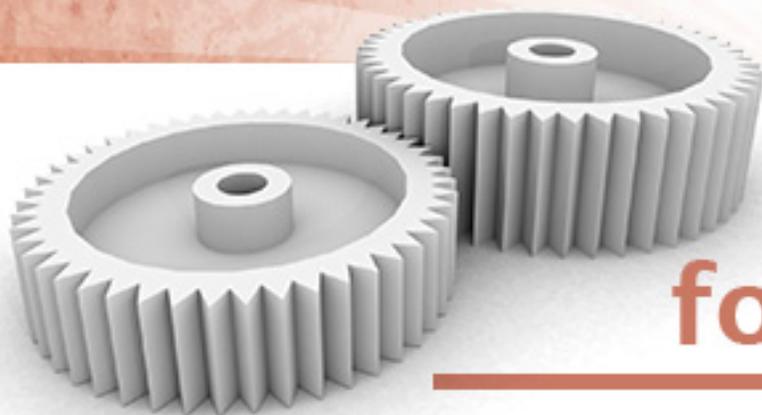


Social Leadership



**A Fresh Vision
for Old Problems**

By The Center for Social Leadership

www.TheSocialLeader.com

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Thank you!

About The Center for Social Leadership

The Center for Social Leadership (CSL) is a think tank and action organization dedicated to building social leaders for the 21st Century.

Humanity is experiencing dramatic changes. Traditional leadership is broken. Conventional human organization based on hierarchies and authority is outdated. Human consciousness is evolving. Technology has transformed the way we interact and enhanced our ability to have impact—for good or for ill.

The Center for Social Leadership was formed to steer these changes to improve the health of society, preserve freedom, and ensure peace and prosperity for humanity.

We firmly believe that a new vision of leadership is needed. Not the old, hierarchical, positional, authoritative, privileged-elite leadership, but a new democratic, action-determined, service-oriented leadership. Through this social leadership, mankind can achieve unprecedented happiness and fulfillment.

For more information visit www.TheSocialLeader.com.



**“It’s not about someone doing everything.
It’s about everyone doing something.”**

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What Is Social Leadership?

Social leadership means to devote one's life and talents to improving society regardless of social standing, wealth, or privilege.

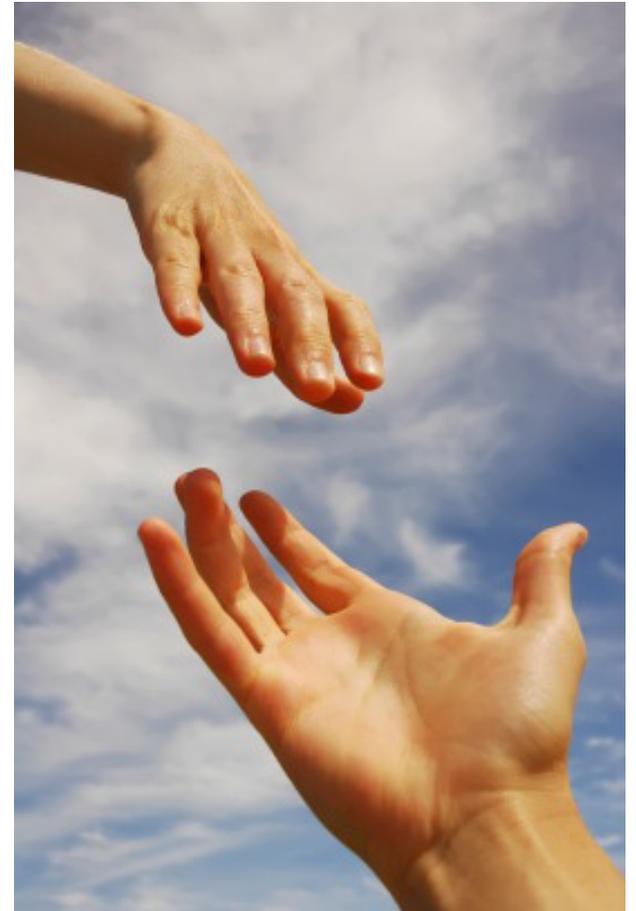
Social leaders serve and bless others. They create beauty in the world, lift the vision of mankind, broaden our possibilities, and deepen our life experience. They protect freedom, preserve peace, and ensure prosperity for as many individuals as possible.

Social leaders are ordinary men and women of “virtue, wisdom, diplomacy, and courage who inspire greatness in others and move the cause of liberty.”¹

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”
-John Quincy Adams

Every productive person contributes to the health of society. But much of this is *incidental*, rather than *intentional*. A social leader very deliberately strives to improve the world by creating value for others.

Social leaders work within all aspects of society including business, government, academia, media, religion, family, and community. They thrive in both for-profit and non-profit institutions. They can be wealthy businessmen, devoted charity workers, or middle-class city council members.



¹ [George Wythe University](#) mission statement

A social leader is born when one ponders such questions as, “What is the highest and best use of my talents and passions? What can I do that will have the most positive impact on society? How will the world be better because of my life and my contribution? What was I born to become and accomplish?”

Thus, social leadership is conscious societal improvement enacted by common people. Social leaders are fully committed to doing the most good for the most people using everything with which they have been blessed. Their lives are a perpetual cycle of self-improvement.

To fully grasp the implications and power of social leadership, consider the following context.

A social leader is born when one ponders such questions as, “What is the highest and best use of my talents and passions? What can I do that will have the most positive impact on society? How will the world be better because of my life and my contribution? What was I born to become and accomplish?”

The Renaissance Among Us

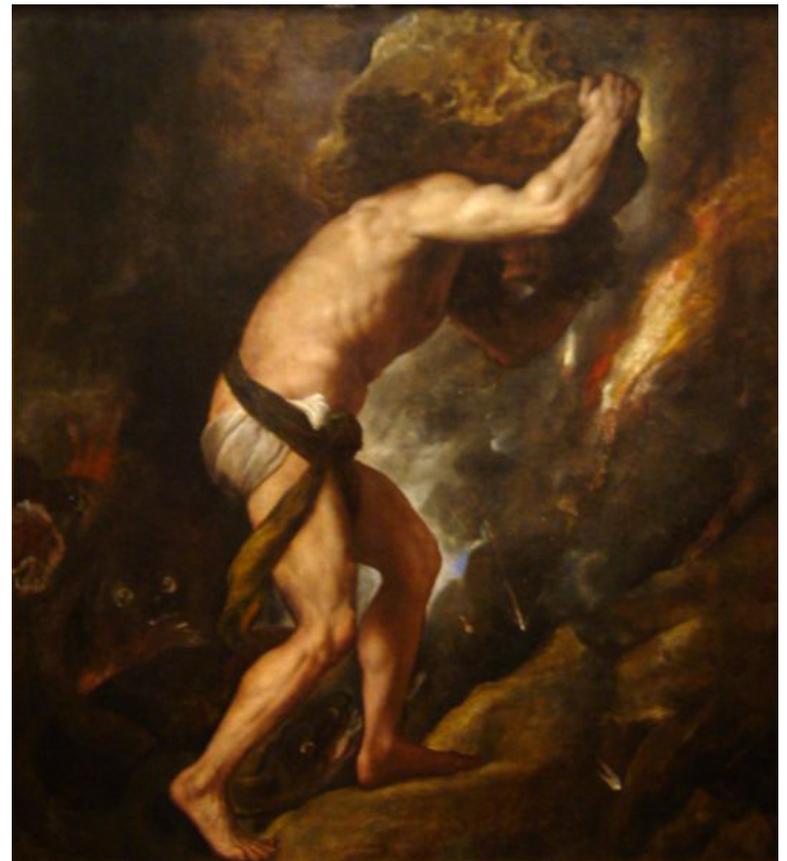
“There is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come.”
-Victor Hugo

In Greek mythology, the gods punished King Sisyphus by cursing him to roll a boulder up a hill, watch it roll back down, and to repeat this throughout eternity.

Is this the story of humanity? Is there an enduring solution to human problems, or are we condemned to fighting the same battles forever?

As this is being written, America seems poised to be the next casualty of civilization, like Sisyphus' boulder at the top of the hill rolling downward. From the collapse of major financial markets and institutions to a soaring national deficit, military conflict to drug abuse, suicide to divorce, it's clear that America is struggling culturally and politically. And things don't seem to be getting better.

Society is suffering. Institutions are crumbling. Faith in government and corporations are all but extinct.



At the core of our problems is the reality that leadership is lacking. To be clear, it's not just lacking—it's *broken*. Our conceptions of leadership are flawed. Our trust has been misplaced.

The good news is that citizens are now asking quality questions: What went wrong? How did we stray? How can we get back on track? Whom can we trust? Is there hope for a better future?

There are viable answers to these questions. Solutions are imminent. We need a new vision of leadership and we need leaders who are prepared to fulfill that vision.

Who Will Save Us?

The old conceptions and methods of leadership are as flawed as they are obsolete. Leadership is the answer to the question, “Who will save us?”

In the past, we've given our rights to kings and rulers in the hopes that they would take care of us. Our hopes were dashed by tyranny. We've looked to the church to rescue us. The oppression of the Dark Ages told the truth of that story.

More recently, we fell asleep while trusting representative government to save us. We awakened to the hard reality that government is in many cases the source of the problems from which we're trying to save ourselves. We've believed in corporations and institutions, only to become insignificant cogs in vast gears that often mash our spirits and dreams.

All of these old models have proven themselves inefficient and insufficient. There is one defining thread that runs through the fabric of all of them. It is the thread that has weakened the garment of society throughout history—with every person that we've elevated above ourselves, our personal power has diminished and our freedoms have eroded.

We've believed that solutions were found outside of ourselves as individuals. We've wanted other people and institutions to fix our problems for us.

We've believed that solutions were found outside of ourselves as individuals. We've wanted other people and institutions to fix our problems for us.

The New Vision of Leadership

The new answer—the only real and lasting answer—is what we’ve known all along, but have been afraid to admit because of the responsibility we know will be required of us.

The cures to societal ills are found within you and me. The real heroes and leaders are each of us as individuals. The new standard means that we will uplift and bless one another through conscious service.

The new vision of leadership becomes a reality as we turn inward for strength and introspection. We cast our gaze away from podiums and power centers and toward our own hearts, resources, and abilities. The new leadership is about common citizens living uncommon lives of service and contribution. It’s lived by rank-and-file members of society who discard fear and embrace the responsibility of greatness.



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

-Margaret Mead

CASE STUDY :

\$70 and Dedication Builds 461 Wells

In 1988, [Ryan Hreljac](#) was a first-grade student in Canada where he learned that people across the globe were dying because they lacked clean drinking water. He immediately decided to raise money to help such people. Four months later, he had earned \$70 from household chores.

He raised enough awareness and got enough support to build his first well in 1999 for a school in a Ugandan village. Ryan's initial \$70 and first well have since grown into a foundation that has raised millions of dollars and contributed to a total of 461 wells in 16 countries, which bring clean water and sanitation services to almost 600,000 people.

At age 17, Ryan remains dedicated to the work of the foundation. He has made presentations to hundreds of schools, churches, and civic clubs and more than two dozen international conferences and global events. "I'm just your regular, average kid," Ryan says when asked about his achievements.



This awakening—focused on the duties and power of the individual—is new. Although Ryan is not alone in his quest, hundreds of thousands more are needed. Old thought patterns and habits are broken beyond repair. They must be replaced.

But they can't be replaced until their replacement has been clearly articulated and widely broadcasted. [The Center for Social Leadership](#) was formed to be the voice and bullhorn of the new vision of, and the new solutions for, mankind.

This new vision is social leadership.

**“We carry within us the wonders we seek without us.”
-Sir Thomas Browne**

The Six Pillars of Social Leadership

The six pillars of social leadership form the following acronym:



Submission

Social leaders believe in and submit to a Higher Power, by whatever name and through whichever means they choose. Depending upon one's spiritual and religious beliefs, this may be God, the Creator, a Supreme Being, or simply natural law. Regardless, social leaders find inspiration, guidance, and stability from a source higher than themselves.

Submission to a Higher Power leads to virtue and stewardship. At the core of submission is the understanding that there is a natural order to the universe. Social leaders know that there are right and wrong actions. While others want to bend nature to their whims and desires, social leaders believe that they must conform to the natural order to truly find happiness and fulfillment.



“Man is growth by law, and not a creation by artifice, and cause and effect is as absolute and undeviating in the hidden realm of thought as in the world of visible and material things.”

-James Allen, *As a Man Thinketh*

Social leaders don't operate from a perspective of selfish license, which says, "It's my life and I can do whatever I want with it." While fully recognizing their right to choose, they also recognize that all material possessions and personal talents belong to a Higher Power and are to be used accordingly.

“God Gave Me My Money”

When John D. Rockefeller was ten years old, he lent \$50 to a neighbor at seven percent interest. His mission was determined when he received \$53.50 at the end of the year. “From that time onward I determined to make money work for me,” he said.

Rockefeller was just as astute with his charity as he was with investing. By the age of sixteen he was giving consistently to a number of charities. He saved his church at the age of twenty-one through an energetic fundraiser.

Writes Arthur C. Brooks, “Later, as his wealth exploded...Rockefeller faced a dilemma: He wanted to continue to give, but was afraid that he could not donate enough money and still pay sufficient attention to the details of responsible philanthropy. He resolved the problem by hiring Frederick T. Gates, the man who created what Rockefeller called ‘scientific philanthropy,’ which sought to focus charitable giving in ways that would have the greatest impact and create the most beneficial opportunities for others—it amounted to a kind of venture capital for social good...Rockefeller believed that this kind of giving was the most responsible way to steward ‘God’s money’ for the greatest good to mankind.”²

Later in his life, Rockefeller said, “God gave me my money. I believe the power to make money is a gift from God...to be developed and used to the best of our ability for the good of mankind. Having been endowed with the gift I possess, I believe it is my duty to make money and still more money and to use the money I make for the good of my fellow man according to the dictates of my conscience.”



² Source : *Who Really Cares: The Surprising Truth About Compassionate Conservatism* by Arthur C. Brooks

Submission is the source of motivation and vision. The desire and ability to act courageously are developed as one develops faith in a Higher Power. Obedience to the “laws of nature and of nature’s God”³ lifts one’s vision from debasement and triviality to the heights of idealism.

Submission also ensures humility. Social leaders are about impact, not fame. They don’t care who gets the credit as long as progress occurs, as long as the work of improving humanity gets done. Whatever fame and fortune they do achieve are leveraged to continue their social work.

For example, in 1979, Mother Teresa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, “for work undertaken in the struggle to overcome poverty and distress, which also constitutes a threat to peace.” She refused the conventional ceremonial banquet given to laureates, and asked that the \$192,000 cash award be given to the poor in India, stating that earthly rewards were important only if they helped her help the world’s needy.



Social leaders form a new elite. But unlike models from the past, this is not a condescending elitism based upon birth, privilege, exclusivity, or wealth. It is a humble outreach based upon service. Social leaders lead by serving, rather than rule by commanding.

“A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.”
-Lao Tzu⁴

³ Source : The Declaration of Independence

⁴ Source : *The Tao Te Ching* by Lao Tzu

Oneness

In contrast to the old models of scientific reductionism, occupational specialization, and societal fragmentation, social leaders feel an abiding sense of unity between themselves and nature, individuals, institutions, and the universe at large. They know that their thoughts, habits, and actions directly result in societal consequences.

Social leaders know they are cells within a greater body. They realize that what happens within their families spills over into the boardroom, the media, the government. Their bedrooms and living rooms form the building blocks of the collective societal home.



“...genuine leadership is deeply personal and inherently collective.”
-Peter Senge⁵

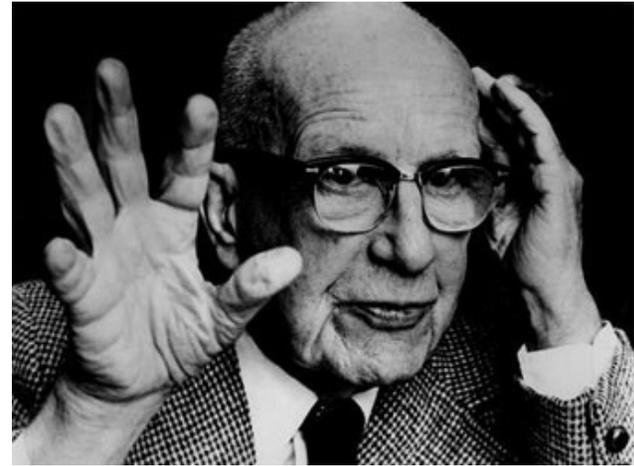
CASE STUDY :

“Call Me a Trim Tab”

Judging by the first 32 years of Buckminster Fuller’s life, one wouldn’t have predicted that he would impact the world for good. He considered himself an average individual, lacking special privileges such as wealth and academic degrees. Furthermore, his “irresponsibility and lack of interest” got him kicked out of college—twice.

⁵ Source : *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power & Greatness* by Robert K. Greenleaf

In 1927, bankrupt and jobless, Buckminster Fuller stood on the shores of Lake Michigan, prepared to throw himself into the freezing waters. His first child had died. He was bankrupt, discredited, and jobless, and he had a wife and newborn daughter. On the verge of suicide, it suddenly struck him that his life belonged, not to himself, but to the universe. He chose at that moment to embark on what he called “an experiment to discover what the little, penniless, unknown individual might be able to do effectively on behalf of all humanity.”⁶

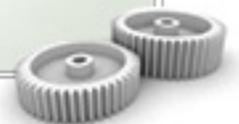


He came alive as he realized the profound and intimate connection between individual action and societal health. He became well known as an architect, author, designer, futurist, inventor, and visionary. He eventually secured 28 patents, was awarded many honorary doctorate degrees, and inspired the [Buckminster Fuller Institute](#).

Fuller “created the term Spaceship Earth to convince all his fellow passengers that they would have to work together as the crew of a ship. His was an earnest, even compulsive, program to convince his listeners that humans had a function in universe. Humans have a destiny to serve as ‘local problem solvers’ converting their experience to the highest advantage of others.”⁷

In his later years, Fuller summed up his personal philosophy with the following story: “Something hit me very hard once, thinking about what one little man could do. Think of the Queen Mary—the whole ship goes by and then comes the rudder. And there’s a tiny thing at the edge of the rudder called a trim tab. It’s a miniature rudder. Just moving the little trim tab builds a low pressure that pulls the rudder around. Takes almost no effort at all. So I said that the little individual can be a trim tab. Society thinks it’s going right by you, that it’s left you altogether. But if you’re doing dynamic things mentally, the fact is that you can just put your foot out like that and the whole big ship of state is going to go. So I said, call me a Trim Tab.”

⁶ Source : [Introduction to Buckminster Fuller](#)
⁷ Source : [Who Was Buckminster Fuller](#) by E.J. Applewhite



Where some business leaders exploit people and ravage the environment for profit, social leaders in business feel a sense of social stewardship, always aware of how their actions affect society. In fact, they see their company as a social institution, not simply a profiteering enterprise.

“...abundance is a communal act, the joint creation of an incredibly complex ecology in which each part functions on behalf of the whole and, in return, is sustained by the whole. Community doesn't just create abundance—community is abundance. If we could learn that equation from the world of nature, the human world might be transformed.”
-Parker J. Palmer⁸

Social leaders don't separate, or compartmentalize, their lives. To a social leader, there is no business life separate from family or personal life. There is no entertainment that conflicts with spiritual beliefs and duties.

Bruce Biddick, a securities underwriter with Centex Securities, provides a glaring counter-example of social connectedness. When asked why he invests in companies that distribute pornography, he responded, “I'm not a weirdo or a pervert—it's not my deal. I've got kids and a family. But I can see as an underwriter going out and making bucks on people being weird. Hey, dollars are dollars. I'm not selling drugs. It's Wall Street.”

To social leaders, this cavalier attitude is misguided and destructive. Dollars aren't just inanimate paper removed from values. What we do with our dollars contributes to the health or demise of society. Right ends don't justify wrong means.

⁸ Source : *Let Your Life Speak: Listening For the Voice of Vocation* by Parker J. Palmer

It's also because of this sense of connectedness that, ironically, social leaders focus on changing themselves rather than focusing on changing others or society. In fact, this is precisely how they change the world.

This is in contrast to social engineers who seek to force others to conform to their visions. Social leaders don't strive for change because they think the problems are "out there." They realize that all societal problems are merely reflections of individual choice; the problems are inside each of us.

While social planners seek to mold society according to their conceptions, social leaders seek to serve others and thus bring out the beauty that already exists in individuals. The one prunes and shapes through force—and therefore limits potential—while the other gives birth to limitless greatness through voluntary methods.

“One moves...so as to make a pertinent force of one's concern for one's neighbor—as a member of a family, a work group, a community, a world society. The outward and inward are seen as parts of the same fabric.”
-Robert K. Greenleaf⁹

⁹ Source : *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power & Greatness* by Robert K. Greenleaf

Calling

Social leaders never act from default mode. They shed negative, flawed programming to reveal passion and purpose.

To be a social leader is to know with certainty that you were born for something great, unique, and specific. Furthermore, it is to know that if you don't live up to your mission, the world suffers.

Interestingly, one common thread found in those who feel a calling in life is that they believe that greatness happens *through* them, not *by* them. Their role is to prepare themselves, accept the call, and follow through with discipline. This allows them to channel their calling into meaningful contributions.

The psychiatrist Carl Jung described his calling when he wrote, "I had a sense of destiny as though my life was assigned to me by fate and had to be fulfilled. This gave me an inner security...Often I had the feeling that in all decisive matters, I was no longer among men, but was alone with God."

The calling of a social leader is the thing that he or she can't *not* do because of the inner voice that compels and drives them. It permeates their thoughts, emotions, actions, and habits.



“Each man had only one genuine vocation—to find the way to himself...His task was to discover his own destiny—not an arbitrary one—and live it out wholly and resolutely within himself. Everything else was only a would-be existence, an attempt at evasion, a flight back to the ideals of the masses, conformity and fear of one’s own inwardness.”

-Herman Hesse¹⁰

Because of calling, social leaders are, of necessity, entrepreneurial. Entrepreneurship is more than just owning a business. It’s a mindset and a worldview. In fact, one can work within a corporation and still be entrepreneurial.

An entrepreneur is one who, regardless of position or job status, takes full responsibility for his actions and results. Entrepreneurs are innovative and creative. They seek to expand horizons and push boundaries. All of these qualities are required for social leadership.

“The best reason to start an organization is to make meaning—to create a product or service to make the world a better place.”

-Guy Kawasaki, Entrepreneur, Investor, Author

Social leaders seek to be in positions of influence to fulfill their calling. They must be daring and persistent. Their calling gives them wings to fly and a wrecking ball to knock through barriers.

¹⁰ Source : *Demian* by Herman Hesse

“I Knew I Had To Do Something”

Greg Mortenson was an ordinary man, nurse, and mountain climber until a failed climbing ascent on the mountain K2 led to a calling that changed his life and that of thousands of children in Pakistan and Afghanistan. His bestselling book, *Three Cups of Tea*, chronicles his powerful story of social leadership.

In 1993, after attempting K2, Greg recovered in Korphe, a local Pakistani village. While in Korphe, Mortenson watched as a group of children “sat in a neat circle and began copying their multiplication tables. Most scratched in the dirt with sticks they’d brought for that purpose. The more fortunate...had slate boards they wrote on with sticks dipped in a mixture of mud and water.



“I felt like my heart was being torn out,” says Mortenson. “There was a fierceness in their desire to learn, despite how mightily everything was stacked against them...I knew I had to do something.” Acting on that internal calling, Greg promised to help the village build a school.

“From that rash promise,” states his biography, “grew a remarkable humanitarian campaign, in which

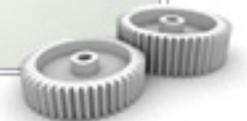
Mortenson has dedicated his life to promote education, especially for girls, in remote regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

“As of 2008, Mortenson had established over 78 schools in rural and often volatile regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan, which provide education to over 28,000 children, including 18,000 girls, where few education opportunities existed before.

“His work has not been without difficulty. In 1996, he survived an eight day armed kidnapping in the Northwest Frontier Province NWFP tribal areas of Pakistan, escaped a 2003 firefight with feuding Afghan warlords by hiding for eight hours under putrid animal hides in a truck going to a leather-tanning factory. He has overcome two fatwehs from enraged Islamic mullahs, endured CIA investigations, and also received hate mail and death threats from fellow Americans after 9/11, for helping Muslim children with education.

“Mortenson is a living hero to rural communities of Afghanistan and Pakistan, where he has gained the trust of Islamic leaders, military commanders, government officials and tribal chiefs from his tireless effort to champion education. He is one of few foreigners who has worked extensively for fifteen years (spending over 67 months) in the region now considered the front lines of the war on terror.

“NBC newscaster, Tom Brokaw, calls Mortenson, ‘one ordinary person, with the right combination of character and determination, who is really changing the world.’”



Integral Education

Integral means entire; complete; whole. Integral education, therefore, is education that leads to whole truth and complete “beingness.” It is “the quest after knowledge for its own sake, but also as leading to social involvement in practical affairs for the sake of social good and individual dignity.”¹¹

Integral education extends far beyond technical knowledge and specialized expertise. It explores human nature and seeks to answer such questions as, “Who are we? Why are we here? What is the purpose of life? What should our ideals be and how can I achieve them?” Not only is such an education whole in scope and methodology, but also its core purpose is to develop whole individuals—in other words, social leaders.



Another term for it is liberal arts education. In contrast, most modern education has become disconnected from such meaningful questions and is specialized to the point of losing the original values and purposes of education.

“Man is not a farmer, or a professor, or an engineer, but he is all. Man is priest, and scholar, and statesman, and producer, and soldier. In the divided or social state, these functions are parceled out to individuals, each of whom aims to do his stint of the joint work, whilst each other performs his... The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.”

-Ralph Waldo Emerson in *The American Scholar*

¹¹ Source : [Dickinson College](#)

An integral, liberal education is based on being mentored in the great classics from all facets of the human experience, such as history, literature, philosophy, political philosophy, economics, business, family, government and constitutional law, theology, psychology, mathematics, science, language, international relations, and public policy.

Such an education teaches students *how* to think, rather than training them *what* to think. It provides deep insights into human nature. It instills virtue and requires self-discipline. It is a lifelong process, rather than a short phase of youth.

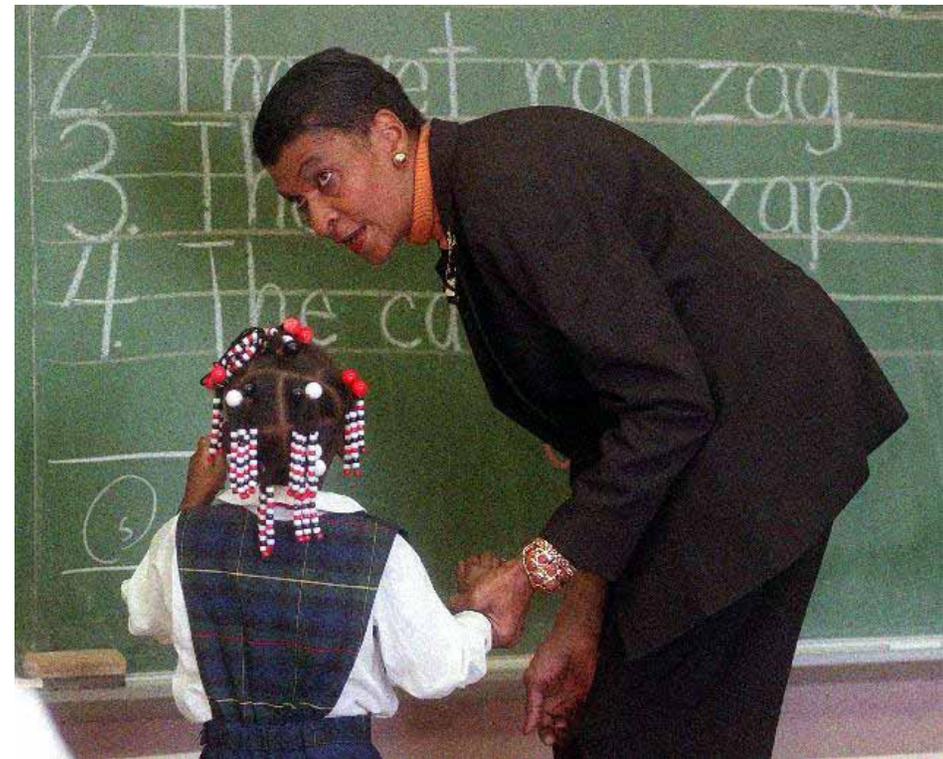
CASE STUDY :

Integral Education in Inner-City Chicago

Marva Collins understands the power of integral education. In fact, she's proven it time and time again with students in her Westside Preparatory School, which she founded in an inner-city area of Chicago.

According to her [biography](#), "Her curriculum is based on classical literature, and other subject material that contain ideas, lofty thoughts, and abstract concepts. The purpose is to teach children the values that hold societies together and that present to students thoughts that may be interpreted differently.

"Fourth graders in her school, for example, read Plato's dialogue, *The Republic*. Students are encouraged to express their own opinion. And, as any observer of Ms.



Collins classes will attest, the children are eager to participate in classroom discussions, and their verbal skills are outstanding as are their reasoning abilities. Her students are taught to appreciate the nuances of language, how to analyze and challenge what they read, and to express their opinions. They learn to contrast their own ideas with the differing ones as expressed by the other students.”

Even more noteworthy is what Marva has done with students who had been branded as failures. “During the first year,” her biography continues, “Marva took in learning disabled, problem children and even one child who had been labeled by Chicago public school authorities as borderline retarded. At the end of the first year, every child scored at least five grades higher proving that the previous labels placed on these children were misguided.

“That little girl who had been labeled as border line retarded, graduated from college Summa Cum Laude. Marva’s graduates have entered some of the nation’s finest colleges and universities, such as Harvard, Yale, and Stanford, to mention just a few. And, they have become physicians, lawyers, engineers, educators, and entered other professions.”

What makes Marva Collins a prime example of social leadership is her under-privileged upbringing, her experience as a teacher, and her dedication to her calling despite a lack of resources.

Born into the system of segregation in Alabama, she was not permitted to use the public library and her school had few books and no indoor plumbing. Gratefully, her family helped her develop a strong desire for learning and independence. After graduating from Clark College in Atlanta, Georgia, she taught school in Alabama for two years. She moved to Chicago and taught in Chicago’s public school system for fourteen years.

“Her experiences in that system,” recounts her [biography](#), “coupled with her dissatisfaction with the quality of education that her two youngest children were receiving in prestigious private schools,

convinced her that children deserved better than what was passing for acceptable education. That conviction led to her decision to open her own school on the second floor of her home. She took the \$5,000 balance in her school pension fund and began her educational program with an enrollment of her own two children and four other neighborhood youngsters.”

What started as an act of faith and a dream became a powerful reality that has blessed hundreds of lives.



Since social leaders deal with ideals and human change, integral education is a prerequisite to social leadership. Whether one works in business, government, academia, media, family, community, or religion, integral education is the key that unlocks the door to social progress.

(For more information on integral education, see [George Wythe University](#), which has established an integral methodology and curriculum devoted to building social leaders.)

Action

Social leaders bridge the gap between what *is* and what *should be*. They are visionary *and* grounded, idealistic *and* practical. They envision what should be, understand current realities, then get to work.

Counterfeits of this include the dreamers who never get anything done, and the pragmatists who never get the right things done. Social leaders blend idealism and realism to trigger healthy progressivism.

“You see things as they are and you say, ‘Why?’ But I dream things that never were, and I say, ‘Why not?’”

-George Bernard Shaw



You won't find social leaders waiting for other people or institutions to make things better. While others are confused, despondent, and waiting, social leaders are confident, optimistic, and acting. You'll find them feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, liberating the captive, educating the ignorant, relieving the oppressed, and administering to the sick and afflicted.

“A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm.”

-Henrik Ibsen

A Revolution in Education

Gloria de Souza, a 45-year-old elementary school teacher in Bombay, India, was the first fellow elected by the social entrepreneurship organization [Ashoka](#). Souza, a teacher for twenty years, had a dream to transform education across India.

Colonial-era methods, such as rote memorization, ruled the classroom. Souza knew there were better ways to teach and help students learn and grow. In 1971 she attended a workshop on experiential and environmental education and knew she had found what she needed. Receiving guarded responses from colleagues, she decided to try out the new methods herself in the private school where she was teaching.

She set aside textbooks and took her students outside to learn about birds and plants and to explore questions about nature and life. She took students on field trips where they learned about architecture and history. Students experienced representative government through school elections. Despite criticism, she persisted and students responded favorably. She knew it was time to spread her ideas and methods to the public school system.

“Do you know that 70 percent of the kids in Bombay want to emigrate?” she once asked Bill Drayton, the founder of Ashoka. “Something is deeply wrong in our society. And I think I can do something very important with this idea. If we can help children grow up learning to think rather than memorize and repeat, learning to problem solve, learning to be creative, learning to be actors rather than acted upon, we can create a generation that will be very different. And India will be very different. And that’s a revolution.”

A grant from Ashoka allowed Gloria to found Parisar Asha in 1982, an organization dedicated to promoting her revolutionary educational approach. In a few years, she conclusively demonstrated the superiority of her methods. By 1985 Bombay's municipal school board had introduced her methods to 1,700 schools. Within three years, almost a million students were learning them, and by the end of the 1980s, the Indian government had incorporated her methods into its national curriculum.



It is action on the part of ordinary citizens, not positions of authority, that defines social leadership, which is why it is democratic in nature. Social leaders span all fields, occupations, income levels, and roles. A social leader doesn't need institutional permission or authority to do what's right, to serve and uplift. She does what's right, when it's right, and for the right reasons—simply because it's right.

**“The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority.”
-Kenneth Blanchard**

In many ways, this is the core of social leadership. The old leadership was aristocratic, where “lesser mortals” looked up to privileged elites. “Commoners” depended on corporate leaders, politicians, experts, and other authority figures to make decisions.

In other words, it's not about someone doing everything. It's about everyone doing something.

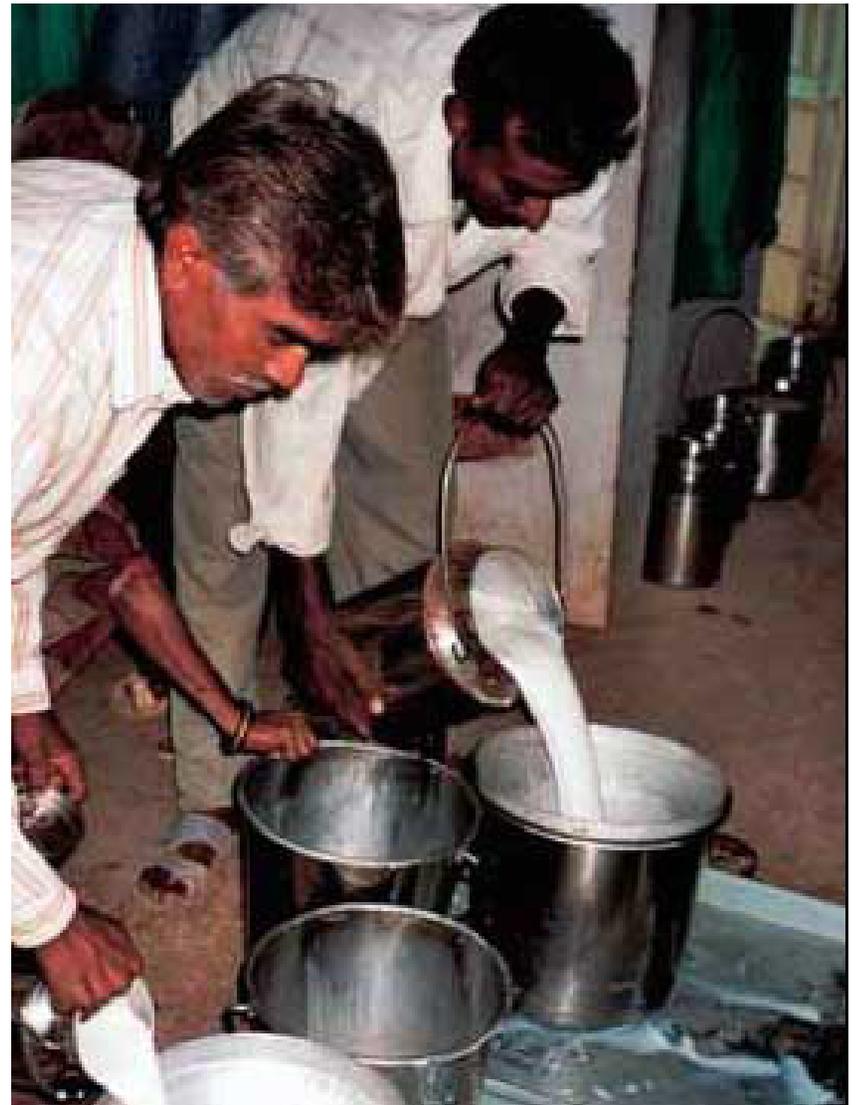
In contrast, democratic social leadership is the reality that progress must be enacted by an army of common people, rather than by a handful of aristocrats or leaders whom we place on pedestals. It is based upon the premise that institutions cannot save us and that we have to save ourselves. Its power comes by recognizing that every individual has genius, every individual has both the capacity and the responsibility to be great.

In other words, it's not about someone doing everything. It's about everyone doing something.

Amul, the national dairy farmer's cooperative in Gujarat, India is an excellent example of grassroots social leaders acting and cooperating to build society. Formed in 1946, the cooperative has made India the largest producer of milk and milk products in the world.

The Amul "revolution" began with awareness among farmers, then grew into a protest movement that was channeled towards economic prosperity. Suffering from exploitation by monopolistic traders, the farmers banded together to eliminate the middlemen. Today, the cooperative is owned by about 2.6 million Indian milk producers who have found self-reliance and a decent livelihood through the program.

"We're not in the dairy business," says Mr. B. M. Vyas, Amul's managing director. "We're in the society-building business. Business is not the goal. Business is a means to build a society that is just and fair and that empowers the poor. Democracy is not sitting in the Parliament in Delhi—it is starting at the grassroots level and giving the ordinary man a chance."



“As models of leadership shift from organizational hierarchies with leaders at the top to more distributed, shared networks, a lot changes...That’s why I think that cultivation, ‘becoming a real human being,’ really is the primary leadership issue of our time, but on a scale never required before. It’s a very old idea that may actually hold the key to a new age of ‘global democracy.’”
-Betty Sue Flowers¹²

In the past, we’ve looked to one person, or a small handful of people, for leadership and solutions. Social leadership is an organic revolution led by an army of individual citizens.

¹² Source : *Presence: An Exploration of Profound Change in People, Organizations, and Society* by Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski and Flowers

Liberty

Social leaders are intimately aware of the art, science, and process of government. They understand its nature and proper role. They do all in their power to secure and preserve freedom for all races, genders, and cultures.



“God Almighty has set before me two great objects...”

Born in Britain in 1759, William Wilberforce became one of the fiercest slavery abolitionists of his day. He was elected to Parliament in 1780 at the age of 21. At the suggestion of Prime Minister William Pitt, Wilberforce became the parliamentary leader of the abolition movement in 1787.

Wilberforce sensed a call from God, writing in his journal in that same year, “God Almighty has set before me two great objects, the suppression of the Slave Trade and the Reformation of Manners.” In 1789 he presented his Abolition Bill before the House of Commons, giving a [speech](#) that was praised by newspapers as one of the most eloquent ever to have been heard in the House. However, he was met with delay tactics and ardent opposition, which was to become the norm of his life until his death.

He wasn’t able to present the bill again until 1791, when it failed again. Working tirelessly, Wilberforce collected petitions, held meetings, published pamphlets, and organized boycotts on slavery-related products. He introduced his bill almost every year through the 1790s and it failed each time.

The abolition movement wasn’t able to gain traction until 1804. In 1806, Wilberforce published an influential tract advocating abolition and, in June of that year, resolutions supporting abolition were passed in parliament. The Abolition Bill was once again introduced in 1807, this time attracting considerable support. In February of 1807 Parliament voted overwhelmingly in favor of abolition of the slave trade.



During the debate the Solicitor-General, Sir Samuel Romilly, spoke against the trade. His speech concluded with a long and emotional tribute to Wilberforce. According to Romilly's biographer, "Wilberforce was overcome by the power of Romilly's concluding passages, and sat with his head on his hands, tears streaming down his face. As Romilly reached his final sentences the House broke into one of those scenes that it reserves for great occasions. Members stood and cheered him tumultuously."

The Abolition Act became law on March 25th, 1807, although slavery remained a reality in British colonies. Wilberforce then turned toward the gargantuan task of complete emancipation. Faced with increasing resistance from the government and suffering from poor health, he continued to campaign, speak, and publish.

He resigned from the House of Commons in 1825. His last public appearance was at a meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society in 1830. In parliament, the Emancipation Bill gathered support and received its final commons reading on July 26th, 1833. Slavery would be abolished, but the planters would be heavily compensated. "Thank God," said Wilberforce, "that I have lived to witness a day in which England is willing to give twenty millions sterling for the Abolition of Slavery." Three days later, on 29 July 1833, he died.¹³



The work of the social leader is to improve society. A healthy society is a free and open society based upon voluntary relationships and transactions. Therefore, social leaders never use force to change people and societal conditions. Rather, they use persuasion, kindness, and long-suffering to influence others for good.

¹³ Source : [William Wilberforce Biography](#)

While they are often politically engaged, they know that government should only be used to protect equal rights and ensure justice, not for social experiments and forced wealth redistribution. The belief that the government exists to equalize through force comes from thinkers who don't trust the power of the human spirit and the intrinsic goodness of mankind.

**“Government is not reason, it is not eloquence, it is force; like fire, a troublesome servant and a fearful master.”
-George Washington**

The willingness of social leaders to depend upon voluntarism springs from their understanding that mere political and economic freedom are nothing but external frameworks that facilitate true, internal freedom. Constitutional government doesn't give us freedom; it gives us the *opportunity* to choose to be free.

The common conception of liberty is the ability to do what one wants without external constraint. It's often associated primarily with government laws. Social leaders, however, understand liberty on a much deeper, more holistic level. To a social leader, liberty includes living a life of virtue in accordance with natural law. To the self-disciplined social leader, internal commitments carry more significance than external restraints.

Personal liberty is protected by external laws yet enriched and enlivened by internal choices. Spiritual, financial, physical, mental, and emotional freedom are ultimately far more important than governmental freedom, since the latter is predicated upon the former. The more personally free individuals are in a society, the more free their government will be.

**“Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without.”
-Edmund Burke**

Your Turn to Shine

Social leadership is the last and best hope for humanity. But it's just a theory without *your* voice and *your* life radiating with service and dedication.

You can become a social leader. We can each **submit** to our Higher Power, feel our **oneness** with the universe and society, heed our **calling**, acquire an **integral education**, **act** with courage regardless of adversity or our social standing, and move the cause of **liberty**.

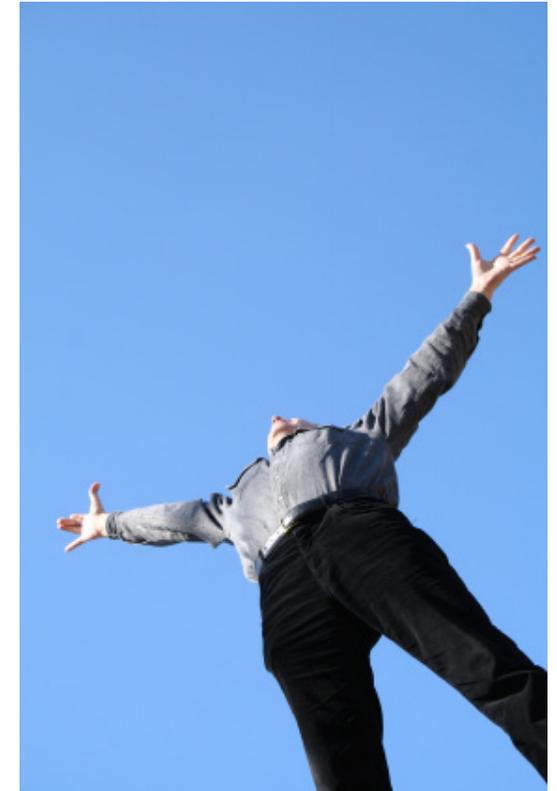
When this happens, people like Gandhi and Mother Teresa will become the norm, rather than the exception. We'll see leaders pouring out of homes and communities and making a profound difference. Average citizens will awake and arise to greatness, transcending anger and fear. Together, we'll replace war, poverty, and oppression with peace, prosperity, and freedom.

Like King Sisyphus' boulder, social problems will never disappear entirely. The difference now, however, is that instead of one person pushing the boulder alone, millions of us will be pushing together. The load will be lighter, the journey more joyful, and the results more sustainable.

The question is whether you will be an observer, or a participant in this great movement. Will you watch the renaissance happen "out there," or experience it within your own heart?

Your journey begins when you accept the responsibility for it.

Will you?



Resources

Get Involved

- [Visit The Center For Social Leadership \(CSL\) website](#) and sign up to receive news and updates
- [Subscribe To Our RSS Feed](#)
- [Have New Articles Delivered Straight To Your Email Inbox](#)

Social Media

- [Social Leadership on Facebook](#)
- [Social Leadership Squidoo Lens](#)
- [Social Leadership YouTube channel](#)

Recommended Reading

- *Magnificent Obsession* by Lloyd C. Douglass
- *Servant Leadership: A Journey Into the Nature of Legitimate Power & Greatness* by Robert K. Greenleaf
- *Let Your Life Speak: Listening For the Voice of Vocation* by Parker J. Palmer
- *Synchronicity: The Inner Path of Leadership* by Joseph Jaworski
- *Presence: An Exploration of Profound Change in People, Organizations, and Society* by Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, and Flowers
- *Jonathan Livingstone Seagull* by Richard Bach
- *And There Was Light* by Jacques Lusseyran
- *The Great Learning* by Confucius
- *Self-Reliance* by Ralph Waldo Emerson
- *As a Man Thinketh* by James Allen
- *The 8th Habit: From Effectiveness to Greatness* by Stephen R. Covey
- *Man's Search For Meaning* by Viktor Frankl
- *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission To Promote Peace, One School at a Time* by Greg Mortenson

- *The Triumphs of Joseph: How Today's Community Healers are Reviving our Streets and Neighborhoods* by Robert L. Woodson
- *The Gift of Change: Spiritual Guidance for Living Your Best Self* by Marianne Williamson
- *Bonds That Make Us Free: Healing Our Relationships, Coming To Ourselves* by C. Terry Warner
- *The Anatomy of Peace: Resolving the Heart of Conflict* by The Arbinger Institute
- *Business as a Calling: Work and the Examined Life* by Michael Novak
- *The Soul of Money: Reclaiming the Wealth of our Inner Resources* by Lynn Twist
- *The Tao Te Ching* by Lao Tzu
- *The Journals of George Fox*
- *The Majesty of Calmness* by William George Jordan
- *The Power of Truth: Individuals Problems and Opportunities* by William George Jordan
- *How To Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas* by David Bornstein
- *Who Really Cares: The Surprising Truth About Compassionate Conservatism* by Arthur C. Brooks
- *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho
- *Critical Path* by Buckminster Fuller
- *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth* by Buckminster Fuller
- *The Purpose Driven Life: What On Earth Am I Here For?* by Rick Warren
- *Way of the Peaceful Warrior: A Book that Changes Lives* by Dan Millman
- *The Celestine Prophecy* by James Redfield
- *Launching a Leadership Revolution* by Orrin Woodward & Chris Brady
- *Finding Our Way: Leadership for an Uncertain Time* by Margaret Wheatley
- *Riches for the Poor* by Earl Shorris
- *The Blue Sweater: Bridging the Gap Between Rich and Poor in an Interconnected World* by Jacqueline Novogratz
- *Path of Least Resistance: Learning to Become the Creative Force in Your Own Life* by Robert Fritz
- *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World* by Margaret Wheatley
- *Turning to One Another: Simple Conversations to Restore Hope in the Future* by Margaret Wheatley
- *Love and the Soul: Creating a Future for Earth* by Robert Sardello
- *A Kind of Genius: Herb Sturz and Society's Toughest Problems* by Sam Roberts

Recommended Movies & Videos

- [A Lesson Before Dying](#)
- [A Man For All Seasons](#)
- [Amazing Grace](#)
- [Ashoka Videos](#)
- [Becket](#)
- [Chariots of Fire](#)
- [Dead Poets Society](#)
- [Frontline on Social Entrepreneurs](#)
- [Gandhi](#)
- [The Great Debaters](#)
- [It's a Wonderful Life](#)
- [Joan of Arc](#)
- [The Kite Runner](#)
- [Life is Beautiful](#)
- [Luther](#)
- [Mother Teresa](#)
- [The New Heroes](#) (PBS Documentary)
- [Norma Rae](#)
- [Patch Adams](#)
- [Pay it Forward](#)
- [Peaceful Warrior](#)
- [The Power of One](#)
- [Radio](#)
- [Remember the Titans](#)
- [To Kill a Mockingbird](#)
- [Uncommon Heroes Videos](#)
- [Whale Rider](#)

Examples of Social Leadership

- [Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn](#)
- [Ann Cotton](#)
- [Ann Moore](#)
- [Aung San Suu Kyi](#)
- [Benito Juarez](#)
- [Bill Drayton](#)
- [Bill Gates](#)
- [Billy Graham](#)
- [Buckminster Fuller](#)
- [Bunker Roy](#)
- [Chris Brady](#)
- [Elizabeth Fry](#)
- [Fabio Rosa](#)
- [Florence Nightingale](#)
- [Garrett Gunderson](#)
- [Gloria de Souza](#)
- [Greg Mortenson](#)
- [Henrietta Mears](#)
- [Herb Sturz](#)
- [Ira Fulton](#)
- [Jeff Skoll](#)
- [John Elkington](#)
- [Joshua Chamberlain](#)
- [Kailash Satyarthi](#)
- [Kris Krohn](#)
- [Mahatma Gandhi](#)
- [Marc Freedman](#)
- [Maria Montessori](#)
- [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)
- [Marva Collins](#)
- [Michael Reynolds](#)
- [Mother Teresa](#)
- [Muhammed Yunus](#)
- [Nellie Bly](#)
- [Oliver DeMille](#)
- [Orrin Woodward](#)
- [Paul Newman](#)
- [Pierre Omidyar](#)
- [Randy Pausch](#)
- [Rigoberta Menchú](#)
- [Ryan Hreljac](#)
- [Steve D'Annunzio](#)
- [Susan B. Anthony](#)
- [Victoria Hale](#)
- [Wangari Maathai](#)
- [William Wilberforce](#)

25 Action Ideas for Aspiring Social Leaders

1. Run for city council.
2. Get involved with a local youth group, e.g. Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Big Brothers/Big Sisters.
3. Start a local reader's theatre.
4. Host a Face-to-Face With Greatness seminar series in your town.
5. Lead a campaign to save an historic building in your community.
6. Begin a neighborhood watch group.
7. Volunteer to help at a daycare or elderly care facility.
8. Volunteer to groom and clean the grounds of a church to which you do not belong.
9. Get permission to paint the curbs of your city streets.
10. Volunteer at a homeless shelter or soup kitchen.
11. Be a foster parent or infant rescue volunteer for critical newborns in the system.
12. Form an organization to bring the arts to your town.
13. Instigate an outdoor theatre for community plays and family movie nights.
14. Start a ballroom dance club for youth.
15. Encourage business and corporations to increase donations to local charities.
16. Organize financial literacy classes for your community. A debt free community is a strong community.
17. Start a block party custom with your neighbors.
18. Volunteer to read to kids at the library.
19. Help people to plan, plant, and grow home gardens in your neighborhood.
20. Create a foreign pen pal program with the kids in your neighborhood.
21. Get involved in 4-H and develop awareness for programs such as [Heifer International](#).
22. Attend every city council meeting in your town for six months.
23. Become a precinct committeeperson.
24. Read to your children every night and see how different life is after three weeks.
25. Write regularly on a blog.