantics, pinning down the meanings of words. How many times have my classmates stopped our teacher, Tony, and asked him to “define this word you’re using, exactly”. The problem is fundamental to language and more exposed when we try to talk about abstract but very personal subjects. Success, Happiness, and Meaning are all inextricable. Even these words we use only crudely set a first order approximation of the problem domain. If words and models are our maps and the ground truth of our desire is the territory, it is painfully obvious that the map is not the territory. I choose these three categories as the brute separation of this territory, to be holistic in this discussion will muddy the waters (if they are not already fevered ramblings).

### 4.2 Success

#### 4.2.1 What is Success?

Success is the feeling we get when we take pride in the fruits of our labors.



As we've covered in class, a sufficient second order approximation of success can be in the following components:

- Happiness
- Achievement
- Significance
- Legacy

"Now wait a minute George", you might ask, "Why is happiness here and also covered later. That seems redundant." And to that I say that you're right... kinda. Happiness is a component of success, but in this domain it is focused on the element of enjoying the fruits of your work. The tomatoes you grow yourself always seem to taste better to you, but could honestly be replaced by store bought and anyone else wouldn't notice.

Achievement is how the success feels in a more visceral sense. It is the feeling of pride when you make it to the summit. Even if the view is obfuscated by fog, even if it is frigid, you can't help feel a sense of satisfaction from conquering this mountain. It is the feeling of **winning**.

Significance is that benefit that your success has to your tribe. How much profit did your project produce for the company? How fulfilling is it to see that student you helped turn around and ace her computer architecture midterm?

Legacy is how your success lasts. When you create your sculpture, your magnum opus, is it made of q-tips and twine? or wrought steel and hard stone? How will your success survive and thrive? We want our successes to not be destroyed in front of us. We want the code we write to be a pivotal benefit to a system that will keep chugging long after you may have left the company.

#### 4.2.2 How do you measure it?

We can thus measure our success more easily by measuring the constituent components.

We measure achievement by how many of our goals we accomplish, by how difficult it was to accomplish them, and comparing them to the goals of others.

I'll focus on measuring happiness later, as much of that discussion applies here.

Legacy and significance are harder nuts to crack. You can imagine why the average Duke student may not focus on these as components of her success. They're far less *real* to us. They require a worldly wisdom to see as products of our labor.

Measuring significance is often not up to us, but on the people who we work for. The appreciation of the people that our work benefits us set the terms for seeing our actions' significance.

Our legacy is not something that we can see moving forward, these dots are only connected looking back on our life's random walk. Legacy is like concrete. It gets stronger the longer it has set, reaching peak strength years after the pour. The roman sewers and aqueducts were lasting success, but we know this only long after their society collapsed. Time has the final word on our legacy.

#### 4.2.3 Why chase it?

Why should we chase success? Is it that warm feeling, that hedonic motivation that makes us search out and carve our success into the mural of human civilization. I feel at a loss for words how to describe this. I want to have some higher reason for my craving success. The materialistic explanation is all I can fall back on. The stupid, beautiful, and simple answer is that we chase success because it feels good. Being successful means surviving the night and finding a good mate. Success is therefore a key fuel in our motivation engine, but success alone cannot drive us forever.

## 4.3 Happiness

### 4.3.1 What is it?

Happiness can, too, be broken up into sub-components:

- Joy is that immediate pleasure. Those butterflies in our stomach. The overwhelming sense of ecstasy.
- Contentment is that slow burn of gratitude. The sense of rightness and harmony in the world.

### 4.3.2 How do you measure it?

The simplest way to measure your happiness is to count the frequency of *butterflies*. It is that fire in your belly that speaks to you. It does lead to a bit of experimental error, for when we look for the ways that happiness appears in our life, we open ourselves to more of it, overestimating its base occurrence.

It is easy, for most, to recognize ecstatic moments, but it is oft harder to recognize effective contentment. The feeling of being more than alright with the state of our world is fleeting if you are so focused on **The Next Big Thing**. To be content, an atomic component of happiness, is to be in deep gratitude to the circumstances of our life, both those that we have worked to achieve and those we had the raw luck to be given.

### 4.3.3 Why chase it?

For the same reasons that we chase success, we chase our happiness. Happiness is more difficult to produce than success however. Where we can work to chase success and be rewarded, chasing happiness often has the exact opposite effect. Happiness is an occasional beneficial side effect of chasing success, but it can also open itself up to you when you least expect it. If anything, happiness is the heat produced by our motivation engine burning success and meaning in different ratios.

## 4.4 Meaning

### 4.4.1 What is it?

Paul Tillich, in his seminal work on the phenomenology of religion “The Dynamics of Faith”, spoke of our religious motivation engine. Humans crave ultimate fulfillment, to do so we engage with our ultimate concern and the risk that our concern is idolatrous (i.e. worshipping a false idol and receiving no such fulfillment). Meaning is our fulfillment produced by our success.

On first glance, it seems that meaning could be represented by the success components of Significance and Legacy. To that I say once again, you’re right... kinda. They are in the same territory, but something about meaning cannot be reducible to success. Ultimate fulfillment is a product of our purpose and drive. Meaning is both the lens and crucible to interpret our success and turn it into what drives us.

### 4.4.2 How do you measure it?

The question reduces to how do we see meaning in our lives. What do we see in those who live with high meaning? Brooks would say that they have chosen the path of service to others and to the world.

I have to punt the ball on this one. Like the supreme court’s definition of pornography, “I’ll know it when I see it”. This, I think, is a binary issue. You can either feel fulfilled by what you are doing or not. You can be fulfilled in some silos of life more than in others, but within each silo, if you are true to yourself, the answer is in your gut.

#### 4.4.3 Why chase it?

These answers must be getting boring to you by now. It's the same as it always has been. We chase meaning because the feeling of being fulfilled is a different kind of wonderful. It is the last fuel in our motivation engine a distillate effect of refining our success through a focus on fulfillment.

## 5 Moral Fiber

### 5.1 Primer on Integrity

For this section, it is useful to understand what I mean when I say integrity. I mean it as the sweet spot where our actions overlap with our intentions.

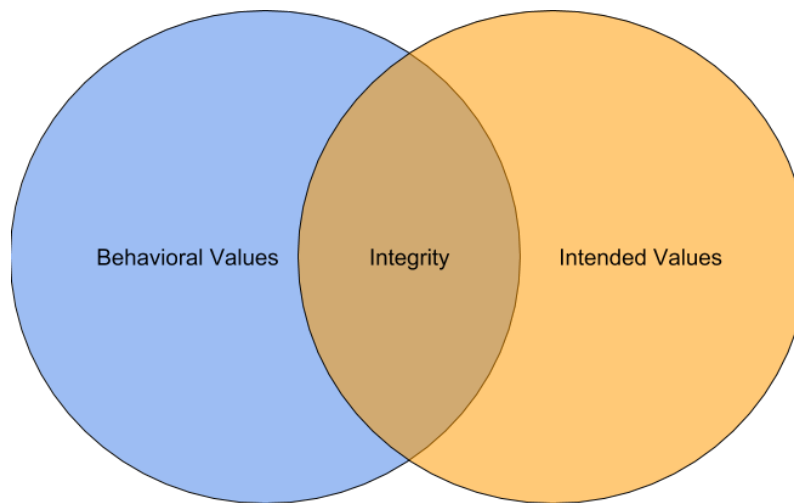


Figure 1: Integrity = Overlap of Intention and Action

### 5.2 Moral Role Models

I have always learned to be a better person by the quality of my company. Those I most admire are those I most stand to learn from. There is something about everyone that I can admire and want to copy and assimilate into my being. I have simply too many role models to list, but I can attempt to list the categories of those people whom I admire.

- Immense, Raw Empathy
- Absolute Kindness
- Humility
- Generosity
- Strong-Heartedness and the Moral Courage to Act

Those same categories I list for my role models, are those traits that are the largest delta growth opportunities for myself. I often feel that I behave in cocky, cold, and lukewarm way. All of my role models have rock solid integrity; they act in the way they believe they should and have the “Heart of a Lion” that drives them to be true to themselves.

## 5.3 Moral Beacons

## 5.4 Moral System

### 5.4.1 Touchstone Principles

### 5.4.2 Moral Compass

### 5.4.3 Moral Code

## 5.5 My Character

My character is built from fundamental traits and principles. Many of these are strengths, and many of my strengths have shadow sides from their logical terminus. Here I try to list those that are indeed fundamental to my core character, those principles I live and die by.

### 5.5.1 Boyscout Principle

Leave things better than you found them

### 5.5.2 Help Others

### 5.5.3 Minimize Harm

### 5.5.4 Duty to Act

### 5.5.5 Shortcoming: People Pleasing

## 5.6 Moral Courage and Being Strong-Hearted

# 6 Amoral Fiber

## 6.1 Master your Craft

I mention this in my life mission, but it's worth going into why I value mastering my craft.

Making things feels good. It's visceral. The satisfaction at making a desk with your hands and your tools. The joy of getting my system set up to convert this leadership map from plain text documents into the format you see here right now. Making things, even better if they solve a problem, is a shortcut to direct achievement and satisfaction.

I've made some cool stuff in my life:

- EMP generator that can shut off small electronics.
- Standing desk from pallet wood for my freshman dorm room
- Programs to help my classmates with grunt work on our final projects
- Papercraft masks for halloween
- Metal and glass flower pot sculpture

These fulfill my creative urge. Literally the desire to create, but also the desire to express myself.

I've always enjoyed making things; I'm not sure where it originated. I can't remember a time when I haven't enjoyed manipulating physical medium. Even in grade school my art projects existed in physical space, penny nails on a wood board adding texture to a water color.

When it comes to mastering my craft, I feel there's also an element of recognition from my peers. I love making a creative product but the icing to this cake is that community validation that comes from making something people value.

## 6.2 Learn, Learn, Learn

Reportedly, this was the advice Lenin gave to young people, and it holds true today. I have a deep curiosity and hunger for learning. It feels so good to grapple with a novel concept. I enjoy more than anything sharing my knowledge with others. I love seeing the glint of clarity and understanding in someone's eyes just as much as experiencing it myself.

Beyond academic learning, I value self-knowledge. We harken back to the words of Socrates:

The unexamined life is not worth living

The benefits of self-awareness are many. To live in accordance with your values, you must first know your values. This is not to say that I am a very self aware person. Like so many areas of expertise, the less you have the more likely you are to overestimate your ability. Suffice to say, I am just on the cusp of self-awareness, enough to realize all the work I need to do.

## 6.3 Being Less Wrong More Often

### 6.3.1 What this means

I value having true beliefs.

This may sound odd, but I believe it is important that my understanding of the world is correct to the best of my ability. It presupposes the existence of ground truth (because, lets be honest, we wouldn't look both ways at crosswalks if we thought truth was completely subjective). If there is ground truth out there, then why should we not try to shape our beliefs to be closest to reality?

### 6.3.2 Radical Epistemic Humility

Being less wrong is about embracing being wrong as a stepping stone towards being right. This approach is radically empirical. It means divorcing my ego completely from my predictive beliefs. This is **very hard**. I fail at this consistently. It means you have to seek out those ideas that radically challenge yours, face them openly, and seriously entertain whether they are true. Evaluating beliefs on their merit means potentially believing very unsavory perspectives if they fit the evidence better. This is where my openness to experience is stretched and tested. It's painful and alienating for the people around you. But at the end of the day, the truth is worth holding.

## 6.4 Shortcoming: Developing Discipline

An amoral virtue I feel the need to cultivate is that of Discipline. So much of the success, curiosity, and passion that drive me are fickle in their source. They could not carry me through a winter. They are useful tools but are capricious. Discipline, for me at least, is an undeveloped muscle. I often fail to hold myself to deadlines, to do what I said I will do by the time I said I would, and when the going gets tough to be tough enough to keep going.

If I could be more disciplined, I would be better able to manage my time and accomplish the goals that matter to me when passion for them is no longer enough to see it through.

## 7 Leadership Qualities

I am not a driver. I am not a dictator. Where I excel is in motivating others, and in helping people remove their blockers. In this section I hope to elaborate on the ways in which I am best able to lead and those areas where I can most stand to get better.

### 7.1 Lead from the Rear

I feel most comfortable doing what I call, leading from the rear. It means listening to your squad, understanding where they want to go, and helping them realize the path to their success. It's flipping the script on traditional leadership. Instead of the team depending on you, you depend on your team. Instead of leading your team, you follow them, and enable them to achieve the success they determine. This is not control, this is trust.

### 7.2 Lead by Example

I feel at home in the trenches. I'm detail oriented in the extreme. In that same way that I love the craft, I love being on the front line with someone on my right and left working on the problem. I'm a poor delegator, but a good doer.

The way I lead is by setting the high water line of what work should be. If you want your community to act the way you want them to, you must first act the way you want them to. If you set the standard, others will follow.

### 7.3 Implementation: P-WILD and Non-Directive Leadership

Twice a year, for every year of my Undergrad, I helped with a program called Project WILD (Wilderness Initiative for Learning at Duke). On August we take groups of 7-8 incoming freshman and 2-3 staffers. On March we take 3-4 crew members and 2-3 staffers. Over two trips as a participant, and 6 trips as a Staffer. The primary leadership style, the high water mark, was non-directive leadership.

Let's unpack that term. To be non-directive is a combination of these leading from the rear and leading by example. As a staffer, you have a fundamental expertise of the problem domain. You've been on these trips, you know how to rig a tarp and cook a meal in the woods. You are a resource for these crew members, but they can easily come to rely on you. The goal of a non-directive leader is to build your crew's competencies to the point they no longer need you. This a difficult path to thread, as you need to balance support with challenge. The crew needs to learn, and in order to learn they need to suffer. If you always act as a safety net for your crew they will not learn the skills they need to become good staffers in turn. Programmatically this means they make the same mistakes we did as crew members, but we learn best from our own mistakes.

### 7.4 Sheep vs. Goats

My approach to leadership can be illuminated by a metaphor:

"The merest accident of microgeography had meant that the first man to hear the voice of Om, and who gave Om his view of humans, was a shepherd and not a goatherd. They have quite different ways of looking at the world, and the whole of history might have been different. For sheep are stupid, and have to be driven. But goats are intelligent, and need to be led." - Terry Pratchett

Let me elaborate and interpret this statement. Mild disclaimer, I know nothing about the actual animal husbandry, so please take this metaphor with a block of salt.

#### 7.4.1 The Shepard and The Drove

It is somewhat problematic to refer to people as sheep, but what I want to focus on is the approach of the shepherd. The shepherd drives the flock. Another name for a sheep collective is literally a **Drove**. What does this mean for the community. It means the sheep are driven by the stick. The sheep are in a state of stress, forced to move to the places the shepherd wants them to.

This is inherently against my strengths. I don't have a vision of where we should go. I don't have the will to force my team in the direction I choose. I am more of a goatherd.

#### 7.4.2 The Goatherd and the Tribe

Goats are stubborn. They are smart. They know what they want and can fight to get it. The collective noun for goats is **Tribe**. These are my kind of people. Goats cannot be driven, they need to be influenced. There is a trust in the tribe, and not every team will have this. The goatherd is a member of the team, in service to the team.

### 7.5 Growth Opportunities - Trade Offs of Gentle Leadership

There are deep trade-offs in this approach though. As a technical leader in the trenches, I can lose the forest for the trees. It prioritizes tactics over strategy. And it depends fundamentally on the mutual trust of you and your team.

I feel that I am passing the buck on taking a stand. This style of leadership is go with the flow; the tree that bends survives the hurricane. What should I do when the time is not to bend but to hold fast, to double down on what matters?

### 7.6 Growth Opportunities - Personal Competency Worksheet

After filling out my core competencies worksheet, I found the following areas needed the most development.

- Taking action, making decisions, and following through
- Managing conflict and negotiating
- Time management

Notice a theme? I find that I too often bend when I should hold steady. I need to learn to hold myself and others around me more accountable. Planning my time so that I am more equipped to follow through on my commitments is fundamental. I need to be true to myself and true to my word. I've mentioned this before, but I am a deep people pleaser, sometimes at the cost of my own integrity. This needs to change.

## 8 Twenties Journey: Objective, Direction, and Path

It may seem paradoxical, but I am simultaneously sitting at a pivotal moment and given a set of, in the long run, meaningless choices. The values I build and cement in the first chunk of my adult life will stay with me as I move forward. In the words of Joseph Campbell, as I join the adult world I switch from a relationship of dependence to a relationship of independence, and finally to a relationship of people depending on me.

I am 23, I have spent my last 23 years in education system, with only a brief foray into working as a coop student (6 months) and interning (2 months). I have 8 months of reasonable adult experience. I sit at the

precipice of a sea change, a complete shift to self reliance where I no longer depend on my parents income nor the communities built up by my schools and childhood interests. This is a defining decade for the man I want to become.

Yet I can't help but remember Robert Frost's poem, "The Road Not Taken". The poems protagonist comes to a fork in the road, and chooses a path. In what is perhaps the most misunderstood poem in American popular thought, the meaning of the poem is not that taking the road less traveled made all the difference, but that the protagonist is rationalizing the future impact of what seems like a weighty decision. The choices I make for my first job or city. Many choices turn out to be irrelevant stumblings on my path.



## **8.1 Aspirations**

### **8.1.1 Find a Community**

### **8.1.2 Professional Development and Recognition**

## **8.2 Strategies**

### **8.2.1 Master my Craft**

### **8.2.2 Prioritize Health**

### **8.2.3 Widen my T**

## **9 Implementation: 3-year plan**

### **9.1 3-year Mission Statement**

### **9.2 3-year Success Kaleidoscope**

### **9.3 Leadership Development Objectives & Key Strategies**

### **9.4 Key Issues, Decisions, and Plans**

### **9.5 Working at Tresata**

### **9.6 New City, New Community**

## **10 Implementation: The next 7 months**

### **10.1 Fall 2018**

### **10.2 Winter 2019**

### **10.3 Spring 2019**

### **10.4 Summer 2019**

## **11 Closing Comments and Reflections**