



*Begin the unfolding of your leadership presence*

## Unfolding Your Leadership Presence

### Opening

We're all living our lives. Trying to get by, keep resources flowing in, getting our work or studies done, trying to help out family and friends when we can. Even living a privileged life in North America, where clean water flows from the taps and food is available everywhere, life is often perceived as just something to endure. Just getting by, hanging in there, same old-same old. It's no wonder anxiety and depression are at significant levels, and that the threat of suicide hangs over a significant portion of our youth. Many young people lack motivation to work hard and excel, and may also be unsure of what their life's purpose is.

So as we step into the material in these pamphlets, we ask you to take a few moments and reflect on your current life. What is your general level of optimism, how resilient do you feel, what is your purpose? With that as a reflection and thought exercise, we then ask you to take a few moments and reflect on your future potential life. Can you see yourself as confident, courageous, self-assured, calm, successful, motivated, happy and productive? Can you envision a future life full of pleasure, meaning and fulfillment? Can you imagine yourself as a leader in your work, your family and your community?

For sure, depending on your present circumstances and future prospects, seeing this kind of positive vision may be challenging. But the thrust of this pamphlet is that you have something deep inside you that will guide you and assist you to meet these challenges and achieve this kind of positive future reality. We'll use the term **leadership presence**, and it's our belief that we all have this deeply resonating within us. For some fortunate individuals, it's close to the surface and perhaps already exhibits itself on a regular basis. For others, it's deeply hidden, covered over by many layers of self-doubt, pessimism and lack of support from others around you. But this gift is within all of us. And like any special gift, it needs to be unwrapped or unfolded before its full beauty can be appreciated. And what we will do in this pamphlet and the related pamphlets is describe the what's and how's of this unfolding process, of how you can let your leadership presence arise and emerge to transform your current life into your envisioned life.

### The Problem—What's Missing?

To be better, there needs to be a drive within you to change. A belief that you can transform your life and the way you live. That you can be better, and as a result happier, in all aspects of your life. This may sound like over-reaching but it's not. Because if you go deep, and develop the foundational awareness of what you need to change, then the resultant changes can impact everything in your life. Everything.

The power to make the required changes in your life, the capacity to do so, is already within you. So the task at hand is not further development of the self. The real work is to unveil or unfold your inherent capabilities to lead a happy and fully realized life. You will need to hold in mind that you indeed will be a leader, as you have an inherent purpose that will be unfolded along with your capacity to achieve it.



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### Credibility Story/Success Story

The following are true stories of students who made significant changes in their lives, after coming to a realization that they needed to change and that big changes were possible with small steps. Some of these are strongly connected to physical improvements, but all had significant intellectual and mindset components. Names have been withheld to protect the innocent.

"A number of years back I had a second year student who always sat in the front row. What we might call a "husky lad" a generation back, he was shy and soft-spoken and generally was one of those folks who blended into the furniture. He seemed a bit nervous, but had a soft smile and a pleasant demeanor under some heavy-framed glasses.

Fast forward a year and there was this chap sitting up front in my third year systems engineering class. He was muscular and tanned, with a sharp haircut and a ready smile. He seemed to be joking back and forth a lot with his classmates, and he greeted me in an energetic and dynamic way. I looked at him and then asked him if I should know him. It was indeed the same young man, but completely transformed in a physical and energetic way. I chatted with him after class and quietly asked him what he had been up to, and he let me know he had started going to the gym every day and watching his food intake. He was off-handed about it all, but it appeared to me I was talking to a completely different person."

"I used to see this young fellow in the hallway. He would always nod a hello, and he seemed to be painfully shy. He was also very obese. Not just overweight, dramatically obese. A couple of years down the road I crossed paths with him as he started coming out to a meditation club I run for students. After a few conversations he told me he had tipped the scales at over 500 pounds. But then he started to go to hot yoga every day, and watching what he ate. And slowly but surely, over a two year period he reduced his weight by more than half. He is a creative guy, and started to do well in school, graduating from engineering and getting an excellent position in the public sector."

“I once had a graduate student who had dropped out of engineering after one semester of study. He went out West and got a job leading camping excursions for the YMCA for underprivileged urban kids. After five years of shivering from camping out on the glaciers, and some heavy introspection, he went back to studying engineering. But this time he was a straight A student who went on to win scholarships for his masters and doctoral work. Along the way he got married and had two nice kids, and ended up getting a faculty position as an engineering professor and quickly became the Chair of his academic department at a well-respected school. And he is still a pretty good outdoorsman...”

### **Clear Statement of Solution**

Sit down for a period of quiet reflection and ponder your current life. Write down what is working well, and perhaps what is not working as well as you might like. Try to do this in an honest, detached way. The writing of this is for you, not for anyone else to comment on. Overall, is there room for improvement? Are there specific aspects of your life that really need improvement? Perhaps this is the only question one could get complete agreement on across a wide spectrum of humanity.

So going from this to your downstream future life, can you imagine the areas that need improvement being significantly improved? If you can imagine this, and believe that the related improvements can be achieved this, then we can move on to what you need to do to manifest this improved life.

And this is where we plunge in to the work of these pamphlets. Defining the deep work to bridge the gap between your current life situation and your improved future life. It will be a continuous effort over time, but this deep, foundational work will give you the base that you will continue to come back to, over and over again as you progressively enhance your life and make the contributions to the world that you were intended to make.

### **Statement of Benefits**

We contend that if you embark on this journey of unveiling your inner strengths, you will start to enjoy a range of considerable benefits. Lowered anxiety, more happiness, becoming a better friend, evolving into a better family member, being more productive, and being more capable of meeting Life’s Big Challenges. This may sound like a lot, or maybe even over-reaching. But we contend the deep work to uncover or unveil your true essence will have such a profound transformation on your life and the presence you bring to your daily commitments, that all of the above can be achieved by these fundamental and foundational changes.

To achieve this, in later pamphlets we will give you details of specific modalities that you can practice to achieve the unveiling of your essence. Background concepts, related exercises, elements of a regular practice regimen, and activities to support and maintain your improvement will be offered.

### **Summary-Starting Points**

Where are you at?

Where do you want to be?

If these are different, some kind of work or improvement is needed. We contend that the related process to bridge the gap is beyond a conventional approach. Instead of building up, or self-development, it is more like an unveiling, or unfolding, to show what is already in you. And from that will flow purpose, achievement, engagement in all aspects of your life.



*Unveiling your inner strengths*

### **Closer Story—Tie to Next Pamphlet**

In the next pamphlet we will outline a model for living life fully called The 4C’s. A life where an individual spends time on the contemplative, creative, community, and corps (body) aspects of life. What we might call a balanced life, and integrated life.

In this context, one might argue that an all-rounder individual would be the epitome of this approach to life. In the American context, consider the life of Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson was a man of the earth, a farmer who knew hard work that kept his body strong. A skilled musician, who played the violin and cello. A poet, a polymath, an author, and a founder of the University of Virginia. A Founding Father, principal author of the Declaration of Independence, and the third President of the United States. Jefferson had a strong belief in God, followed Unitarian traditions, and was a strong supporter of the separation of church and state. And while being a reasonably enviable model for a person living a fully realized life, it needs to be pointed out that Jefferson was also a slaveowner, and had less-than-charitable perspectives on Native Americans.