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How Does the Presence and Management of Leadership Tension Affect Leaders and the Organizations They Lead?

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HOW DOES THE PRESENCE AND MANAGEMENT OF LEADERSHIP TENSION

AFFECT LEADERS AND THE ORGANIZATIONS THEY LEAD?

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Many leaders inside and outside the church struggle with the weight of leadership demands, feeling overwhelmed and intimidated by the tension that comes with leadership. It is not a lack of calling, clarity, or vision on the part of leaders but the tension of moving people toward achieving mission. Such tension, caused by the function of leadership and not necessarily the leader, is a crucial area that tends to cause a leader to rise or fall. Unfortunately, many leaders eject or struggle without success due to a lack of understanding and the skill set necessary to effectively manage leadership tension. However, that need not be. Management of the leadership tension that is common with all leaders and leadership environments can actually accelerate a leader to success and missional achievement for his or her organization.

The dissertation concentrates on how the presence and management of leadership tension affect leaders and the organizations they lead. The subject matter is introduced by defining the terms *tension* and *leadership* and discussing how the process of leadership tension works. The dissertation examines leadership tension's effects to both leader and organization by investigating the common pain encountered by all leaders. It explores the negative effects of leadership tension and the possible responses, both positive and negative, each leader faces. It offers solutions to the issue of successfully managing leadership tension by considering a biblical basis for the presence and management of leadership tension. Finally, the dissertation explores the positive power of leadership tension in a leader's life personally and relationally. Its conclusion offers effective behaviors found in the successful management of leadership tension.

CHAPTER 1

AN INTRODUCTION TO LEADERSHIP TENSION

Tension, though common, is unique in perspective when applied to the subject of leadership or management. In numerous situations, many of which will be illustrated throughout this dissertation, it is not a leader's mental intelligence, emotional intuition, experience, or age that determines success or failure, but how the leader manages tensions personally and corporately. It is the connection between the management of leadership tension and a leader's success that drew my attention. I observed, throughout decades of serving in professional leadership positions, in various settings, organizations, and with different leaders that tension and the management of leadership tension was one of several common denominators in which no one was exempt. The difference of the success or effectiveness was severely challenged when faced with the tension that is inherent in leading. The personal observation of how a leader acknowledged, addressed, and advanced the tension was directly connected to his or her success. This observation became the basis of interest and investigation that led to the writing of this dissertation. I am aware of other works exploring the effects of leadership stress, conflict, and pain, but in this dissertation, we will be exploring leadership from the particular perspective of how the management of leadership tension can affect a leader and produce growth in a leader.

Tension exists in every part and aspect of our world, presenting itself physically, socially, emotionally, culturally, politically, economically, and even spiritually. Tension not only exists, but it is also a necessary and beneficial part of our lives. Without tension's presence, we as people and the world we construct and inhabit would not exist.

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Tony Gaglierd, a faculty member with the Natural Science, Engineering, and Technology Department at Point Park College, explained the essential presence of tension in something as elementary as breathing: "The presence of surfactant in the lungs reduces the surface tension between moist lung surfaces in an air environment. With a reduction in surface tension within the lungs, less pressure (force) is required to inflate the lungs. Surface tension and the resulting capillary action assists the pumping action of your heart to help keep the blood moving in your blood vessels."[1]

However, when it comes to tension in leadership settings, leaders tend to resist and even deny tension's existence. In doing so, they not only lose tension's powerful and constructive benefits, but they also find themselves and the organizations they lead moving in the wrong direction. As with any powerful force in the world, tension can involve inherent dangers and negative side effects. Yet these can be navigated and even used to enhance the power of tension in leaders' lives and the organizations they lead.

The dissertation will look at the power and effect of tension in the area of leadership. It will journey through the subject matter by addressing how tension can define both the leader and the role of leadership. Then it will briefly investigate tension's inherent dangers and potential negative side effects. However, the dissertation will primarily explore the positive use of tension in leadership. To do so, it will present a framework through which leaders can harness the power of tension and use it to propel themselves and their organizations toward successfully managing and fulfilling the organizational mission.

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[1] Tony Gaglierd, "Re: How Does Water Surface Tension Relate to Earth and Human Sustainability?" MadSci Network: Environment, December 12, 2000, accessed June 22, 2017, http://www.madsci.org/posts/archives/2000-12/976669243.En.r.html.

Leadership

Leadership in its purest form is influence. Dr. John C. Maxwell made this concept famous when he introduced it in his book *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*. Maxwell states, "True leadership cannot be awarded, appointed, or assigned. It comes only from influence, and that cannot be mandated. It must be earned. The only thing a title can buy is a little time—either to increase your level of influence with others or to undermine it."[2] Maxwell did not say that influence comes without tension. That is, any given leadership environment will always produce tension. The tension then produces a friction that over time results in pain. The pain is inevitable, regardless of leadership quality. The management of that pain eventually determines the lifespan and effectiveness of a leader. Thus, the ability to manage leadership tension determines a leader's resilience and ultimately his or her leadership identity.

A personal contention is that tension is a reality in all leadership environments. Richard Paul and Linda Elder address this tension in *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools*. They state, "As humans we live with the unrealistic but confident sense that we have fundamentally figured out the way things actually are, and that we have done this objectively."[3] Such leadership tension should not be eradicated but managed. The management of tension in organizational environments is ultimately the responsibility of leadership. It is the responsibility of given leadership to navigate an

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[2] John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People Will Follow You* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 13.

[3] Richard Paul and Linda Elder, *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools,* 5th ed. (Tomales, CA: Foundation for Critical Thinking Press, 2008), 21, accessed December 13, 2017. https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ae91/0a3996c2ae6bfc3e1393896b5a2c270d5ff5.pdf.

organization successfully through the ever-changing landscape of change. Such navigation should result in missional accomplishment.

The leadership journey of tension, friction, and pain resulting in resilience and leadership identity is the focus of this chapter.

Peter Drucker says, "Leadership is the lifting of a man's vision to higher sights, the raising of a man's performance to a higher standard, the building of a man's personality beyond its limitations."[4] Therefore, the focus of one's leadership in its purest form is not about the leader, but about those he or she is called to lead. It is about the cause he or she is called to champion and the change he or she is called to bring about. It is not about the person.

Followers of Jesus Christ see this in living form in the life of Jesus. God describes the mission of Jesus in John 3:16–17 (NASB): "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him." Jesus says his mission and calling—the focus of his leadership—is not about himself but about the humanity of the world he is called to save. In Luke 19:10, Jesus declares, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (NASB). Nothing about Jesus' leadership was about himself, but others.

Thus, at bare minimum, leadership for a Christ follower is not about himself or herself but about those he or she is called to lead. John Stott famously stated: "The authority by which the Christian leader leads is not power but love, not force but

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[4] Peter F. Drucker, *The Daily Drucker: 366 Days of Insight and Motivation for Getting the Right Things Done* (New York: Harper Business, 2004), 29.

example, not coercion but reasoned persuasion. Leaders have power, but power is safe only in the hands of those who humble themselves to serve."[5] The same is true for leadership that is not inherently Christian in its ideology or origin. The bare minimum of leadership for those who are not Christ followers is likewise not about themselves but about the people they are called to serve. In his groundbreaking book *Good to Great*, Jim Collins explains, "We found that for leaders to make something great, their ambition has to be for the greatness of the work and the company, rather than for themselves."[6] Ultimately, leaders are called not for themselves but for others.

Tension

The leader and the leader's focus are not about himself or herself but about those he or she is called to lead. Such a focus introduces every leader to a leadership reality: tension. Leadership tension results when the leader's vision and mission contrast with a given follower's buy-in and commitment to that vision. The management of this leadership tension ultimately defines a leader and the accomplishment of his or her given mission.

Tension is defined as "the strain or stretching that results from opposing forces." Such strain or stretching can manifest emotionally, relationally, or mentally; it is a tangible result that has a physical manifestation. Leadership tension manifests itself in all of the above areas: emotional, relational, mental, and physical. Orison Swett Marden

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[5] Gary Runn, "John Stott on Leadership," *The Leadership Crossing* (blog), February 14, 2013, accessed December 12, 2017, http://garyrunn.com/2013/02/14/john-stott-on-leadership.

[6] Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap … and Others Don't* (New York: Harper Business, 2001), 21.

wrote, "Success is not measured by what you accomplish but by the opposition you have encountered, and the courage with which you have maintained the struggle against overwhelming odds."[7]

The ability to manage leadership tension is crucial to the effectiveness and success of a leader. In his book *Leadership Pain*, Dr. Sam R. Chand states:

> As we lead organizations—businesses, nonprofits, and churches—size doesn't matter as much as another crucial factor. The biggest difference between leaders of large organizations and small organizations isn't their location, the size of their building, the scope of the vision, the number of staff members, or their talent. In fact, some of the best leaders I've ever met have small organizations. But in all my consulting and conferences, I've seen a single factor: leaders of larger organizations have proven they can handle more pain.[8]

Therefore, acknowledgement and management of leadership tension are key to success. The ability to manage leadership tension is essential to the successful journey of any leader or attempted mission. Leadership tension produces friction, pain, and resilience (or the lack thereof), and it ultimately results in a leader's identity.

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[7] BrainyQuote, "Orison Swett Marden Quotes," 2015, accessed December 13, 2015, https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/orison_swett_marden_166019.

[8] Samuel R. Chand, *Leadership Pain: The Classroom for Growth* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 33.

Friction

Friction, as defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary*, is "the resistance that one surface or object encounters when moving over another; the action of one surface or object rubbing against another; conflict or animosity caused by a clash of wills, temperaments, or opinions."[9] Friction in leadership is created when a leader's vision rubs against the grain of a follower's reality or perception and encounters resistance. Such friction results in conflict. Navigating through this friction is part of managing leadership tension. The presence or lack of management directly relates to a leader's success in a mission.

Friction is natural because it involves change. Usually, no one likes change unless he or she initiates it. Dr. Sam Chand asserts: "Remember: growth equals change; change equals loss; loss equals pain; so inevitably, growth equals pain. That's why leadership is both brutal and beautiful. It's bleedership! It's brutiful! If you're leading, you're bleeding."[10]

Friction is unavoidable. Since change is pivotal to leadership, so is the friction and the pain that accompanies it. Change leads to pain because it requires the follower to adjust preconceived ideas, beliefs, and patterns that, in many cases, he or she has held for years or even for a lifetime. Thus, in any place, time, or people group, friction is a reality when it comes to leadership. Friction is a constant companion in the life of a leader.

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[9] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "friction," accessed December 10, 2015, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/friction.

[10] Chand, 35.

Pain

As previously noted, friction produces pain, and pain is inevitable in the life of

any leader. Pain manifests itself in various shapes and forms. Some of its effects are

negative, yet others are positive. Charles Kingsley speaks to the positive aspect of pain by

saying, "Pain is no evil, unless it conquers us."[11] Each effect of pain will vary according

to the individual leader and the issue at hand. But make no mistake: pain is no respecter

of leaders. As the poet Kenji Miyazawa penned, "We must embrace pain and burn it as a

fuel for our journey."[12]

Stress

Stress is a common effect of pain in the life of leader. A leader's stress can

manifest itself in many ways. Various types of stress include limited finances, personal

inability, and frustration when followers do not embrace or embody the leader's vision.

The *Handbook of Leadership Theory and Practice* is a collection of almost fifty

contributing scholars on the subject of leadership. In a chapter that addresses the

complexity of a leader's (chief executive officer's) role, Michael E. Porter and Nitin

Nohria describe leadership as a job "rife with paradoxical opportunities and constraints."

The demands are ever growing and "endless," and the role involves the "discomfort of

being exposed, vulnerable, and even overwhelmed." Team members find a solace that the

team leader does not because the security of the final decision rests on the team leader's

shoulders. The team leader often faces lonely and unprotected decisions that leave him or

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[11] Epigraph in Chand, 9.

[12] Epigraph in Chand, 1.

her feeling vulnerable and uncomfortable. This is a very stressful place of leadership.[13]

Relational Hurt

Relational hurt is another common effect of pain in a leader's life. Relational hurt presents itself in two ways: betrayal and departure. The first is intentionally hurtful, and the other is a natural progression of life. However, both result in pain and, if not handled properly, can cause long-term disability.

Wounds of betrayal run deep, and every leader experiences them. The effects are severe and can even create enough hurt to damage a leader for a lifetime. The damage affects not only the leader but also his or her future relationships. Dan Allender states:

> Betrayal is a deep psychic wound that hardens the heart against grief and deadens its hunger for intimacy. Grief is meant to open our hearts and eventually move us to care for others. But what if we feel profound shame with our grief? Shame distances us from people and the comfort they could offer us in our grief; shame also causes a person to hate the innate desire to be connected to others.[14]

Departure may be a natural progression of life and leadership, but it still hurts. Henri Nouwen explores the pain of departure in an excerpt from his book *Bread For The Journey:*

> Every time we make the decision to love someone, we open ourselves to great suffering, because those we most love cause us not only great joy but also great pain. The greatest pain comes from leaving. When the child leaves home, when the husband or wife leaves for a long period of time or for good, when the beloved friend departs to another country or dies … the pain of leaving can tear us apart.
> Still, if we want to avoid the suffering of leaving, we will never experience the joy of loving. And love is stronger than fear, life stronger than

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[13] Michael Porter and Nitin Nohria, "What Is Leadership? The CEO's Role in Large, Complex Organizations," in *Handbook of Leadership Theory and Practice*, eds. Nitin Nohria and Rakesh Khurana (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press, 2010) 466–67.

[14] Dan Allender, *Leading with a Limp: Turning Your Struggles into Strengths* (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook, 2006), 98.

death, hope stronger than despair. We have to trust that the risk of loving is always worth taking.[15]

Depression

Depression is an effect of pain in a leader's life. Depression can originate from many places: perfectionism, genetics, illness, loss, conflict, and so on. Mayo Clinic calls depression of this sort *dysthymia*, "a mild but long-term form of depression. Usually, symptoms last for at least two years, and often for much longer than that. It interferes with your ability to function and enjoy life. You may lose interest in normal daily activities, feel hopeless, lack productivity, and have low self-esteem and an overall feeling of inadequacy."[16]

Criticism

Criticism is also an effect of pain in the life of a leader. There are two types of people in the world: critics and those being criticized. Criticism is common with all leaders. Differing opinions, second guesses, and disagreement will always arise over the choices and actions of leaders. By definition, leaders lead, and critics criticize; that is what they do because that is who they are. Leaders are agents of innovation and change; they must take big risks for big returns. "The biggest [prerequisite for innovation] is

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[15] Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Bread for the Journey* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997), 291.

[16] Mayo Clinic Staff, "Diseases and Conditions: Dysthymia," Mayo Clinic, http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dysthymia/basics/definition/con-2—33879, quoted in Chand, 77.

willingness to fail. You need to think for the long term and be misunderstood for a long

period of time," says Jeff Bezos, founder and chief executive officer of Amazon.[17]

Avoidance

Avoidance of pain is a common response to leadership tension. Instead of leaning

into the pain and persevering through it, a leader can respond by leading conservatively

to avoid discomfort. However, pain is necessary in the life of a leader. A. W. Tozer said,

"It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply."[18]

Our personal desire for comfort can cause us to attempt to avoid the tension or

pain that comes with leadership. Dean Karnazes, an ultramarathon athlete, eloquently

deals with the subject of pain versus comfort:

> Western culture has things a little backwards right now. We think that if we had
> every comfort available to us, we would be happy. We equate comfort with
> happiness. And now we are so comfortable we are miserable. There is no struggle
> in our lives. No sense of adventure. We get in a car, we get in an elevator, and it
> all comes easy. What I have found is that I am never more alive than when I am
> pushing and I am in pain, and I am struggling for high achievement, and in that
> struggle, I think there is a magic."[19]

Michael Hyatt encourages us to embrace discomfort as a leader: "Comfort is

overrated. It often leads to self-absorption, boredom, and discontent. Discomfort can be a

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[17] Om Malik, "Tips on Innovation & Entrepreneurship from Jeff Bezos," June 15, 2009, accessed December 12, 2017, https://gigaom.com/2009/06/15/tips-on-innovation-enterprenuership-from-jeff-bezos/.

[18] A.W. Tozer, *The Root of the Righteous* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1955), 47.

[19] Katie Arnold, "Drafting Dean: Interview Outtakes," *Outdoor*, December 8, 2006, accessed December 12, 2017, http://www.outsideonline.com/outdoor-adventure/running/Drafting-Dean—Interview-Outtakes.html.

catalyst for growth. It forces us to change, stretch, and adapt. Lastly, discomfort is often a sign that we are making progress."[20]

Indifference

Pain is indifferent. It is important to note that pain occurs as much in Christian leaders as in non-Christian leaders. No leader gets a free pass when it comes to facing pain. Dr. Richard J. Krejcir of the Francis A. Schaeffer Institute of Church Leadership Development demonstrates this in a study of church leaders. Chand presents Krejcir's statistics as follows:

- 100% had a close associate or seminary friend who had left the ministry because of burnout, conflict in the church, or a moral failure.
- 90% stated they are frequently fatigued and worn out on a weekly and even daily basis.
- 71% stated they were burned out and battled depression beyond fatigue on a weekly and even a daily basis.
- 89% considered leaving the ministry at one time, and 57% said they would leave if they had a better place to go—including secular work. …
- 75% felt they were unqualified and/or poorly trained by their seminaries to lead and manage the church or to counsel others. This left them disheartened in their ability to pastor. …
- 23% said they felt happy and content on a regular basis with who they are in Christ, in their church, and in their home.[21]

The pain and tension found in Christian leadership is not new. Leadership tension is as old as the church itself. It is amazing how Christians can all read the same book and worship the same Jesus yet find so many differences. In *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, Alister E. McGrath discusses the debates or "controversies" that peppered

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[20] Michael Hyatt, "Why Discomfort Is Good for You: 5 Reasons We Should Jump Outside Our Comfort Zones," Michael Hyatt: Your Leadership Mentor, November 28, 2017, accessed December 12, 2017, https://michaelhyatt.com/why-discomfort-is-good-for-you/.

[21] Richard J. Krejcir, "Statistics on Pastors," Francis A. Schaeffer Institute of Church Leadership Development, 2007, http://www.intothyword.org/apps/articles/?articleid=36562, quoted in Chand, 69–70.

church history. During the patristic period, scholars debated over an emphasis on the divinity of Christ (Alexandrian School) versus the humanity of Christ (Antiochene School). During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the debate centered on a difference of educational emphasis between the Franciscans (who renounced wealth for prayer and poverty) and the Dominicans (who embraced education and the intellectual life). During the Reformation the most notable controversy was Luther's departure from the Catholic Church, producing the Protestant Church. The modern period has been marked by personal ideologies such as Marxism (religion as only a response to the real world), Darwinism (evolutionary humanity), and postmodernism (pluralistic truth based on relative thinking) in the face of traditional "chapter-and-verse" Christianity. From postmodernism has come the biggest divide in multiple Protestant denominations and nondenominations, as well the arguable weakening of the Catholic Church.[22]

In all the differences, debates, and controversies, there are people and sides who are right and others who are wrong. Some are clear departures from Christian theology, such as the pluralistic thinking of our day in which all roads lead to God. Others are less clearly defined, such as the tension between the Catholic Church and Protestant Church. Each believes it has a "corner market" on salvation, as though a person must be Catholic or Protestant to receive salvation through faith in Jesus. However, according to Romans 10:9–10, individuals are saved by confession of the mouth and belief of the heart; it is not contingent upon being Catholic or Protestant. Lastly, some differences are not either/or choices but are both/and. Such is the case with various schools of thought on education found in the Middle Ages. To believe that poverty is any holier or purer than academic

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[22] Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 5th ed. (Chichester, West Sussex: Blackwell Publishers, 2011).

excellence for a higher calling or purpose is not biblically supported. Regarding the patristic period debate, both the divinity *and* the humanity of Christ are equally important. For Jesus to be humanity's Savior, he must be both man and God. There was no need to choose one over the other; rather, the need is to embrace both. Again, leadership tension and pain are no strangers to the Christian leader.

Growth

Strangely, growth can also create pain. Although this leadership pain is ultimately good and healthy, it is still pain. As an organization grows, as a staff expands, and as facilities become too small, pain is a part of the process. The pain of growth is beneficial but still uncomfortable. It still calls for adjustment and alignment.

Resilience

Resilience is the reward of correct leadership tension management. It is produced from the pain endured in the life of a leader. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *resilience* as "(1) the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness; (2) the ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity."[23] Resilience is a rare character trait among self-proclaimed leaders today. Barna research states that "80 percent of pastors leave the ministry within five years."[24]

The issue is not whether a leader will have an opportunity to be resilient but whether he or she will be resilient when the opportunity comes. Every leader faces

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[23] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "resilience," accessed December 12, 2015, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/resilience.

[24] Fuller Institute, George Barna, and Pastoral Care Inc., "Why Pastors Leave the Ministry," The Free Believers Network, July 21, 2009, accessed December 12, 2017, http://freebelievers.com/article/why-pastors-leave-the-ministry.

crucibles of development. All leaders journey through seasons of sifting. Through this process in the life of a leader, resilience emerges. Resilience cannot be purchased or given; it must be earned, grown, and developed from the friction, tension, and pain that result from taking the helm of leadership. Pastor and leader Wayne Cordeiro addresses the sifting process this way: "The process of sifting, coming to that moment when our strength is spent, is how God builds our faith. It is a process that forms new character, tearing away old perspectives and putting fresh truth in its place. Former habits are discarded and wrong tendencies abandoned."[25]

The process that leads to a leader's resiliency is necessary. The journey is fraught with failure, disappointment, and struggle, especially in the beginning. However, the leader must keep in mind that all is working toward the formation and creation of the leader himself or herself. "The truth is that you will fail. You simply won't have what it takes when you begin. You may have the calling, the zeal, the energy, and the support. But when you begin you won't have what it takes to finish."[26]

So how does a person achieve resiliency? Cordeiro explains the internal process that produces a leader's resilience:

> What's missing (in the beginning life of a leader) is that inner core, the tensile strength of faith that is revealed only under strain. It is a quality of character that is tested not in port, but in the open seas. And it is this testing that ratifies your calling … it is something that can only be acquired through failure, learning your limits, and learning not to trust in yourself but in the God who has called you.[27]

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[25] Wayne Cordeiro, *Sifted: Pursuing Growth Through Trials, Challenges, and Disappointments*, With Frances Chan and Larry Osborne (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 10.

[26] Ibid., 31.

[27] Ibid., 32.

The process of tension, friction, and pain producing resiliency in the life of a leader is marked all throughout scripture. Noah built a boat on dry ground waiting for rain that did not come for 120 years. Abraham, the "father" of God's people, and his wife Sarah suffered with infertility. Joseph's dream from God led him into slavery and prison before the palace. Moses grew up in an epicenter of civilization only to be shelved for years in the desert. Daniel lived his entire life in exile, serving pagan governments and regimes. Even Jesus himself was criticized, condemned, and crucified by those he was called to save. The point is this: it is through the tension, friction, and pain that God works. Charles Spurgeon said, "The worse thing that can happen to any of us is to have a path that is made too smooth. One of the greatest blessings the Lord ever gave us was a cross."[28]

Leadership Identity

The ultimate outcome of tension is how it shapes a leader's identity. Every leader's journey results in an identity that is likened to an individual's DNA or fingerprint. It is one of a kind. It has been molded, shaped, and formed uniquely. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *identity* as "the fact of being who or what a person or thing is; the characteristics determining who or what a person or thing is."[29] This is the direct result of the tension, friction, and pain: leadership identity.

There is limited but growing research on the subject of leadership identity. A study done by the American College Personnel Association's Educational Leadership

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[28] AZ Quotes, "Charles Spurgeon Quotes," 2015, accessed December 14, 2015, http://www.azquotes.com/author/13978-Charles_Spurgeon.

[29] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "identity," accessed December 13, 2015, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/identity.

Foundation and the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership proves a process by

which leadership identity is formed:

> Leadership identity develops through six stages moving from awareness to integration/synthesis. The process within each stage engaged developing self with group influences, which in turn influenced the changing view of self with others from dependence to interdependence and shaped the broadening view of leadership, shifting from an external view of leadership to leadership as a process. Developmental influences facilitated this identity development.[30]

Leadership identity is not a destination but a journey. It will continue to grow and

form as one grows and forms as a person and as a leader. Leader and author Brad

Lomenick states, "When it comes to identity, the danger isn't just that the leader will

cease to be. It is also that she will unwittingly become someone she is not." [31] The

process is unrelenting and unending in the life of the leader.

> Your sense of identity will help determine your scale of influence. Ignore it at your own peril. Do you have the courage to be rather than cease? … Are you brave enough to resist the forces trying to shape you into something you're not? … Self-discovery is not one and done. There are no few silver bullets to utilize today so that tomorrow you'll have completed the process. Discovery, by definition, is a progressive reality. It is not something you've *done*, but something you should be *doing*. Discovery never ends.[32]

Herminia Ibarra, Scott Snook, and Laura Ramo discuss leadership identity and

development in the *Handbook of Leadership Theory and Practice*. They suggest "that

helping people to learn requires a view of leadership development as ultimately about

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[30] Susan R. Komives et al., "Developing a Leadership Identity: A Grounded Theory," *Journal of College Student Development* 46, no. 6 (November/December 2005): 608–609.

[31] Brad Lomenick, "Leadership Identity: Part One," LifeWay Leadership, September 21, 2015, accessed December 12, 2017, http://www.lifeway.com/churchleaders/2015/09/21/leadership-identity-part-one/.

[32] Brad Lomenick, "Leadership Identity: Part Two," LifeWay Leadership, September 22, 2015, accessed December 12, 2017, http://www.lifeway.com/churchleaders/2015/09/22/leadership-identity-part-two/.

facilitating an identity transition. The underlying processes have not been fully articulated or systematically linked to theory or research. We argue the notion of identity transition is a useful lens for conceptualizing and designing developmental experiences."[33] Thus, leadership identity is very real but also fairly new in the leadership conversation. Yet its importance and relevance are undeniable. "Leadership development may be one of the most important yet understudied areas in leadership research. An identity-based view of leader development calls attention to the need for creating opportunities to practice (and make mistakes with) new possible selves."[34]

To conclude, leadership tension has implications for leaders revealing that the successful management of leadership tension is key to the success of any leader. Leadership produces tension, friction, and pain regardless of the quality of a leader. However, the response to leadership tension is what allows it to work for or against a leader. The next chapter will more fully explore the pain that comes with leadership tension. How a leader manages the pain of leadership tension is a determining factor in his or her leadership.

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[33] Herminia Ibarra, Scott Snook, and Laura Guillén Ramo, "Identity-Based Leader Development," in *Handbook of Leadership Theory and Practice*, eds. Nitin Nohria and Rakesh Khurana (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press, 2010), 673.

[34] Ibid., 674.

CHAPTER 2

THE PAIN OF LEADERSHIP TENSION

Recently, Kevin Kruse, a contributor to *Forbes* magazine, tweeted, "Leadership is a process of social influence which maximizes efforts of others towards achievement of a goal."[1] The process of leadership is not pain free. In any given leadership environment, pain will always be a part of the journey. A leader's pain results from the tension and friction of the process of moving people or an organization toward the achievement of a goal. Even in sacred environments, ministry pain from tension is increasingly part of the journey. H. B. London, author and former Focus on the Family Pastor to Pastors, states: "We live in a culture of increased religiosity but decreased morality. Pastors have never had to work harder to serve people than they do now. The pressures are incredible and brutal."[2] The pain is inevitable, regardless of the quality of leadership. Leadership pain cannot be eradicated but managed as it ultimately shapes a person's leadership identity.

A leader's pain manifests itself in numerous ways. Some are negative, and others are positive. From a negative perspective, a leader's pain commonly presents itself in the form of stress, depression, relational hurt, criticism, avoidance, and indifference. All of these cumulatively form a person's leadership identity.

The chapter will build upon the idea that the essence of leadership is the management of tension. Tension results from a given leader's attempt to move or

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[1] Kevin Kruse, "What is Leadership?" *Forbes*, April 9, 2013, accessed April 20, 2016, https://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2013/04/09/what-is-leadership/#457617d55b90.

[2] H. B. London Jr. and Neil B. Wiseman, *Pastors at Greater Risk: Help for Pastors from Pastors Who Have Been There* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2003), 28, iBooks.

progress an organization forward to fulfill its given mission. In the progress of an organization's stated vision becoming a reality, resistance produces friction. Friction produces pain, which thereby manifests itself in numerous ways.

For the sake of establishing understanding and common ground, several presumptions are necessary to create a firm foundation moving forward. These presumptions are found in the definitions and perspectives of the following terms: *tension*, *friction*, and *pain*. Any given leadership environment will always produce tension. The tension produces a friction that over time results in pain. Such pain is inevitable, regardless of leadership quality. The management of that pain eventually determines a leader's lifespan and effectiveness and ultimately determines his or her response to relational hurt and criticism. The management of tension, friction, and pain in a given organizational environment is ultimately the responsibility of leadership. This basis of understanding will create cohesion for how relational hurt and criticism function in the life of a leader.

Tension is defined as "the strain or stretching that results from opposing forces." Such strain or stretching can manifest emotionally, relationally, or mentally. The ability to manage leadership tension is crucial to the effectiveness and success of a leader. Leadership tension is a product of the leader's vision and mission contrasting with a given follower's buy-in and commitment to the leader's vision. The management of this leadership tension is what ultimately defines a leader and the accomplishment of his or her given mission.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *friction* as "the resistance that one surface or object encounters when moving over another; the action of one surface or object

rubbing against another; conflict or animosity caused by a clash of wills, temperaments, or opinions."[3] Friction in leadership is created when a leader's vision rubs against the grain of a follower's reality or perception and encounters resistance.

Friction is natural because it involves change. Typically, no one likes change unless he or she initiates it. Dr. Sam Chand writes, "Remember: growth equals change; change equals loss; loss equals pain; so inevitably, growth equals pain. That's why leadership is both brutal and beautiful. It's bleedership! It's brutiful! If you're leading, you're bleeding."[4] The leader's navigation through this friction is part of leadership tension. It is unavoidable and constant in the life of a leader. Because change is essential to leadership, so is the friction or pain that accompanies it. Thus, in any place, time, or people group, friction is a reality when it comes to leadership.

As previously stated, leadership is management of tension. Tension produces friction, which produces pain; therefore, pain is inevitable in the life of any leader. The connection or domino effect of events requires not only the follower but also the leader to adjust preconceived ideas, beliefs, and patterns that, in many cases, have been held for years or even a lifetime. The resulting discomfort or pain manifests itself in various shapes and forms, some negative yet others surprisingly positive.

The chapter focuses on the leadership process of friction leading to pain management, which manifests itself in the form of stress, depression, criticism, relational hurt, betrayal, and even departure. As with any endeavor, successful navigation of the

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[3] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "friction," accessed December 8, 2016, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/friction.

[4] Chand, 35.

friction resulting in pain is the goal. In this case, it ultimately leads to forming a leadership identity.

Pain

Pain, by definition, is "a suffering or discomfort." The cause of pain can vary from a physical reality to an emotional one. Leading pastor and author Craig Groeschel states: "Pain is a part of progress. Anything that grows experiences some pain. If I avoid all pain, I'm avoiding growth. Often the difference between where I am and where God wants me to be is the pain I'm unwilling to endure."[5]

Pain can come into a leader's life both externally and internally. Sometimes it is from no fault of the leader, yet many times pain is a direct result of the leader. Again, it is not that the leader is bad or poor but that leadership produces friction, and friction produces pain. Not only the leader's action but also at times his or her inaction can cause the pain. Leader and pastor Wayne Cordeiro asserts: "God is not cruel, but He is not lenient. He is true; He is not safe. He is unchanging; therefore, we must change. We must learn in order to succeed. Our failures do not influence our grades, but our unwillingness to learn from them does."[6]

How a leader deals with pain has much to do with how it affects him or her. The issue for most leaders is the denial of pain or the belief that they can handle it. Denial of pain can produce a blind spot that becomes a leader's greatest pain and downfall. Bob Buford, cofounder of Leadership Network, states:

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[5] Ibid., 4.

[6] Wayne Cordeiro, *Leading on Empty: Refilling Your Tank and Renewing Your Passion* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2009), 29–30.

> I asked Dr. Larry Allums, my "personal trainer in literature," about this issue. He told me that a great deal of literature and drama turns around the "tragic flaw"—characters not admitting their limits to themselves or others. In Shakespeare, Julius Caesar is a great general and a very poor politician. King Lear is so blinded by his own self-absorption and desire to retire and take it easy that he is careless about putting his kingdom and his own future in good hands.[7]

A tragic flaw of many leaders is that they cannot recognize their limits or acknowledge their need for others as the demands of work or ministry scale up dramatically.

The effects of pain manifest themselves in many prominent ways in a leader's life: stress, depression (burnout), criticism, relational hurt, betrayal, and even departure. These are not always caused by the leader but rather are a byproduct of the leadership journey. These effects can be managed and overcome, but they cannot be ignored.

Stress

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *stress* as "the state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances."[8] Stress is a common effect of pain in the life of leader. A leader's stress can manifest itself in numerous ways, including limits, inabilities, and frustrations. These manifestations can originate from within or independent of a leader. Regardless, the leader must confront and manage them in spite of pain or difficulty.

Stress is a natural byproduct of leadership. Dr. Robert Steele explains, "Leadership is intrinsically stressful. Early studies on people who had a high drive for power—the need to have an impact—showed that their very desire for that power had the

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[7] Bob Buford, *Beyond Halftime: Practical Wisdom for Your Second Half* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 27.

[8] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "stress," accessed April 8, 2016, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/stress.

same arousing effect on them as if they were under actual biological stress."[9] Although

stress is natural in a leader's life and journey, it must also be monitored and regulated so

that it does not become destructive.

Not all stress is bad or toxic to a leader. Viktor E. Frankl, Holocaust survivor and

author of *Man's Search for Meaning* stated, "What man actually needs is not a

tensionless state but rather the striving and struggling for a worthwhile goal, a freely

chosen task."[10] Stress can actually work for a leader and not against him or her.

The two types of stress are distress and eustress. Distress involves harmful stimuli

and weakens a leader; it makes a person less confident and less able. Conversely, eustress

involves healthy stimuli and grows and develops a leader. Examples of eustress include

inspiration that pushes a leader to grow and a regimen or discipline that benefits a leader.

The key difference is that the pain of distress is punitive or destructive, whereas the pain

of eustress is helpful and beneficial. For example, the pain caused by a new diet, workout

regimen, or disciplined academic program is eustress. Author Timothy Ferriss writes:

"There is no progress without eustress, and the more eustress we can create or apply to

our lives, the sooner we can actualize our dreams. The trick is telling the two apart."[11]

Stress can become toxic to leader when it goes unchecked or unregulated. Author

and church leader Randy Sawyer explains:

> Stress, the experts say, is the physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes
> bodily, mental, or spiritual tension. Stress brings the sense of fear, overload, and
> the inability to focus on even the routine activities of living. Stress can produce

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[9] Robert S. Steele, "The Physiological Concomitants of Psychogenic Arousal in College Males" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1973).

[10] Timothy Ferriss, *The 4-Hour Workweek: Escape 9–5, Live Anywhere, and Join the New Rich*, expanded and updated ed. (New York: Harmony Books, 2009), 512, iBooks.

[11] Ibid., 75.

the sense that everything is out of control. If not checked, stress can eventually lead to certain diseases and can open the individual up to an array of temptations.[12]

Chemically and biologically speaking, negative stress produces less than optimal conditions for a leader. It can begin with a positive rush of energy, but if unregulated, it can interfere with progress. Best-selling author Daniel Goleman states: "When a person's stress increases … the body reacts by secreting more adrenaline and noradrenaline, the body's stress hormones. That leads to higher blood pressure, getting the individual ready for action. At the same time, the body secretes the stress hormone cortisol, which is even longer lasting than adrenaline—and which interferes with new learning."[13] Therefore, a leader's stress load needs balance. Ground-breaking research discussed in "Goal-Setting and Self-Directed Behavior Change" by David A. Kolb and Richard E. Boyatzis demonstrates that "learning for leadership works best when people feel safe—but not so relaxed that they lose motivation."[14]

Warning signs of negative stress exist. According to Dr. Richard A. Swenson, these signs display themselves in a leadership life in four major areas: physical, psychological, behavioral, and ultimately burnout.[15] Each is somewhat connected to or intertwined with the others.

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[12] Randy Sawyer, *Battling the Black Dog: Raw Confessions of Depression in Ministry* (Nashville, TN: Randall House, 2010), 7, iBooks.

[13] Daniel Goleman, *Primal Leadership: Learning to Lead with Emotional Intelligence* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2004), 163.

[14] Ibid., 164.

[15] Richard A. Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2004), 39–40.

The first three areas are more manifest to the leader himself or herself, not so much to colleagues. Physical signs display themselves in pain such as stomach problems, headaches, and loss of interest sexually. Psychological signs display themselves in internal feelings of hopelessness, isolation, and irritability; inability to concentrate; lack of judgment; and general anxiety. The third area of warning is behavioral signs, which begin to manifest themselves to colleagues and those in close proximity to the leader. Behavioral signs include overeating or undereating, sleeping, using medication, and neglecting normal responsibilities. In addition, compulsive behavior becomes normative.

The last area of warning is burnout. Burnout is not actually a warning but a result of not confronting and dealing properly with negative stress in the leader's life. We will discuss burnout in a future chapter.

An additional sign comes into the life of a Christian leader: spiritual apathy or dryness. Ruth Barton describes this condition in a Christian leader's life: "It is possible to gain the world of ministry success and lose your own soul in the midst of it all. … These days (and maybe every day) there is real tension between what the human soul needs in order to be truly well and what life in leadership encourages and even requires."[16] The leader's soul grows cold and darkens. The daily routine and requirements of leadership create unhealthy distance between oneself and God. Spiritual disciplines cease, and a destitute and dark desperation takes their place. The goal is to walk and lead in fullness and wholeness, not in emptiness or depletion. Theologian Henri Nouwen artfully describes the picture of a heathy Christian leader: "The central question is, Are the leaders of the future truly men and women of God, people with an ardent desire to dwell

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[16] Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership: Seeking God in the Crucible of Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008), 13, 26.

in God's presence, to listen to God's voice, to look at God's beauty, to touch God's

incarnate Word and to taste fully God's infinite goodness?"[17]

Solutions to managing stress in the life of a leader become essential to managing

leadership tension. Stress itself is not the problem because it is a natural byproduct of

leadership; rather, the management or lack of stress is the problem. Therefore, leaders

must learn to manage the stress of leadership and not eradicate it. Dr. Sam Chand states:

> Stress isn't the problem. Too much unrelieved stress is the culprit. A little stress brings out the best in us. Our adrenaline flows, and we become more creative, more energetic, and more determined to reach higher than before. But many leaders live without safety valves. They are like pressure cookers with a blocked valve. Every difficult conversation, every hard decision, every failure, every challenging question, and every self-doubt adds to all the ones that have already filled the pot. With each new strain, the addition seems imperceptible, so the person doesn't do anything about it. As stress rises to the point of explosion or implosion, it seems completely, absolutely normal.[18]

First, begin with honesty. Assess leadership stresses and symptoms. Everyone is

wired differently and has different capacities and weaknesses. Then work to address

those areas of weakness or insufficiency that cause stress. Doing so will help to define a

leader's limits and to put the leader in control of his or her life and leadership.

Second, create margin. "Margin is the space between our load and limits. It is the

amount allowed beyond that which is needed. Margin is the gap between rest and

exhaustion, the space between breathing freely and suffocating."[19] Margin is the room or

space in a leader's life to create, process, and dream. It is also usually one of the first

areas to go in a distressed leader's life. Yet it is essential to long-term growth and

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[17] Henri J. M. Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections of Christian Leadership* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 29–30.

[18] Chand, 64–65.

[19] Swenson, 52.

performance. Dr. Richard Swenson has developed a formula for margin: "Power – Load = Margin. Power is made up of factors such as energy, skills, time, training, emotional and physical strength, faith, finances, and social supports. Load is made up of such factors as work, problems, obligations, expectations, debt, deadlines, and interpersonal conflicts." [20] Therefore, when a leader's load is greater than his or her power, margin is gone, and distress and burnout are in the future. However, when power is greater than the load, margin is created, and health returns or remains with the leader.

Third, engage in rest and recreation, which is possible only if margin is created. God himself worked six days straight and then rested on the seventh. Human beings, as his creation, are designed to do the same. A leader must define what replenishes and what gives him or her rest and then act accordingly. Doing so creates rhythm in a leader's life.

Fourth, live and lead in the leadership sweet spot. Leaders are gifted to solve problems and lead. A leader must fill his or her leadership schedule with activities that generate positive energy. Doing so reinforces the leadership gift and works to create momentum in the leader's life.

Last, beware of stressors. Every leader has stressors. Common stressors include change, expectations, time pressure, control, fear, relationships, competition, and anger.[21] Some can be managed, but some need to be eradicated. Such balance and awareness are the responsibility of the leader. A leader cannot lead where he or she has not been or give what he or she does not possess.

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[20] Ibid., 52–53.

[21] Ibid., 38–39.

Depression

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *depression* as "feelings of severe despondency and dejection."[22] Depression, like stress, is a common effect of pain in the life of a leader. A leader's depression can manifest itself in numerous ways: behaviorally, cognitively, and emotionally. These manifestations can originate from within or independent of a leader. Regardless, the leader must confront and manage them in spite of pain or difficulty.

Unlike stress, depression is not always a result of leadership, and it is not common to all leaders. However, it does emerge in most every leader's journey. A leader's emotional, mental, and genetic makeup are the lead determining factors in the presence or occurrence of depression. Because of depression's commonality and its pain that results in leadership tension, it is essential to this discussion and chapter.

Depression is a real tension in the life of a leader. Although it does not plague all leaders, it does affect most. This is true even in Christian leaders. H. B. London questions: "The Church is the essence of the Christian movement and the cornerstone of everything we believe and stand for. Yet 40 percent of its leaders say they're thinking about bailing out. Why are 40 percent ready to give up?"[23]

Depression in the life of a leader is not a new issue or phenomenon. Many great leaders, both secular and sacred, encountered and fought with depression. Sir Winston Churchill referred to his depression as a "black dog" in a letter to his wife dated July 11,

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[22] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "depression," accessed April 22, 2016, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/depression.

[23] London and Wiseman, 35, iBooks.

1917. Churchill mentioned "his cousin Ivor Guest's wife Alice, who spoke of a doctor in Germany who completely cured her depression." He added, "I think this man might be useful to me—if my black dog returns."[24] Charles Spurgeon once wrote, "As it is recorded that David, in the heat of battle, waxed faint, so may it be written of all the servants of the Lord. Fits of depression come over the most of us. Usually cheerful as we may be, we must at intervals be cast down. The strong are not always vigorous, the wise not always ready, the brave are not always courageous, and the joyous not always happy."[25] Mother Teresa described her depression: "I am told God loves me—and yet the reality of darkness and coldness and emptiness is so great that nothing touches my soul."[26] The list of leaders who have battled depression, from President Abraham Lincoln, civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., theologian Henri Nouwen, and so on, continues to the present.

By definition, *depression* can also be "a recess or a dip in a physical object." Applying this physical perspective to human emotions creates a metaphor of sorts. It denotes that depression can also be a loss, reduction, or lull in someone. The metaphor definitely applies to the struggle or tension an individual faces in leadership. Lulls, recesses, absences, and depressions occur in the life of a leader. He or she must address these depressions to maintain healthy and balanced leadership individually and organizationally. Dr. Richard Swenson explains this perspective of depression in his quantum of emotional energy theory:

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[24] Martin Gilbert, *Churchill, A Life* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1991), 230.

[25] Charles Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1977), 167.

[26] Mother Teresa and Brian Kolodiejchuk, *Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light: The Private Writings of the "Saint of Calcutta"* (New York: Doubleday, 2007), 187.

Each morning we rise to meet the day with a certain quantum of emotional energy. For some, this energy reservoir is huge, while for others it is nearly drained empty. … This quantum of emotional energy is not fixed but instead is in constant flux with the environment. We are always losing energy into the environment and receiving energy back again. Sometimes the reservoir is being drained, as when we are sad or angry. Other times the reservoir is being filled, perhaps by expressions of encouragement or activities successfully completed. No matter how large or small the quantum of emotional energy is at the start of the day, and no matter how fast or slow it is exchanging with the environment, one thing is certain: The amount within us is finite. No one has an infinite capacity for emotional discharge. When our reserves are depleted, they are depleted. If we make further withdrawals, pain will be felt.[27]

Depression is caused by a few major factors: long-term stress, great loss, unresolved problems, and unmet expectations. These are similar to the causes of stress. However, depression differs in that there is never a good kind of depression, whereas a certain amount and type of stress are actually beneficial and healthy. Depression is a loss or void that must be addressed and filled. The more a leader knows and understands the causes and symptoms, the more likely he or she is to survive and thrive in depression.

Depression affects ministry leaders in the same way it does their secular counterparts:

- In one study, 45.5 percent of pastors said they experienced depression or burnout "to the extent that they needed to take a leave of absence from ministry."[28]

- Studies from Standing Stone Ministry showed that "every month approximately 1,700 to 1,800 pastors leave the ministry. The main reason is burnout." Further, "according to an article in the New York Times … 40% of pastors and 47% of pastoral spouses are suffering from burnout,

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[27] Swenson, 61–62.

[28] London and Wiseman, 263, iBooks.

frantic schedules, and/or unrealistic expectations. And 45% of pastors say that they've experienced depression or burnout to the extent that they needed to take a leave of absence from ministry."[29]

- "The clergy depression prevalence was 8.7%, significantly higher than the 5.5% rate of the national sample. The high rate of clergy depression signals the need for preventive policies and programs for clergy. The extrinsic and intrinsic demands and rewards suggest specific actions to improve clergy mental health."[30]

Depression, like stress, is accompanied by warning signs. Although the warning signs vary for each individual, leader and follower alike experience them. The following are common warning signs: sense of hopelessness, frequent tears, difficulty concentrating, difficulty in decision making, irritability, insomnia, lower activity levels, loneliness, lack of marital attraction, eating disorders, and physical aches and pains.[31]

Depression also arrives and continues at differing levels. "In mild depression we continue to function normally; we can tolerate the feeling. Medium depression begins to affect us. We start canceling out on obligations. In severe depression, people are totally incapacitated and unable to take care of themselves, and that can be dangerous. They

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[29] Omar Miranda, "Nine Secrets to Avoid Pastoral Burnout," *Ministry*, July 2014, accessed December 12, 2017, https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2014/07/nine-secrets-to-avoid-a-pastoral-burnout.

[30] Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell et al., "Using Effort-Reward Imbalance Theory to Understand High Rates of Depression and Anxiety Among Clergy." *Journal of Primary Prevention* 34, no. 6 (December 2013): 439–453.

[31] Cordeiro, *Leading on Empty*, 60–64.

won't eat. Their wish to die is so strong that suicide is a real threat."[32] These levels and their length of stay vary greatly with each individual and situation that has triggered the depression.

When it comes to depression, there are no quick answers or solutions, and one size does not fit all. The variables are too great, the leaders are too unique, the circumstances are too complex, and the genetics are one in over seven billion. Walking through depression is a journey. Wayne Cordeiro likens recovery from depression to a battery: "Your soul is like a battery that discharges each time you give life away, and it needs to be recharged regularly. You haven't given it time to recharge, and that doesn't happen overnight. It's a gradual slow recharge."[33]

Therefore, the first key is to identify. The leader needs to begin the process of identifying what fills and what drains him or her. Work toward activities that fulfill, and work to minimize activities that drain. This is an oversimplification, but it is a step in the journey toward health. The first step will help to protect a leader from the depths of depression.

Second is to surround. The leader needs to surround himself or herself with colleagues and meaningful relationships that will affirm and rebuke. Pastor and leader Bill Hybels writes, "We need us all, my friend, whatever it is that we are leading, wherever it is on the globe. The kingdom advancement we're pursuing needs us all."[34]

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[32] Archibald D. Hart and Marilyn Thomsen, "Coping with Depression," *Ministry* 57, no. 9 (September 1984): 4–6, accessed December 12, 2017, https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1984/09/coping-with-depression.

[33] Cordeiro, *Leading on Empty*, 88.

[34] Bill Hybels, *Leadership Axioms: Powerful Leadership Proverbs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 205.

Third is to install guidelines and guardrails. These will serve to protect and warn the leader to keep him or her on "the road" to a successful journey and not derail. Wayne Cordeiro refers to this as a "dashboard." "It includes twelve dials that meter vital systems essential to my health and success. I first delineate what they are; then I assess them. Then I decide which require immediate maintenance and repair."[35]

Fourth is to create margin. Just as with stress management, margin is critical in regard to depression in the life of a leader. Margin facilitates the rest, reflection, and recreation that replenishes a person. It is critical to long-term success and health. "Margin grants freedom and permits rest. It nourishes both relationship and service. Spiritually, it allows availability for the purposes of God. From a medical point of view, it is health-enhancing."[36]

Last is to care for the soul, whether a leader's vocation is secular or sacred. The soul is the only eternal and redeemable part of a person. Because of its importance, it affects all other entities of an individual's life. Depression does not strike the mind or the body as much as it does the soul. "The seduction of leadership, the grind of ministry, the brokenness of our culture, and the pace of twenty-first-century life create and environment in which it's very challenging to stay healthy at the soul level."[37]

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[35] Cordeiro, *Leading on Empty*, 176.

[36] Swenson, 61.

[37] Lance Witt, *Replenish: Leading from a Healthy Soul* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011), 25.

Criticism

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *criticism* as "the expression of disapproval of someone or something on the basis of perceived faults or mistakes."[38] Criticism is a common effect of pain in the life of a leader because his or her choices and actions will always bring opinions, second guesses, and disagreement. Winning basketball coach and best-selling author Rick Pitino states, "Being criticized—fairly or not—comes with the territory and is part of your professional diet. You must understand, as a leader, criticism is here to stay, that it's a part of your job. So prepare yourself for it."[39]

There are two types of people in the world: critics and those being criticized. By definition, leaders lead, and critics criticize. Leaders are agents of innovation and change. However, leaders—no matter how great—often find themselves at the mercy of criticism. Henri Nouwen puts the issue of criticism in perspective: "At issue here is the question: 'To whom do I belong? To God or to the world?' Many of my daily preoccupations suggest that I belong more to the world than to God. A little criticism makes me angry, and a little rejection makes me depressed. A little praise raises my spirits, and a little success excites me. … Often I am like a small boat on the ocean, completely at the mercy of its waves."[40]

Criticism has always been common to even the best of leaders. Jesus, arguably the greatest leader who ever lived, faced constant criticism. The prophet Isaiah even prophesied of the criticism Jesus would endure and suffer: "He was despised and

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[38] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "criticism," accessed December 7, 2016, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/criticism.

[39] Rick Pitino, *Lead to Succeed: 10 Traits of Great Leadership in Business and Life*, with Bill Reynolds (New York: Broadway Books, 2000), 134.

[40] Henri Nouwen, *The Return of the Prodigal Son* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 42.

forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom

men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him" (Isa. 53:3, NASB). In

his lecture on "Leadership and Criticism," Dr. Mike Rakes noted that "criticism was

common to Jesus' ministry."[41] He explained, "In the life of Jesus we see seven

predominant types of criticism he faced: ideological, motivational, comparative,

theological, domestic, threatening, and authoritative."[42]

Criticism is common not only to leadership but also to the human condition, as

stated in Luke 6:41–42:

> Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the
> log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me
> take out the speck that is in your eye," when you yourself do not see the log that is
> in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then
> you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.

What causes criticism, and what is its point of origin? Dr. Randal Ross states,

"Criticism arises from conflict itself. This conflict is the tension from two forces who

want different paths. These opposing values are the intersection or the apex of conflict

from which criticism originates."[43] The greater the value, the greater the conflict, the

greater the criticism. Ross continues, "Conflict-based criticism occurs within three areas:

intrapersonal, an individual conflict; interpersonal, a community conflict; intergroup,

organizational departments in conflict with each other."[44] Ross notes that conflict-based

criticism has five levels of escalation: "The first level is problem awareness; the second

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[41] Mike Rakes, "Leadership and Criticism" (presentation, Wisconsin/Northern Michigan District of the Assemblies of God, Green Bay, WI, April 13–14, 2005).

[42] Ibid.

[43] Randal Ross, "Session 3: Conflict Resolution" (presentation, Calcutta Mercy Conference, Naperville, IL, August 28, 2012).

[44] Ibid.

level is dissociation with problem or issue; the third level is win versus loss; the fourth is

removal (of opposition of ideal); the fifth and final level is destruction (of person or

group)." What is the solution to the tension that results from conflict-based criticism? The

solution is leadership. The management of this leadership tension is what ultimately

defines a leader and the accomplishment of his or her given mission.

Why does criticism bring so much pain in the life of a leader, and why do so

many leaders fear it? Leadership expert Mark McGuinness states, "When you're hit by

rejection or criticism, it shakes you to the core. It feels impossible not to take it

personally. Logically, it may not be a matter of life and death, or the end of the world, but

it sure as hell feels like it. And words most certainly can hurt. Paper dragons breathe real

fire."[45] The multiple reasons for the existence and fearful pain of criticism include failure,

rejection, and conflict.

The fear of failure is a real pain of criticism, especially among leaders. Leaders do

not like failure for the same reasons followers do not: it becomes a net loss of time and

precious resources. However, leaders face the pain of failure to a much greater degree

because, unlike a follower, criticism is always associated with a leader's failure.

Criticism due to failure can easily lead to fear in the life and journey of a leader. Best-

selling author and leadership expert Seth Godin discusses this fear of failure among

leaders in his book *Tribes: We Need You to Lead Us.* Godin explains that failure for the

follower is different than for the leader. He states:

> Fear of failure is actually overrated as an excuse. Why? Because if you work for
> someone, then, more often than not, the actual cost of failure is absorbed by the
> organization, not by you. If your product launch fails, they're not going to fire

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[45] Mark McGuinness, *Resilience: Facing Down Rejection and Criticism on the Road to Success* (N.p.: Lateral Action Books, 2013), 26.

you. The company will make a bit less money and move on. What [leaders] are afraid of isn't failure. It's blame. Criticism. We choose not to be remarkable because we're worried about criticism.[46]

Godin proposes two questions every leader should ask when embarking upon a leadership decision that could emit a fear of criticism: "'If I get criticized for this, will I suffer any measurable impact?' … And then … 'How can I create something that critics will criticize?'"[47]

The second fear of criticism among leaders is rejection. Everyone desires to be liked, even as leaders. However, many times leadership demands that individuals shelve their need or desire to be liked for the greater good of the organization they lead and the people they are called to serve. Fear of rejection or lack of approval from colleagues and followers can cause paralysis of leadership due to the impending criticism, whether real or perceived.

Best-selling author John Ortberg discusses the fear of rejection and need for approval as an addiction among leaders. "Why is it we often respond so strongly to criticism? I believe it reveals a serious addiction in many of us … what might be called 'approval addiction.' Some people live in bondage to what others think of them."[48] Ortberg offers a prescription to counteract this addiction with a reference to Paul's writing to the Corinthian church: "Imagine receiving criticism or judgment as 'a very small thing.' Imagine being liberated from the need to impress anyone."[49] Ortberg

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[46] Seth Godin, *Tribes: We Need You to Lead Us* (New York: Penguin Group, 2008)*,* 46.

[47] Ibid., 48.

[48] John Ortberg, *The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 158.

[49] Ibid., 159.

concludes, "The primary symptom is the tendency to confuse our performance in some aspect of life with our worth as a person. The result is that we seek a kind of approval from people that can satisfy only when it comes from God."[50]

The third fear of criticism among leaders is conflict, which is the origin of criticism, as previously discussed. Yet conflict, along with the criticism and confrontation that accompany it, is the responsibility of the leader. Pitney Bowes executive Fred Purdue states, "When you turn over rocks and look at all the squiggly things underneath, you can put the rock down, or you can say, 'My job is to turn over rocks and look at the squiggly things,' even if what you see can scare the hell out of you."[51] Best-selling author and leadership expert Jim Collins, in his book *Good to Great,* spends an entire chapter on the fact that leadership has a responsibility to confront brutal facts regardless of criticism. Collins asserts, "The moment a leader allows himself to become the primary reality people worry about, rather than reality being the primary reality, you have a recipe for mediocrity, or worse."[52] He suggests the following to combat the tendency of leadership to avoid conflict: "Lead with questions, not answers. Engage in dialogue and debate, not coercion. Conduct autopsies, without blame. Build 'red flag' mechanisms."[53]

If criticism is indeed part of the leadership landscape, how then do leaders deal with or handle criticism correctly? From a biblical perspective, there are three responses to criticism. First is to listen. Proverbs 15:31–32 says, "He whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise. He who neglects discipline despises himself,

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[50] Ibid.

[51] Collins, *Good to Great*, 72.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid., 74–83.

but he who listens to reproof acquires understanding." Second is to answer. Proverbs 15:1 says, "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." Third is to dismiss the criticism. Nehemiah 6:2–3 says, "Then Sanballat and Geshem sent a message to me, saying, 'Come, let us meet together …' But they were planning to harm me. So I sent messengers to them, saying, 'I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?'"

From a nonbiblical perspective, which is not in conflict with a biblical one, best-selling leadership author and speaker Dr. John C. Maxwell offers a four-step process to deal with criticism. First is to "know yourself—this is a reality issue." Second is to "change yourself—this is a responsibility issue." Third is to "accept yourself—this is a maturity issue." Fourth is to "forget yourself—this is a security issue."[54]

Relational Hurt

Relational hurt is a common effect of pain in a leader's life that presents itself in two predominant ways: betrayal and departure. The first is intentionally hurtful, and the other is a natural progression of life. However, both result in pain and, if not handled properly, can cause long-term disability. James Kouzes and Barry Posner, authors of *The Leadership Challenge*, state, "Leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow."[55] That relationship between leader and follower is the ground on which hurt occurs.

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[54] John C. Maxwell, *Leadership Gold: Lessons I've Learned from a Lifetime of Leading* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2008), 34–38.

[55] James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 24.

A common response to hurt or pain is control. The idea is that, if the leader is in control, then the exposure to relational hurt or pain can be minimized or even avoided. However, this is a myth. Charlene Li, author of *Open Leadership*, writes, "Face it—you're not in control and probably never really were."[56] The issue of control is not a new leadership dilemma. "Balancing letting go with being in command has been a problem that harkens back to the very start of the information age, when the printing press allowed people to transfer and share information at scale for the first time."[57] With the utilization of social media, the aforementioned reality has never been more real.

So how does a leader manage the pain of betrayal in an open world? Mark McGuinness addresses a leader's response to the pain of rejection: "Remember, it's supposed to hurt. In private, allow yourself to really feel whatever emotions rise up. Don't try to rationalize them or explain them away. Roll with the punches and trust that you'll come out the other side."[58] Therapist John Eaton states, "If you suppress your emotions, they don't go away—they keep pushing to be released, because they have something important to teach you about your situation. But if you acknowledge the emotion and express it—in words or actions —it fades away, having done its job."[59]

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[56] Charlene Li, *Open Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 9.

[57] Ibid., 12.

[58] McGuinness, 78.

[59] Ibid., 78–79.

Betrayal

Wounds of betrayal run deep, and every leader experiences them. The effects are

severe and can even create enough hurt to damage a leader for a lifetime. The damage

affects not only the leader but also his or her future relationships. Dan Allender says,

> Betrayal is a deep psychic wound that hardens the heart against grief and deadens
> its hunger for intimacy. Grief is meant to open our hearts and eventually move us
> to care for others. But what if we feel profound shame with our grief? Shame
> distances us from people and the comfort they could offer us in our grief; shame
> also causes a person to hate the innate desire to be connected to others.[60]

The key to overcome or manage the relational pain of betrayal is to develop

resilience. A leader cannot control the actions of followers but can choose a response.

Mark McGuinness defines *resilience* as "the ability to keep pursuing your goals in spite

of adversity. It is driven by passion, the fuel that keeps you going in spite of

disappointment, rejection, and criticism. And because it is an ability, you can learn it and

improve with practice, just like any other skill."[61]

Resilience is not automatic or a natural byproduct of a leader or leadership

gifting; it must be developed as an intentional character trait. Diane Coutu, a senior editor

at *Harvard Business Review*, points to research suggesting that "resilient people …

possess three characteristics: a staunch acceptance of reality; a deep belief, often

buttressed by strongly held values, that life is meaningful; and an uncanny ability to

improvise."[62] First, acceptance of reality is not about an overly optimistic hype but a

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[60] Allender, 98.

[61] McGuinness, 50.

[62] Diane Coutu, "How Resilience Works," *Harvard Business Review* 80 (May 2002): 5, accessed
December 12, 2017, https://hbr.org/2002/05/how-resilience-works.

factual understanding of a given situation at hand or on the horizon. During the Second

World War, Winston Churchill believed so heavily in the acceptance of reality that he

created a Statistical Office whose function was to report the wartime facts. Churchill

famously stated, "Facts are better than dreams."[63] Second is a deep belief, value, or

meaning by which a leader leads. This is the calling of the leader—a given mission that

empowers even during the loneliest of times. Third is the ability to improvise. Leaders

who are resilient have an ability to remain cool under pressure, creatively problem solve,

and, to some degree, figure out the solution as the situation unfolds. To some this is

innate, but others can learn it chiefly through experience and a desire for self-awareness

to grow and develop.

Departure

Departure may be a natural progression of life and leadership, but it still hurts.

Henri Nouwen explores the pain of departure in an excerpt from his book *Bread For The*

Journey:

> Every time we make the decision to love someone, we open ourselves to great
> suffering, because those we most love cause us not only great joy but also great
> pain. The greatest pain comes from leaving. When the child leaves home, when
> the husband or wife leaves for a long period of time or for good, when the
> beloved friend departs to another country or dies … the pain of leaving can tear us
> apart.
> 　　Still, if we want to avoid the suffering of leaving, we will never experience the
> joy of loving. And love is stronger than fear, life stronger than death, hope
> stronger than despair. We have to trust that the risk of loving is always worth
> taking.[64]

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[63] Collins, *Good to Great*, 33.

[64] Henri Nouwen, *Bread for the Journey* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997), 291.

Departure is necessary for both a leader and an organization. Dr. Henry Cloud writes,

> Whether we like it or not, endings are a part of life. They are woven into the fabric of life itself, both when it goes well, and also when it doesn't. On the good side of life, for us to ever get to a new level, a new tomorrow, or the next step, *something* has to end. Life has seasons, stages, and phases. For there to be anything new, old things always have to end, and we have to let go of them. Infancy gives rise to toddlerhood, and must be forever shunned in order to get to the independence that allows a child to thrive. Later, childhood itself must be given up for people to become the adults that they were designed to be.[65]

Departure is not about subtraction but about addition in the life of a leader or an organization. A leader or an organization cannot possess what lies ahead until releasing what lies behind. Dr. Henry Cloud states, "Getting to the next level always requires ending something, leaving it behind, and moving on. Growth itself demands that we move on. Without the ability to end things, people stay stuck, never becoming who they are meant to be, never accomplishing all that their talents and abilities should afford them."[66]

Leaders know that pain is real and inevitable. For better or for worse, it shapes them. The leader may not choose the pain, but the leader does have control over his or her response. It is the response to pain that works for good or bad in the life of a leader. The choice and outcome are ultimately up to the leader.

However, the choice or the journey to deal with the pain that comes from leadership is not easy or even uncomplicated. Leadership is messy because it requires leading people, both oneself and others. People are complicated beings. Leading them is

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[65] Henry Cloud, *Necessary Endings: The Employees, Businesses, and Relationships That All of Us Have to Give Up in Order to Move Forward* (New York: HarperCollins, 2011), 14.

[66] Ibid., 15.

both an art and a science. It requires a seasoned leader with wisdom and discernment, which come only through experience and the crucible of pain.

Life is not fair, especially for a leader; the leader is an easy target due to his or her position on the frontlines. Jim Collins describes the reality of leadership: "We will all experience disappointments and crushing events along the way, setbacks for which there is no reason, no one to blame. What separates people … is not the presence or absence of difficulty, but how they deal with the inevitable difficulties of life."[67] Collins gives the Stockdale Paradox as the leadership axiom by which to conquer these pains: "Retain faith that you will prevail in the end," regardless of the difficulties. At the same time, "confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be."[68]

The key in leading is not to drown in the inevitable pain but to manage the tension and lean into it, like a 735,000-pound Boeing 747 uses aerodynamics to lift off the ground and propel around the globe. A leader will never have the luxury of avoiding pain, but a leader does have the ability to choose whether the pain lifts his or her leadership to new heights or brings the leader crashing down in flames. Edwin H. Friedman describes such leadership dynamics in *A Failure of Nerve.* He gives five statements and characteristics of a leader who will soar to such heights: (1) "a capacity to get outside the emotional climate of the day"; (2) "a willingness to be exposed and vulnerable"; (3) "persistence in the face of resistance and downright rejection";

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[67] Collins, *Good to Great*, 85–86.

[68] Ibid., 86.

(4) "stamina in the face of sabotage"; and (5) "being 'headstrong' and 'ruthless'—at least in the eyes of others."[69]

Leadership tension causes friction, pain, and discomfort in the life of a leader that are inherently part of the terrain. A leader will also experience pain due not necessarily to error but to relational dynamics in leadership. How a given leader handles these pains will to a great degree determine the success of that leader and the organization he or she leads.

When facing the effects of leadership pain, stress and depression are similar in nature and effect yet unique in how they are handled and processed. However, both are no respecters of persons and can take down formidable individuals. Stress and depression are not for the faint of heart, but both can be successfully navigated.

Successful navigation and management of pain rest solely on the leader himself or herself. They are crucial to the formation of leadership identity. How a leader navigates through pain and its ill effects shapes him or her. Therefore, it forms the quality and unique identity of a leader. No one can do this but the leader himself or herself. The key to success is true self-leadership. And in leading oneself, one can lead others—the essence of true leadership.

The next chapter will explore the response to leadership tension and how it affects leaders. Leadership tension either lifts leaders to growth and resilience or tends to drag leaders to avoidance and apathy. The next chapter will examine the benefits and hazards of such responses.

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[69] Edwin H. Friedman, *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix* (New York: Church Publishing, 2007), 188–189.

CHAPTER 3

THE RESPONSE TO LEADERSHIP TENSION

This chapter will continue to explore the relationship between how leaders manage tension and leadership and how tension management is a natural consequence of forward progress for leaders as they pursue their mission. Leadership tension can often result in friction, which can be pain-producing, negative, and destructive.

The chapter will explore how the pain of leadership tension results in one of two common reactions: avoidance and apathy or growth and resilience. In other words, the leadership journey of tension produces a drag of avoidance and apathy or a lift of growth and resilience. The material in this chapter forms an understanding of the how and why of the drag of avoidance and apathy or the lift of growth and resilience in the life of a leader.

The chapter contains several presumptions in regard to the meaning of the terms *tension*, *friction*, and *pain*. Tension is understood to eventually result in a drag of avoidance and apathy or the rise of resilience and growth. The result of tension in a given organizational environment is ultimately the responsibility of the leader. Understanding such drag or rise will create a basis for understanding leadership tension's results in the life of a leader.

As stated in the previous chapter, *tension* is defined as "the strain or stretching that results from opposing forces." The ability to manage leadership tension is crucial to the effectiveness and success of a leader. Leadership tension is a product of the leader's vision and mission contrasting with a given follower's buy-in and commitment to that vision. Therefore, the leader is ultimately defined by the tension managed as he or she accomplishes a given mission.

Also stated in the previous chapter, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *friction* as "the resistance that one surface or object encounters when moving over another; the action of one surface or object rubbing against another; conflict or animosity caused by a clash of wills, temperaments, or opinions."[1] Therefore, leadership tension is created from a natural friction especially from and within the relationship of the change agent to the change recipient. As quoted in the previous chapter and appropriate in this context, Dr. Samuel Chand states, "Remember: growth equals change; change equals loss; loss equals pain; so inevitably, growth equals pain. That's why leadership is both brutal and beautiful. It's bleedership! It's brutiful! If you're leading, you're bleeding."[2]

The tension-based and friction-producing pain process results in avoidance and apathy or growth and resilience. The focus of this chapter is to discover what drags some leaders down to avoidance and apathy yet lifts others to growth and resilience. The chapter will define, discover, and offer a possible reason as to why leaders ultimately respond to tension in these manners.

Avoidance

Avoidance is an all-too-common response to leadership tension. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *avoidance* as "the action of keeping away from or not doing something; the action of preventing something from happening."[3] For example, the action of avoidance is exhibited when, facing the friction-producing pain of leadership decisions

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[1] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "friction," accessed April 17, 2017, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/friction.

[2] Chand, 35.

[3] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "avoidance," accessed April 17, 2017, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/avoidance.

and direction that oppose an organization's followers or status quo, a leader chooses to

divert from the original vision or mission and detour toward alternative routes. The

alternate routes emerge in multiple variations of avoidance: ignoring given sentiment and

moving ahead; stopping progress or vision; changing or adjusting to please or meet status

quo; or completely abdicating leadership. In any sense, avoidance becomes the plan and

response that produces an avoidance behavior: "behavior on the part of a person or

animal which tends to remove it from situations or stimuli which are perceived as

harmful or unpleasant."[4]

The issue of avoidance due to leadership tension is succinctly illustrated in Edwin

Friedman's book *A Failure of Nerve*, where he demonstrates this issue through the lens of

the US Civil War. Friedman states,

> Viewing the Civil War through this principle of leadership, it is possible to see
> that the war was no more "caused" by the issue of slavery than a divorce results
> from the perceived differences between spouses. In either case, the "cause" had
> more to do with the ways in which family emotional processes turned those
> differences into divisive factors. From this perspective, "the great American
> divorce" was ultimately the result of the failure of the five Presidents before
> Lincoln … to function in a differentiated manner. The way in which these glad-
> handing, conflict-avoiding, compromising "commanders-in-chief" avoided taking
> charge of our growing internal crisis when they occupied the position "at the top"
> is exactly the same way I have seen today's leaders function before their
> organizations (or families) "split."[5]

Avoidance can present itself in the response of ignoring the given tension and

moving ahead. Leadership expert and best-selling author Jim Collins poignantly

illustrates the damage and destruction that can come with avoidance in the face of

tension. He walks through the ignorant avoidance of tension as it related to the decision

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[4] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "avoidance behavior," accessed April 17, 2017,
https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/avoidance_behaviour.

[5] Friedman, 17–18.

to launch NASA's *Challenger* in 1986, which exploded just over a minute after takeoff

and resulted in the deaths of all seven of its crew. The avoidance came from the tension

of conflicting and inconclusive data concerning O-ring damage at low temperatures at the

point of launch, which the NASA engineers and Morton Thiokol debated for hours.

Collins concludes,

> The *Challenger* story highlights a key lesson. When facing irreversible decisions
> that have significant, negative consequences if they go awry—what we might call
> "launch decisions"—the case for launch should require a preponderance of
> empirical evidence that it's safe to do so. Had the burden of proof rested on the
> side of safety rather than the other way around, *Challenger* might have been
> spared its tragedy.[6]

Avoidance can also result in pleasing the status quo in order not to upset or cause

disruption that would produce additional pain. The need to be liked is common among

leaders, but it is not always possible and should never be part of the character of a leader.

Leadership experts and best-selling authors Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner deal with

pleasing and leading in their book *A Leader's Legacy.* Kouzes and Posner state, "A tough

truth about leading … is that sometimes you hurt others and sometimes you get hurt. …

They come with the territory. … When you take a strong stand on guiding values and on

a vision of the future, there's no way that everyone is going to be happy about what you

say and what you do."[7]

Avoidance can lastly result in a complete abdication of responsibility and

ownership. This is probably the most damaging effect as it keeps the leader at the helm of

the ship but with no hands on the wheel. Because of the position or the station of the

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[6] Jim Collins, *How the Mighty Fall: And Why Some Companies Never Give In* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 73–74.

[7] James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *A Leader's Legacy* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 60.

leader, who is not leading, no one else can lead either, and the organization and the people it employs and serves suffer needlessly. Abdication of leadership cannot be an option for any leader. Author Peter Koestenbaum communicates the responsibility to lead in his book *Leadership: The Inner Side of Greatness*: "One job stands out above all: learning the meaning of *personal responsibility*, and knowing its rootedness in your *free will*. In some fundamental sense, it's all up to you. … Specifically, leading requires 'ownership' of the meanings of personal responsibility and accountability. It means fully internalizing the human truth that … nothing happens unless you personally make it happen."[8]

Apathy

A leader is not a robot, nor are the activities of leadership an automated algorithm for the response of people served or the organizations led. Therefore, leadership is personal before it is professional, and leaders must manage both, especially in times of tension due to organizational progression. The chapter discusses the effect of apathy in response to pain or friction for leadership.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *apathy* as a "lack of interest, enthusiasm, or concern."[9] Apathy is all too common in leadership when the pain of tension is present and leaders respond to the pain by quitting emotionally before tendering a formal resignation. Remember that leaders are people before occupying the leadership role,

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[8] Peter Koestenbaum, *Leadership: The Inner Side of Greatness* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 6.

[9] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "apathy," accessed April 17, 2017, http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/apathy.

which means that human will, emotion, and the effects of leading are not only real but always present in their lives.

The apathy of a leader affects not only the leader, as discussed in previous chapters, but also the organization led and its future. *Forbes* leadership contributor Glenn Llopis writes,

> An indifferent leader will lead you and your company no closer to good fortune than one who drops one quarter in each of three different slot machines. The odds of success are random and unpredictable at best. To attempt to sustain a momentum of good fortune under her leadership is equally unpredictable. … He has neither the eyes to see good fortune nor the skills to seize and sustain its growth.[10]

Apathy renders even the highest potential leaders useless; it shuts down the leadership gift and potential of a given leader and the organization led.

The subject and ideology of apathy are discussed by leadership expert Robert Quinn in his book *Deep Change*. Quinn examines how and why leaders change organizations and what prevents them from doing so. He summarizes the issue of managing leadership tension and the downfall of apathetic avoidance: "We must confront first our own hypocrisy and cowardice. We must recognize the lies we have been telling ourselves. We must acknowledge our own weakness, greed, insensitivity, and lack of vision and courage. … The transition is painful, and we are often hesitant … Change is hell. … The journey puts us on a path of exhilaration, growth, and progress."[11]

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[10] Glenn Llopis, "How Distrust, Indifference and Lack of Integrity Will Destroy Your Business," *Forbes*, January 17, 2011, accessed December 12, 2017, https://www.forbes.com/sites/glennllopis /2011/01/17/how-distrust-indifference-and-lack-of-integrity-will-destroy-your-business/#741f19ea6a42.

[11] Robert Quinn, *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 78.

Resilience

The correct and positive response to leadership tension is resilience, which is the opposite of apathy and avoidance. As cited in the previous chapter, Diane Coutu, a senior editor at *Harvard Business Review*, points to research suggesting that "resilient people … possess three characteristics: a staunch acceptance of reality; a deep belief, often buttressed by strongly held values, that life is meaningful; and an uncanny ability to improvise."[12] With this thought process in mind, the aforementioned points will serve as the basis for considering the meaning and action of resilience in the leader as he or she responds and emerges from the pain and friction of managing the tension of leadership.

First, resilience is about defining reality in a realistic and factual fashion without overt optimism. At times, the reality of the situation involves the reality of the leader as much as the situation, because both can be tethered. Leadership expert and *New York Times* best-selling author Marshall Goldsmith deals with the difficulty leaders have with defining reality. Goldsmith states,

> I work as an executive coach with successful people who have a slightly dented sense of proprioception. They look at the map of their life and career. It tells them, "You Are Here." But they don't accept it. They may resist the truth. They may think … "I'm successful and you're not." … I show these people what their colleagues at work *really* think of them. It's called feedback. It's the only tool I need to show people, "You Are Here."[13]

The second characteristic is deep belief imbedded in conviction-based values. Goldsmith explains that in every winning leader are four common denominators of belief that, regardless of external circumstances, they will be successful. According to

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[12] Coutu, 5.

[13] Marshall Goldsmith, *What Got You Here Won't Get You There: How Successful People Become Even More Successful!*, with Mark Reiter (New York: Hyperion, 2007), 8.

Goldsmith, the first belief is about skill: "Successful people believe in their skills and talent."[14] The second belief is about confidence: "I am confident I can succeed. Successful people believe that they have the capability within themselves to make desirable things happen."[15] Third, they are motivated to succeed: "I have the motivation to succeed. If 'I have succeeded' refers to the past, and 'I can succeed' to the present, then 'I will succeed' refers to the future. Successful people have unflappable optimism."[16] The last belief is about choice: "Successful people believe that they are doing what they choose to because they choose to do it. They have a high need for self-determination. The more successful a person is, the more likely this is to be true."[17] In essence, successful leaders have an unconquerable belief in their ability and calling to lead. Such a belief produces strength and resiliency during the pain and friction of leading.

Resiliency's third characteristic is what Coutu describes as the ability to improvise. Leadership author Danny Cox believes that the ability and opportunity for improvisation in leadership is fertile soil for greatness. Cox states, "Solving problems sharpens us. Problems often herald the arrival of good things. When you're up against a seemingly insurmountable problem, chances are you're on the brink of a great discovery."[18] In leadership there is no pass when it comes to facing the tension of leadership; the only option is embracing or running, because every leader finds himself or

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[14] Ibid., 18.

[15] Ibid., 20.

[16] Ibid., 22–23.

[17] Ibid., 23.

[18] Danny Cox, *Leadership When the Heat's On* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1992), 169.

herself in the "hot seat" of leadership. "Whether it is pressure from above as opposed to pressure from below, or pressure from the right as opposed to pressure from the left, or pressure from everywhere, when you're the one in the vise, you can feel the temperature rising. Although we are often insensitive to others and their pressure, I have yet to meet anyone who doesn't know when he or she is on the hot seat."[19]

In conclusion, resiliency in leadership is about a choice that only the leader can make. It is a choice to embrace the tension, not reject it. It is a choice to stand when others run. It is a choice to allow the friction and the pain to push a leader to develop and not decease. Leadership expert and author John Maxwell summarizes it best: "Perseverance is not an issue of talent. It is not an issue of time. It is about finishing. Talent provides hope for accomplishment, but perseverance guarantees it."[20]

Growth

Growth, especially in leadership circles, has a highly contested definition with so many variations that one paper could not contain them all. For the sake of this chapter, *growth* will be defined as "a leader and organization that is progressing toward a stated mission or goal." The speed of the progress or amount of net gain or loss of supporters or followers is not part of the focus or scope. Growth is simply based on the measurable forward movement toward a stated mission or goal.

However, certain markers or indications conclusively demonstrate the sought-after growth. The chapter will define, describe, and discuss these indicators. As with the definition of growth, the indicators are endless. Therefore, the chapter will focus on the

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[19] Ibid., 3.

[20] John Maxwell, *Talent Is Never Enough* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 125.

following indicators: character growth, personal growth, strength of strategy and process, and numerical or empirical growth.

Growth is natural. "Life grows effortlessly and naturally and does not have to work at growing. Deepak Chopra says, 'Grass doesn't try to grow, it just grows. Fish don't try to swim, they just swim.' … Machines have to be told what to do and where to do it, but organisms [humans included] are designed to grow by their DNA."[21]

Character growth is the leadership's progress and/or the organization's progression of possessed, stated values. Every leader (or organization) has stated values that drive him or her, and it is here that the fruit of such character is demonstrated. Leadership expert Marcus Buckingham defines three building blocks of character growth. First, "as you grow, you become more and more of who you already are."[22] Essentially, "who" (character) is most important because it will eventually inform the "what" a person does in life and leadership. Second, "you grow most in your areas of greatest strength."[23] Again, the "who" informs the "what" in one's life. Third, character is displayed in diversity and through others: "A great team player volunteers his strengths to the team most of the time and deliberately partners with people who have different strengths."[24]

Personal growth is the next barometer to measure the growth of a leader or an organization. Personal growth is the synergistic movement of an organizational team

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[21] Bill Easum, *Leadership on the Other Side* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2000), 88.

[22] Marcus Buckingham, *The Truth About You: Your Secret to Success* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 14.

[23] Ibid., 15.

[24] Ibid.

toward a mission or goal that has been given by a leader. To be successful, this area of growth demands two things: (1) the clearly communicated vision of a leader, and (2) the support, buy-in, and forward progression of followers. When these two factors occur, the personnel, staff, or team of an organization is measurably progressing.

The key to personal growth is the person, from buy-in to productivity. Howard Schultz of Starbucks stated his passionate sentiment on the subject: "How do we grow big but maintain intimacy with our people? This is the toughest dilemma I face as the leader of Starbucks. Achieving that ideal may ultimately be impossible, a contradiction in terms. But we've got to try. If we don't, Starbucks will become another soulless big chain. I'm determined never to allow that to happen."[25] Without a person there is no personnel, nor is there any need for leadership or a leader because no one is following. Leadership expert and best-selling author Jim Collins explains the value of the person to organizational and leadership success. "The greatest leaders do seek growth—growth in performance, distinctive impact, creativity, and in people—but they do not succumb to growth that undermines long-term value. And they certainly do not confuse growth with excellence. Big does not equal great and great does not equal big."[26]

Collins believes that disciplined choices and strict adherence to the organization's mission and people will drive success. Collins capitulates this idea in what he calls Packard's Law: "No company can consistently grow revenues faster than its ability to get

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[25] Howard Schultz and Dori Jones Yang, *Pour Your Heart into It: How Starbucks Built a Company One Cup at a Time* (New York: Hyperion, 1996), 276.

[26] Collins, *How the Mighty Fall*, 54.

enough of the right people to implement the growth and still become a great company."[27]

He believes so strongly in this principle that he goes on to state, "If a great company

consistently grows revenues faster than its ability to get enough of the right people to

implement that growth, it will not simply stagnate, it will fall."[28]

Strategic or progressive growth concerns the intentional, planned, and directed

movement of an organization toward a given goal or mission. Here, plans are made,

executed, and evaluated. The measurement of forward movement upon the intentionally

planned, strategic rails is how successful growth is determined or measured. To

demonstrate this growth and give principles whereby growth can be achieved in any

given organization, Walmart's concept of the Supercenter will serve as a case study of

sorts. The chapter will look at an article by author Lois Flowers as she interviews Don

Soderquist, former senior vice chairman of Walmart.

In 1987 Walmart revealed its Supercenter, a 200,000-plus-square-foot

combination of full general merchandise retail and full-scale supermarket. According to

Walmart's corporate website, 3,522 Supercenters were in operation as of January 1,

2017.[29] Needless to say, Walmart's experiment has produced growth based upon a

strategic plan. The growth plan was based upon six guiding values or principles:

(1) "satisfy the customer," (2) "embrace change," (3) "behind the shelves,"

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[27] Ibid., 55.

[28] Ibid., 56.

[29] Walmart, "Our Locations: United States," accessed April 22, 2017, http://corporate.walmart.com/our-story/locations/united-states#/united-states.

(4) "celebrating innovation," (5) "fix it before it's broken," and (6) "a matter of attitude."[30]

In regard to satisfying the customer, Don Soderquist, a former Walmart executive, explains, "We're driven by the belief that we're in the business to satisfy the customer … It's a matter of never being satisfied that we're doing all that we can do for the customers."[31] Embracing change is all about "the belief that we can always get better … The great ideas never come from the people at the top; the great ideas in our company have come from the people at the bottom."[32] Behind the shelves refers to the relentless culture of experimentation at Walmart and a willingness to cut products, ideas, and retail outlets that may have a modicum of success but do not reach the threshold of what Walmart deems as success. Celebrating innovation refers to the culture of constant self-reflecting questions that keep Walmart humble and hungry. Soderquist states, "If you encourage people when they come up with new and creative ideas, then they're likely to come up with more."[33] Fix it before it's broken is a commitment to constant improvement. Soderquist says, "As long as you create an environment of change … an environment of doing better tomorrow than you did yesterday, that forces you to be looking at new things. Some companies become satisfied with the way things are. Things might be going good—if it ain't broke, don't fix it. We don't think that applies at all; we

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[30] Lois Flowers, "Always Reinventing … Always," *Life@Work Journal* 2, no. 2 (March/April 1999): 33–38.

[31] Ibid., 34.

[32] Ibid., 35.

[33] Ibid., 38.

think you begin fixing it before it's broken."[34] A matter of attitude is a commitment to forward positive thinking. Soderquist notes, "As soon as you begin to talk about how difficult things are and how hard it is to do things, you begin to believe that it's hard, and that will stifle innovation. You have to continually have an attitude that we can always get better, we've never arrived, we've never done all that we can possibly do."[35]

The essence of the Walmart case study is to demonstrate how growth works. Growth does not occur in the absence of tension, friction, pain, or risk but in spite of it. The key is a mission and a strategic plan that is implemented and adaptable.

Empirical and numerical growth is the final principle or barometer to measure growth that this chapter discusses. The old saying "Numbers don't lie" is the basis for understanding this principle. In every organization, every leader is either growing or shrinking the organization. In the previous Walmart example, the proof of the Supercenter concept is in the numbers, both the number of stores and their financial productivity.

A leader can say that a concept or idea is working, but eventually the empirical and numerical data will tell the truth. Leadership guru Peter Drucker explains the empirical-data-driven success measurement in his book *The Executive in Action.* Drucker states,

> Every new product has to be given a limited time to come up to expectations. It should only get an extension if it has made great progress. The only industry that seems to understand this is book publishing. If a new novel has not succeeded within a short time, publishers stop advertising and promoting it. And another six months later they sell out the remaining stock and take their loss.[36]

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[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Peter F. Drucker, *The Executive in Action* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 74.

Leadership is the management of tension, and tension results from the friction of a given leader's vision and the resistance that occurs during the implementation of the missional accomplishment of the stated vision. Many negative and positive side effects arise from leadership tension. This chapter has focused on the power of choice a leader has when confronted with the painful friction of leadership tension.

A leader's first choice when confronting the pain of leadership tension is avoidance and apathy. Avoidance or apathy occurs when a leader decides to disengage from the activity of leading an organization forward yet stays in the position of leadership while choosing to essentially ignore the tension. When the leader chooses this option, he or she may remain the leader positionally but ceases to effectively lead and abdicates his or her responsibility as leader. Ultimately, the leader's days are numbered, and the organization led is impotent at best.

A leader's second choice when confronting the pain of leadership tension is growth and resilience. Growth occurs when a leader decides to engage in the activity of leading an organization forward. When the leader chooses this option, he or she makes positive change and forward progress for himself or herself and the organization. It is essentially a win for all involved and is why the power of leadership tension is such a friend to any leader.

Leadership is not the absence of tension but the management of tension. Growth, resilience, perspective, and character are developed through leadership tension. The great news is that the power of leadership completely rests in the choice of the leader.

The next chapter will explore a biblical basis for leadership tension. It will focus upon the successful use of leadership tension shown by the leadership of the New

Testament church as outlined in the book of Acts. It will reveal a major bridge that connects leadership tension and this dissertation to a ministry context in both a historical and a practical sense.

CHAPTER 4

A BIBLICAL BASIS OF LEADERSHIP TENSION

The New Testament church successfully and effectively managed tension that

helped it to grow and develop. The most extensive historical and biographical profile of

the New Testament church and its leadership tension is found in the book of Acts. For the

sake of common ground, this chapter will begin with reiterating a definition of *tension*,

then proceed with various key citations of occurrences found within the book of Acts that

demonstrate tension, and finally show how successful management of the tension resulted

in betterment of the New Testament church.

Tension will continue to be understood as "the strain or stretching that results

from opposing forces." Such strain or stretching can be manifested emotionally,

relationally, or mentally. The opposing forces are not necessarily inherently evil; rather,

they are differing points of view or perspectives resulting in tension that must be

managed.

Tension, from a theological perspective, presents itself primarily from an

eschatological position. It is from this perspective that tension theologically exists in

humanity. The eschatological view is that humanity itself is born in, exists, and dies in a

tension of managing human restrictions while housing an eternal soul. It is almost

paradoxical in that we live every day of our existence with the potential and eventuality

of life and death. As Christian's we are changed by the grace of God, but not fully until

eternity. According to Romans 6-8, we are in a perpetual struggle of sin and spirit. Only

until eternity will the tensions of our soul and being cease. It is these theological

challenges that illustrate the normative and powerful tensions that are already existent in us.

The scope of investigative material showing the management of tension resulting in the growth, development, and advancement of the New Testament church will be the book of Acts, along with various academic support material dealing with Acts. In this way, it will relate the early church's experience and how it managed tension to the twenty-first-century church and how leaders can learn from its experience.

Examples of Tension

The following are key examples of tension that emerged in the New Testament as recorded in the book of Acts. Each represents a key type of tension encountered in the life of any leader endeavoring to move an organization—or, in this case, the church—forward to accomplish a mission. The types of tension are (1) external: opposing forces outside the organization that are at odds with its mission; (2) internal: conflicts that arise over programmatically based solutions for meeting the internal needs of people or the mission; and (3) relational: personality conflicts that arise from the growth or development of an organization and the people who lead.

Ultimately, when managed correctly, growth does indeed occur, and the mission of the organization—the church, in this case—advances. Strangely, growth can create tension, and tension can create growth. As pastor and author John Piper explains, the absence of such tension can have negative effects on the church and its mission:

> I think there is a tremendous lesson for us here. The lesson is not just that God is sovereign and turns setbacks to triumphs. The lesson is that comfort and ease and affluence and prosperity and safety and freedom often cause a tremendous inertia in the church. Inertia is the tendency of something that is standing still to stay

standing still and of something moving to keep moving. The very things that we think would produce personnel and energy and creative investment of time and money in the cause of Christ and his kingdom, instead produce, again and again, the exact opposite—weakness, apathy, lethargy, self-centeredness, preoccupation with security.[1]

Although this leadership tension is ultimately good and healthy, it is still tension that poses potential negative effects. As an organization grows, as a staff expands, and as facilities become too small, tension is a part of the process. Such tension is beneficial but still uncomfortable. It still calls for adjustment, alignment, and management of the tension.

Three major types of tension are shown in the book of Acts. The first, external tension, is illustrated in the persecution of the church as recorded in Acts 4:1–22 (Peter and John arrested by the Sanhedrin), 5:17–40 (the apostles arrested by the Jewish high priest), and 7:54–8:3 (Stephen martyred and Saul persecuting believers). Examples of internal tension are found in Acts 5:1–16 (Ananias and Sapphira lying to church leadership), 10:1–11:18 (Peter taking the gospel to Gentile believers with an outpouring of the Holy Spirit), and 15:1–29 (the Jerusalem Council). Examples of the last type, relational tension, are found in Acts 9:26–30 (the apostles' first reaction to Saul and his ministry) and 15:36–41 (Paul and Barnabas' division over John Mark). Although these do not give an exhaustive account of all the tension found in the book of Acts, they are highlights demonstrating the major tensions that did arise and that are common in every church today.

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[1] John Piper, "Spreading Power Through Persecution," Desiring God: Sermons, May 5, 1991, accessed November 1, 2017, https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/spreading-power-through-persecution.

External Tension

External tension is the strain or stretching that results from opposing forces occurring outside the organization or church. In the church, external tension was most prevalent in the form of persecution. In Acts this persecution most commonly came from the Jewish establishment (Sanhedrin) toward the newly emerging Christian church. Although some in the first century viewed Christianity as a form of Judaism, many still perceived it to be in conflict with orthodoxy and therefore a competitor (at minimum) or a competing religion.

> Competition and reform happened as much within individual religions as among representatives of different branches of the same religion. Those circles at the core of what would become either mainstream Judaism or mainstream Christianity saw each other as competing interests, since both were trying to avert Roman hostility and court the favor of the powers of state and society at each other's expense. Thus the split occurred and the gap widened.[2]

We find this first in Acts 4:1–22, where the Sanhedrin arrest Peter and John because of their preaching in the name of Jesus. The response is censorship:

> They really had no charge to lay upon them. Further, the accused were popular with the people, for the news about healing of the lame man had already spread throughout Jerusalem. There was only one thing they could do—they could threaten. They would warn the apostles to no longer speak "in this name" (v. 17). Although only implicit at this point, this would also establish culpability should the apostles decide to transgress the interdiction of the court.[3]

The next notable occurrence is found in Acts 5:17–40, where the Jewish high priest arrests the apostles. Here is a progression of intensity in the external tension felt by the church.

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[2] Dieter Georgi, "The Early Church: Internal Jewish Migration or New Religion?" *Harvard Theological Review* 88, no. 1 (January 1995): 35–68, accessed December 14, 2017, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost.

[3] John B. Polhill, *Acts*, New American Commentary, vol. 26 (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1992), 146.

> The conflict between the Christians and the Jews steadily intensified. With the growing success of the Christian witness, there is a heightened reaction on the part of the Jewish authorities—at first only a hearing, warning, and release (4:5–22). Now those on the Council would impose the death penalty (5:33) and were only thwarted in their intentions by the sage advice of a Pharisee (5:34–39). The apostles were again released, but this time the Council had them whipped before so doing (5:40).[4]

There is also a broadening from just Peter and John to all the apostles. "This second appearance before the Sanhedrin is significantly different from the first (4:5–22). That one only involved two apostles, Peter and John. Here all the apostles stood before the Council."[5]

The next occurrence, found in Acts 7:54–8:3, escalates to death. Stephen is martyred, and Saul's persecution of the church is noted and continues. Although the intensity of persecution increases and intensifies, so does the strength and growth of the church. "The murder of Stephen began a whole new phase for the church, introducing a time of more violent and more widespread persecution. It seems evident that this persecution was not aimed just at restricting the church, but at destroying it."[6] "But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison" (Acts 8:3, NIV). The verse communicates that the destruction of the church becomes the goal. Because of the life-and-death stakes of being a Christian, many flee, which takes the gospel to new places; however, the apostles remain to secure the future of the church.

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[4] Ibid., 165.

[5] Ibid., 168.

[6] John W. Wade, *Acts*, Unlocking the Scriptures for You series (Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing, 1987), 80.

The external tension does not stop the church but rather grows it. "Luke emphasizes once again the rapid growth of the church (cf. 2:41, 47; 4:4; 5:14) and will continue that theme (9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:31)."[7] An important fact to remember is this: the church grows in intensity and following during and from persecution because it refuses to shrink from its mission. Marc Cortez, associate professor of theology and doctoral supervisor at Wheaton College, supports the concept of early church growth from enduring the external tension of persecution:

> Does the church thrive under persecution? Maybe it does at times. For the most part, the early church seems to have done so. Even though persecution hindered the church's growth at times and made it more difficult to thrive, it's amazing how much those early leaders accomplished: spreading the gospel, connecting with one another across vast distances, reflecting deeply on their beliefs, and impacting the broader society.[8]

In each of the aforementioned accounts of external tension, the response—not the tension—creates the growth.

> Christianity grew in the context of adversity but was first born in the immediate aftermath of trauma. Indeed, its emergence has been described, in an image attributed to its founder, as a "posttraumatic birth." Its distinctive strength, however, seems to have been a developing spirituality that saw suffering and adversity as means of thriving. This gave the first Christians not only resilience but also the capacity, in the words of Tacitus, when "checked" to "break out again once more."[9]

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[7] Chalmer E. Faw, *Acts*, Believers Church Bible Commentary (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1910), 88.

[8] Marc Cortez, "Does the Church Thrive under Persecution?" Christianity.com, August 2, 2012, accessed December 22, 2017, http://www.christianity.com/church/does-church-thrive-under-persecution.html.

[9] Joanna Collicutt McGrath, "Post-Traumatic Growth and the Origins of Early Christianity," *Mental Health, Religion & Culture* 9, no. 3 (2006): 291–306, accessed December 14, 2017, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, EBSCOhost.

Strong leadership and successful management of the tension aid in building the church.

> The martyrdom of Stephen (7:54–60) does not reduce the church to a level of frightened ineffectiveness. To the contrary, the persecution that broke out against the disciples scattered the church throughout Judea and Samaria. The defeated church then became the proclaiming church as the dispersion spread the gospel to new areas. God in his sovereignty turned defeat into a larger victory (8:4).
> M. Green is correct in his assessment that Stephen's death led to the beginning of a massive lay movement which spread the gospel. … Those evicted from Jerusalem following Stephen's martyrdom, eventually became the leaders who changed the face of the movement by preaching to the Greeks and initiating the Gentile mission.[10]

The leadership remain in Jerusalem when others leave (Acts 8:1), the leadership proclaims and practices the teachings of Jesus even unto death (7:54–60), and the leadership divests power and authority to focus on leading the fledgling church (6:1–7). All occur under the leading of the Holy Spirit, as noted in Acts 15:28.

Internal Tension

Internal tension presents itself in the book of Acts in numerous ways. First is, tension of character, which involves the question of integrity between stated beliefs and lived beliefs. Next is an issue of action over words. Will the Great Commission of going into all the world be heard or acted upon? Last is a doctrinal issue of how to decide the issues that could divide the church due to a lack of clarity, since Jesus never clearly defined the answer. Internal tensions such as these become crucial and paramount to the success of any church.

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[10] Thom S. Rainer, "Church Growth and Evangelism in the Book of Acts," *Criswell Theological Review* 5, no. 1 (1990): 62, accessed December 14, 2017, http://faculty.gordon.edu/hu/bi/ted_hildebrandt/NTeSources/NTArticles/CTR-NT/Rainer-ChurchGrowthActs-CTR.pdf.

Luke would have us note that numerous internal problems were also turned into divine victories. One such example is the Ananias and Sapphira incident of Acts 5. In his typical pattern of conflict/surprise/victory, Luke relates what seems to be an overwhelming internal problem: deceit within the fellowship. The surprise factor is the death of the two perpetrators at the hands of God. The victory is noted in a rapid-fire sequence of events: all who heard about the incident were seized with fear (5:11); the "outside world" highly regarded the church (5:11); and "more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number" (5:14).[11]

Aubrey Malphurs says, "Scripture is replete with examples of how God raised up strong leaders of change to lead his people in a crisis."[12] In his book *Eating the Elephant*, Thom S. Rainer says that avoidance of conflict in the development of the church leads to what he calls the "passive pastor." In dealing with the growth and expansion of the church, it will be necessary to deal with conflict. Peter knew that taking the gospel to those who were not Jewish would create conflict within the church.[13]

The character issue of a stated versus a lived belief system is common with any organization, especially the church. Here, a leader faces the dilemma of living what he or she preaches and of determining how to handle the issue as a leader. In Acts 5:1–16, Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, lie to church leadership about the sale of personal property. The problem is not their giving or the amount of their contribution to the church but the lie that the contribution is the full amount. The propitiation of lying is equated to a disassociation with the church and followership with Jesus.

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[11] J. Albert Harrill, "Divine Judgment against Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1–11): A Stock Scene of Perjury and Death," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130, no. 2 (2011): 353, accessed December 14, 2017, Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost.

[12] Aubrey Malphurs, *Pouring New Wine into Old Wineskins: How to Change a Church Without Destroying It* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1993), 114.

[13] Thom S. Rainer and Chuck Lawless, *Eating the Elephant: Leading the Established Church to Growth* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1994), 38.

Keeping part of the money from the property sale in light of the explicit oath in 4:32 characterizes Ananias and Sapphira in the stock of the atheistic perjurer. Such a character consistently behaves without fear of the gods, denying any divine intervention in human affairs. Only after the couple's expulsion is the community called a "church" (ἐκκλησία, 5:11). Luke's scene thus shows the church's belief in the power and reality of the divine, the author's apologetic response to potential or actual charges that Christians were atheists. At a crucial point in its history of the church, the narrative exposes two converts to Christianity, Ananias and Sapphira, as impostors—atheists who must suffer swift divine judgment for violating their oaths to the community of goods.[14]

Here, the church leadership faces the dilemma of confronting the sin of lying over letting it slide and accepting the contribution. The leadership confronts this breach of integrity that God uses as an example to all in the first century and beyond. The leadership's handling of the situation sets a high bar and clear line for all who follow. Such tension leads to the church truly becoming the church:

The effect produced by these two deaths … Luke again notes the fear and its greatness; This fear came "upon the whole church." Here Luke for the first time uses ἐκκλησία with reference to the body of the believers in Jerusalem. The term is derived from ἐκκαλεῖν, "to call out," as when a herald calls out the citizens to meet in assembly. The assembly of Israel was called its ecclesia, 7:38. "All those that heard these things" were the people who were not connected with the congregation.[15]

The internal tension over words and actions as Jesus commanded is exemplified in Peter's bringing the gospel to the house of Cornelius, a Gentile, as recorded in Acts 10:1–11:18. The passage notes that Peter has a vision, he believes it to be from the Lord (scriptural), he acts upon it, God demonstrates salvation power, and finally Peter stands before leadership to defend and explain his actions. The scenario is common to any pastor in a local church hearing from the Lord a scripturally sound vision, acting upon it,

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[14] Harrill, 366.

[15] R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1934), 206.

and giving a report of his or her actions. Just as with Peter's experience, God shows up and moves, but people (specifically church leadership) may have some questions or need some additional information.

Notice that Peter does not shy away from the vision or the leading of God, even though he knows the proverbial slippery slope between Jews and Gentiles. Rather, he leans into the tension and navigates through it with an open heart to God and humility toward leadership. These two postures enable him to proceed with a vision that will ultimately open the church to all, regardless of race. Peter's action and leadership do not go without contest. To the contrary, "here were critics, indeed, but when the actual facts were placed before them, they sought not to carp, they were convinced, they capitulated, 'they were quiet' as to any further objection; nay, more, they glorified God, and that for the real and essential thing which is expressed as a deduction … namely that 'also to the Gentiles did God give the repentance unto life.'"[16] Therefore, there was no avoidance of tension, but rather an embrace and navigation of it.

The last internal tension is found in Acts 15 with the Jerusalem Council, as issues of doctrine are discussed and defined. The passage gives great insight into how to listen, discern, and solidify a belief, doctrine, or value in the midst of differing thoughts and ideas. It serves as guidelines and guardrails concerning the differences in rules and expectations of Jews who had become Christ followers and Gentiles who had become Christ followers.

> The issue that the Jerusalem council sought to address was how unity (particularly as exhibited in table fellowship) between Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus may be achieved; the decree it issued did not indicate that all foods have been cleansed, and therefore, Gentiles who eat unclean foods. Rather, it stated that

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[16] Ibid., 446.

Jews and Gentiles are saved by the same grace (Acts 15:11), that "God first concerned himself to take from among the Gentiles a people for his name" (15:14), alluding to Peter's vision and interpreting it as pertaining to Gentiles, not foods. This implied that Gentiles are acceptable (not unclean) if only they observe the very minimum of moral laws. [17]

The central question of the "Jerusalem council," or "apostolic council," described in Acts 15:1–31 is whether or not the *Gentile* believers in Jesus are to be subjected to the Law. This would make no sense if the Jewish believers had concluded from Peter's vision that the Law was abrogated for themselves; in that case the group of Pharisees mentioned in 15:5 would have criticized the apostles for forsaking the Law. Rather, "the Jewish obligation to maintain Jewish identity was universally presupposed" (Soulen 1996:171). Kinzer (2005:67) argues, "If one was a Jew, one was not just free to live as a Jew, one was obligated to do so. Otherwise, the issue of Gentile obligation to live as a Jew would have been nonsensical." Moreover, Peter's address to the council in 15:7–11 refers to God's acceptance of Cornelius' household without coming under the Law, yet Peter retained a crisp distinction between "we" (Jewish believers) and "they" (Gentile believers). This too would be meaningless if the Law had been abolished. God made "no distinction" (15:9) in terms of how Jews and Gentiles are saved, yet Peter, in his speech to the council in Jerusalem, made a distinction between Israel and the nations, consistent with the rest of scripture.[18]

These differences rose to the level of doctrinal differences; therefore, the church leadership met to discuss and define the issues that were causing internal tension in the church. Lenski describes the resolution of the tension as

outstanding in the history of the apostolic church is this apostolic convention at Jerusalem and the spirit and the manner in which it settled the great question regarding what was necessary for salvation and thus for membership in the Christian Church. Underlying the entire situation and the way in which it was handled was the conviction that the church was one no matter how many and how widely scattered throughout the world its members were. Despite the gulf which had existed between Jews and Gentiles … the way of salvation was one, and the church was one and could not be two. The conflict that arose must be settled and was forthwith settled on this basis. Jews and Gentiles remained one church; a right and Christian *modus vivendi* was established. Jewish and Gentile Christians

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[17] David B. Woods, "Interpreting Peter's Vision in Acts 10:9–16," *Conspectus: The Journal of the South African Theological Seminary*, 13, no. 3 (March 2012): 203.

[18] Ibid., 196.

remained on the same level in every way, their living together in full unity was mediated by Christian love in the domain of liberty in the nonessentials.[19]

Relational Tension

The last tension observed is relational in nature. It occurs among the apostles and leadership of the church interacting with and about each other personally. Relational tension is of a private nature that, if not dealt with properly, can result in public division and problems for the entire church. The first relational tension emerges with the church leadership's reaction to Paul's ministry noted in Acts 9:26–30 (NIV):

> When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. He talked and debated with the Hellenistic Jews, but they tried to kill him. When the believers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus. Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

The key leader in navigating the tension of Paul and his relationship with the church is Barnabas. Acts 9:26 records that to this point the church and its members were scared and skeptical of Paul due to his history of persecuting the church. Verse 27 shows that Barnabas first believes in Paul and endorses his ministry. From that meeting, verses 30–31 indicate that two actions occur: First, the church's leadership sends or endorses Paul to go to Tarsus, where he will spend eight relatively silent years before returning to a more visible ministry.[20] Second, the time away in Tarsus will bring a more forgetful

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[19] Lenski, 591.

[20] Ibid., 378.

church membership of Paul's days as a persecutor of the church and an opportunity for him to prove his ministry. Dr. Gotthard V. Lechler comments, "For Paul, himself; he appears to have been induced to flee rather by the persuasions of the brethren, than by any anxiety on his own account. For the brethren, who could appreciate him, and whose faithful love led them to adopt measures for his own deliverance."[21] Again, this is a tense and potentially hazardous time for the church, but with successful management of the tension, the church prospers, as verse 31 declares.

Another relational tension is recorded in Acts 15:36–41, where Paul and Barnabas peacefully go different directions in ministry over the fitness for ministry of John Mark. The tension between these epic New Testament leaders gives incredible reinforcement to the statement "Leadership demands persistence and moving people out of their comfort zones."[22] The tension over John Mark is an unavoidable leadership tension, as "this type of leadership can engender conflict."[23] Here is yet another potential hazard for the young and growing church, yet maturity, wisdom, and the ability to face and avoid the tension allow for the health and growth of both the church and its leaders.

> This is the situation painted by the imperfect tenses which hold the reader in suspense. We need not overdraw the picture and speak of passionate and bitter words, of hot tempers and anger. Paul and Barnabas were not men of that common, cheap type. This clash was one between incompatible convictions, Barnabas being sure that Mark would prove fit for the task, Paul equally convinced that he would not prove fit. Neither insulted the other nor did anything regrettable. But because they had such opposite convictions in regard to Mark, the two men separated and divided.[24]

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[21] Gotthard V. Lechler, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Exegetical and Doctrinal Commentary*, trans. Charles F. Schaeffer (1872; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2007), 184.

[22] Thom S. Rainer, *High Expectations: The Remarkable Secret for Keeping People in Your Church* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1999), 169–70.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Lenski, 634.

Benefits of Tension

Tension is not something to be avoided or ignored; rather, it can be a great accelerant to growth and health if leadership manages it effectively and successfully. Most view church or leadership as a place in which to "play nice" and pretend all is perfect. However, the book of Acts documents numerous times in which imperfections and issues (tension) were managed effectively and brought much success to the church. Dr. George O. Wood, general superintendent of the Assemblies of God, addressed the entire denomination on the subject of conflict and resolution in the church based upon the book of Acts and the New Testament church. Dr. Wood concluded his address with a summation that speaks to the benefit of tension and conflict in building the church:

> Our conflicts today may not match apple for apple with those found in Acts. Perhaps there are conflicts you face that fall into categories other than social fairness, doctrine, or methodology. The category does not matter.
> These three disputes from the Early Church provide a template for handling any dispute. The bottom line for all conflict resolution is that the Kingdom is advanced. The disagreements related to treatment of widows, inclusion of the Gentiles, and the utilization of John Mark ultimately advanced the Kingdom. If you will keep the love of Jesus and seek the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit, your conflicts will also bring great advances for His cause. You may not see it right away, but He makes all things beautiful in His time.[25]

Each instance involves real problems, real issues—some of them life and death. Not once is the tension ignored, avoided, or dismissed; rather, in each situation it is properly managed with the appropriate leaders and at the appropriate time.

There is no haste to judgment or action; neither is there a slothfulness or neglect. Either of these would end in a loss or disastrous situation. If Peter does not deal with

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[25] George O. Wood, "The Acts Method for Resolving Conflicts," *Enrichment Journal* (Spring 2005), accessed December 26, 2017, http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200502/200502_062_acts.cfm.

Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, publicly and swiftly, the sin festers, and the damage is

done. In the commentary *The Acts of the Apostles*, Dr. Gotthard Victor Lechler explains

the significance of Ananias and Sapphira to the church:

> The Church was not founded for the purpose of fostering sinful inclinations, or securing impunity for the sinner. Divine judgments are intended to awaken a holy fear; yet they are often regarded only with idle wonder, or with levity, or with uncharitableness and self-righteousness! When the Lord purges his floor, [Matt. 3:12], and the chaff is scattered [or burned], his own kingdom sustains no loss, for true believers are then protected and confirmed in the faith. [26]

However, in the case of John Mark, who will go on to write the Gospel of Mark,

Paul can follow his conviction. At the same time, thankfully Barnabas follows his

conviction of John Mark's calling and does not avoid or ignore the tension.

> The first two conflicts described in Acts ended with amicable resolutions. This one did not. Paul and Barnabas' "sharp disagreement" resulted in each going his separate way. These two great friends parted because they could not agree. … In the long run, both Barnabas and Paul were right. They were just not right at the same time. Paul was right. If John Mark had flaked out on the first journey, the rigors of the second journey (that included the flogging at Philippi) would have flattened him. Barnabas was right. Mark deserved a second chance. In the less stressful environment of Cyprus, Barnabas' home island where the church was already established, John Mark had a chance to get back on his feet. Mark recovered his courage and years later during Paul's final imprisonment in Rome, Paul sent for Mark because Mark was "helpful" to him (2 Timothy 4:11).[27]

Even with the timing of the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15, the tension of the

differences between the Jewish and Gentile believers is not addressed until the size of the

issue demands a decision and guidelines. Therefore, the growth and success of the New

Testament church was not tension free; it grew, not in spite of the tension produced, but

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[26] Lechler, 88.

[27] Wood.

because of an effective management of the tension. Presbyterian minister Gary Hansen

summarizes the issue with an excellent perspective:

> Conflict has always been a part of the life of the Church. It should surprise no one
> that we differ and argue, even on the most basic issues. However, Christ remains
> the Lord of the Church. It is Christ's Church, far more profoundly than it is our
> Church. Our task is to remain faithful, to argue and work in Christ-like ways for
> the peace, unity, and purity of the Church, and to trust that through it all Christ
> will lead us and guide us.[28]

The next chapter will explore a leader's well-being. It will define a leader's well-

being as well as tension's effects on a leader physically, mentally, emotionally, and

spiritually. The chapter will investigate how leadership tension positively affects a

leader's well-being.

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[28] Gary Neal Hansen, "Theological Conflict: A Perspective from the Early Church," *Theology Matters* 7, no. 5 (September/October 2001): 1, accessed December 26, 2017, http://www.theologymatters .com/SepOct01.PDF.

CHAPTER 5

A LEADER'S WELL-BEING AS A RESULT OF LEADERSHIP TENSION

As has been established, leaders who are productive in organizations are often

effective in managing the tension that is produced as they lead organizations toward their

mission. The management of tension can accelerate or decelerate both the organization

led and leadership effectiveness. What happens organizationally has a net effect on the

leader personally. The leader cannot be separated from the organization he or she leads,

and the effects that follow are either positive or negative. Peter Drucker articulates the

leadership connection by stating, "The CEO (leader) is the link between the Inside that is

'the organization,' and the *Outside* of society, economy, technology, markets, and

customers. Inside there are only *costs*. *Results* are only on the outside."[1] The critical factor

that determines whether the effects are positive or negative does not lie with the

organization but with the leader. A. G. Lafley, chairman and CEO of Procter and

Gamble, says the leader is critical to the success of a given organization: "The CEO is the

only one held accountable for the performance and results of the company—according

not just to its own goals but also to the measures and standards of diverse and often

competing external stakeholders."[2]

Therefore, a healthy leader demonstrates a well-being in his or her life and

leadership. Such well-being results from the harnessing of educational growth and

personal development, the discipline of a leader's personal composition of strengths and

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[1] A. G. Lafley, "What Only the CEO Can Do," *Harvard Business Weekly* 87, no. 5 (May 2009): 56, accessed December 14, 2017, Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost.

[2] Ibid.

weaknesses, and the healthy emerging from personal and professional crucibles that create the leader's identity.

The well-being of the leader presents itself in four prominent areas: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Leader and pastor Bill Hybels echoes the sentiment in an interview with *Christianity Today*. Hybels notes, "I'm convinced God wants us to live so as to finish the race we've started. That's the challenge of every Christian leader. And monitoring all three gauges—spiritual, physical, and emotional—plays an important part in our longevity."[3] In discussing a theory of spiritual leadership, Dr. Louis W. Fry of Texas A & M University explains the need for all four quadrants of well-being:

> I also propose that the ultimate effect of spiritual leadership is to bring together or create a sense of fusion among the four fundamental forces of human existence (body, mind, heart, and spirit) so that people are motivated for high performance, have increased organizational commitment, and personally experience joy, peace, and serenity. In a very real sense, spiritual leadership is, I believe, like a nuclear reactor in that it generates the fusion necessary to power the learning organizations of the new millennium.[4]

The chapter will discuss, develop, and substantiate the leader's well-being. The primary perspective will be through a positive lens, looking at the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being of a leader. The basis for the positive perspective comes from previous research and discussion of the negative, downward pull of the effects of poor leadership tension management. Therefore, this chapter will focus its attention on the positive results of healthy management of leadership tension. It will draw upon the understanding of tension that ultimately inform the leader and the leadership.

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[3] Bill Hybels, "Reading Your Gauges," *Christianity Today*, 1996, accessed October 17, 2017, http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/books/prayerpersonalgrowth/lclead04-17.html.

[4] Louis W. Fry, "Toward a Theory of Spiritual Leadership," *The Leadership Quarterly* 14 (2003): 718, accessed October 17, 2017, https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/4ae7/dbb708b59251854f69d780953556f433cced.pdf.

The body of this chapter will be divided into four sections, each section discussing a positive net effect of leaders' healthy management of leadership tension.

Physical Well-Being

The basis of any leader is the person, the physical embodiment of the individual. Regardless of how intelligent, educated, gifted, or well-connected a leader is, if he or she is in poor physical health, his or her leadership ability is limited to the degree of physical strength. However, when a leader is physically healthy, his or her potential is accelerated. Dr. Laura M. Little, Synovus Director of the Institute for Leadership Advancement and associate professor at the University of Georgia, substantiates the connection of a leader's well-being to his or her leadership in research documented in the journal article "Health Among Leaders: Positive and Negative Affect, Engagement and Burnout, Forgiveness and Revenge." Dr. Little states,

> Poor health of a key decision maker can greatly reduce the effectiveness of the organization as well as create anxiety in his/her followers. Conversely, if a leader is healthy and is able to perform his/her job and provide a positive example for his/her followers, the organization should benefit. Thus, it is of crucial importance to understand what factors lead to deleterious effects on health as well as positive effects on health for leaders of organizations.[5]

The successful management of leadership tension works not only to excel a given organization but also to provide a treadmill of sorts to grow or develop a leader, benefitting him or her physically. Such benefit is most commonly displayed in the stress that is typical in managing tension. Stress can present itself in good and bad forms; not all stress is negative. Dr. Robert M. Sapolsky of Stanford University explains:

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[5] Laura M. Little, Bret L. Simmons, and Debra L. Nelson, "Health Among Leaders: Positive and Negative Affect, Engagement and Burnout, Forgiveness and Revenge," *Journal of Management Studies* 44, no. 2 (March 2007): 243, accessed October 17, 2017, http://www.coba.unr.edu/faculty/simmonsb/mgt486/JOMSLittle.pdf.

The first central concept in stress physiology is if one becomes stressed like a normal mammal, which is, for example, 30 s [sic] of screaming terror running across the Savannah, the stress response is perfectly designed to help save your life. Where the trouble begins is when people start excreting those same hormones for reasons of chronic psychological stress. Another concept of stress pattern physiology is that if the stress response is turned on for too long, the chances of developing a chronic disease greatly increase. Humans are capable of turning on the same stress response as other mammals, but we turn it on for cognitive reasons, psychological reasons, and social reasons. The system did not evolve to be chronically activated. Constant mobilization of energy increases the likelihood of certain metabolic disorders, while chronic increases in blood pressure take their toll on blood vessels. Constantly deferring growth and repair for a more auspicious time exacts a price as well. The inhibition of digestion, growth, reproduction, and immune surveillance produces increased risks of colitis, various psychogenic growth disorders, stress-induced amenorrhea, impotency, and increased risk of infectious disease.[6]

Eustress is the positive stress exhibited in humans when stress is handled in a proper and healthy way. All humans, not just leaders, need stress. A group of researchers and research institutions in the United States published their findings on stress and its effects:

Although the term "stress" carries a negative connotation, evidence suggests that under certain circumstances, stress exposures may have the potential to enhance an organism's performance and resilience. The first evidence that low-to-moderate doses of stress may have *beneficial* effects ("eustress") emerged over a century ago as an "inverted U" relationship between arousal and performance (Yerkes and Dodson, 1908). … In cell culture models, brief administration of high-dose cortisol resulted in *improved* mitochondrial function and neuroprotective effects, whereas long-term high-dose cortisol administration dramatically *decreased* mitochondrial function and promoted cell death (Du et al., 2009).[7]

Without stress, individuals do not grow or develop in any dimension of their lives. The same is true in leadership. Struggle or stress can produce strength in leaders' lives.

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[6] Robert M. Sapolsky, "Stress Hormones: Good and Bad," *Neurobiology of Disease* 7: 540, accessed October 30, 2017, http://www.sciencedirect.com/sdfe/pdf/download/eid/1-s2.0-S0969996100903504/first-page-pdf.

[7] Kirstin Aschbacher et al., "Good Stress, Bad Stress and Oxidative Stress: Insights from Anticipatory Cortisol Reactivity," *Psychoneuroendocrinology* 38, no. 9 (September 2013): 1701, accessed October 17, 2017, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4028159/pdf/nihms455018.pdf.

Just as a physical cardiovascular workout benefits a person physically, so does the eustress encountered in leadership tension. Without it a leader lacks or loses a physical benefit that would not be afforded to him or her.

Richard Harris, science journalist for National Public Radio, reiterates the value of stress: "Ask somebody about stress, and you're likely to hear an outpouring about all the bad things that cause it—and the bad things that result. But if you ask a biologist, you'll hear that stress can be good. In fact, it's essential."[8] Harris uses research from Huda Akil, codirector of the Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience Institute at the University of Michigan, to prove his point. "'A lot of stress can be very disruptive,' Akil says. 'But a little bit of stress is kind of like working your muscles, your emotional muscles. And you build them up and you learn how to cope. So this is not something that's irretrievably wired to be bad or good. It can be retuned and fine-tuned, and it's never too late.'"[9] Harris concludes that stress is not something to avoid but something to manage. "Stress is, at root, a mechanism for adapting to changing circumstances. So when a challenging situation inevitably appears, the trick is to get the stress reaction to work to your advantage."[10] Therefore, a leader's well-being physically is enhanced by the successful management of leadership tension.

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[8] Richard Harris, "Like All Animals, We Need Stress. Just Not Too Much," National Public Radio Morning Edition, July 9, 2014, accessed October 17, 2017, http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2014/07/09/325216030/like-all-animals-we-need-stress-just-not-too-much.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

Mental Well-Being

Closely connected to a leader's physical well-being is his or her mental well-being. Just as the physical effects of stress on a leader can be positive or negative, so can the mental effects. The basis of all mental well-being is the brain; if not challenged properly, it will not perform at its peak ability.

John L. Evans quotes Winston Churchill, "Kites rise highest against the wind, not with it," to explain the use of stress or tension to a leader's advantage: "What I take from this quote is that challenges and stress may in fact be important ingredients in achieving the optimal human experience. Why? Because a life without stress has a tendency to make us flounder and under-perform."[11] He believes the idea of stress as a negative in the life of a leader should be eradicated, citing such examples as Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr. Evans quotes Dr. Jim Loehr, cofounder of the Human Performance Institute, as saying, "Stress gets a very bad rap." Evans continues, "Without stress, we cannot even start to realize our potential. This sentiment is applicable across the board."[12] The challenge presented though the management of leadership tension is one avenue by which the leader can journey to a healthy mental well-being.

Well documented are the negative effects of tension upon the brain. Dr. Robert Sapolsky authored one of the classic articles on the effects of stress in the journal *Science*: "Why Stress Is Bad for Your Brain." He explains,

> Sustained stress can have numerous pathologic effects. Among the molecules that mediate such effects are the adrenal steroid hormones, including the human

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[11] John L. Evans Jr., "Got Stress? Good, Use It to Your Advantage," *Journal of Financial Planning* 26, no. 11 (2013): 20, accessed November 6, 2017, Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost.

[12] Ibid.

glucocorticoid (GC) hydrocortisone. Along with epinephrine (adrenaline) and norepinephrine, GCs are essential for surviving acute physical stress (evading a predator, for example) but they may cause adverse effects when secretion is sustained, such as when waiting to hear about a grant renewal.[13]

The essence of Sapolsky's findings is that prolonged stress, not stress alone, can be harmful in that it kills brain cells.

However, healthy amounts of tension produce positive effects on the brain. Thomas Davenport of the Towers Watson Research and Innovation Center in San Francisco, California, explains the positive effects of stress on the brain and on the productivity of an individual:

> Organizations are minefields of stressors; human responses to stress are complex and individually idiosyncratic. Consequently, eradicating all stressors from the work environment is impractical. Managers can, however, modify stressors and introduce stress-buffering conditions into the workplace. By doing so, they can transform much of what employees experience as damaging stress (or *distress*) into a more productive form (referred to as *eustress*).
> This transformation can not only reduce the unhealthy effects of stress but also increase employee satisfaction and productivity. We use the term *fulfillment* for the outcome of positive stress.[14]

Dr. Sonia J. Lupien of the Fernand-Seguin Research Center in Montreal, Canada, further supports the benefits of good stress:

> Clinical studies indicate that stress is not always a bad thing, and that some optimal level of life stress may actually be beneficial to the individual. Stress, as defined by Dr. Lupien, involves one of the following experiences: exposure to novelty, unpredictability, threats to the ego, or a sense of lost control (Schramek

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[13] Robert M. Sapolsky, "Why Stress Is Bad for Your Brain," *Science* 273, no. 5276 (August 9, 1996): 749.

[14] Thomas O. Davenport, "The Good Stress Strategy: How Managers Can Transform Stress into Fulfillment," *Employment Relations Today* 42, no. 3 (2015): 11, accessed November 6, 2017, Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost.

2008a; Lupien et al. 2009). These factors strongly contribute to the development of aversive responses to environmental stimuli.[15]

These positive effects enhance and lead to a person's mental well-being.

Beyond the physical aspects of mental well-being is the emotional aspect. Roche, Haar, and Luthans state, "Psychologically healthy, thriving leaders not only benefit themselves, but are also critical to employee well-being as well."[16] Within this framework a leader's views impact not only himself or herself but also a given organization, people, or set of circumstances.

A leader's mental well-being in terms of perspective is invaluable. Many experts refer to this aspect as "mindfulness." *Mindfulness* is defined as "an inner resource that supports beneficial psychological functioning, and thus facilitates well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2003)."[17] Its value stems from the ability in "disengaging individuals from unhealthy thoughts, habits, and unhealthy behavioral patterns (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 823)."[18] As well, mindfulness plays a vital role "in developing informed and self-endorsed behavioral regulation, which has long been associated with well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2008), as well as enhanced leadership efficacy (Hannah, Woolfolk, & Lord,

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[15] James I. Koenig et al., "Effects of Stress across the Lifespan," *Stress: The International Journal on the Biology of Stress* 14, no. 5 (2011): 478, accessed November 6, 2017, Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost.

[16] Maree Roche, Jarrod M. Harr, and Fred Luthans, "The Role of Mindfulness and Psychological Capital on the Well-Being of Leaders," *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* 19, no. 4 (2014): 476, accessed November 6, 2017, doi: 10.1037/a0037183m.

[17] Ibid., 477.

[18] Ibid.

2009)."[19] The results of mindfulness are found to be positive and rewarding to the leader

and to those whom the leader serves.

> For leaders who are working in stressful situations (Andrea et al., 2009), this greater mindfulness enables them to view situations "for what they really are" without rumination or worry of past or future negative events. Rather than being mindless and frantic, present moment awareness and attention allows the leader to focus on the issue at hand, not on the problems that may arise, or have previously arisen. This allows leaders to facilitate reflective choices to situations that in total benefit their mental health outcomes and well-being.[20]

Therefore, a leader's well-being mentally is enhanced by the successful management of

leadership tension.

Emotional Well-Being

For all leaders, regardless of spiritual background or composition, emotional well-

being is key when it comes to the successful and healthy management of leadership

tension. The leader's emotional well-being is the capstone of his or her well-being. Dr.

Daniel Goleman, psychologist and CEO of Emotional Intelligence Services, describes

emotional well-being as key in the life of a leader:

> All effective leaders learn to handle the internal world of feeling, particularly the big three: anger, anxiety, sadness. Managing one's emotions is a matter of controlling one's impulses—and that turns out to be a decisive life skill. In short, stress makes people stupid because it leaves them with less attention to bring to the moment. That is why a leader's ability to manage emotions is crucial. One study of a large retail chain, for example, showed that store managers who could best handle stress and manage emotions had the highest profitability per square foot of stores. [21]

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Daniel Goleman, "The Emotional Intelligence of Leaders," *Leader to Leader* 1998, no. 10 (Fall 1998): 22, accessed October 17, 2017, Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost.

Emotional well-being is predicated upon the idea of personal perspective as well as an individual's success or acceptance based upon external factors, of which he or she has little or no control. The emotional quotient is difficult to measure concretely, but it is a quantity that is felt unequivocally when achieved. Achievement is aided in part by the successful navigation of leadership tension. Dr. Goleman explains, "When the Center for Creative Leadership updated its study of leaders who lost their jobs or started to stagnate, they found two main reasons: the failure to adapt to change and the failure to lead a team. Both relate to emotional intelligence and the ability to manage stress."[22]

The emotional well-being of leader is comprised of many aspects. Dr. Don Gorman, director of the Center for Rural and Remote Area Health for the University of Queensland, cites that the numerous facets of emotional well-being culminate into two divisions or factors: internal and external.

> Mental health, or more broadly, social and emotional well-being (SEWB) is dependent on many factors, both internal and external. The external factors such as socio-economic disadvantage are fairly well documented and generally their link to SEWB are fairly easy to understand, although the degree of impact they have may be debated. The internal factors such as motivation are much more difficult to explain. One framework that is still used to explain motivation since it was first published in the 1940s is that of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.[23]

The external factors are more easily identified because of the nature of external prominence. Although the cause of the leader's external emotional state falls into the latter category of internal, the external emotional responses and actions are easily identified and provide clues to the internal issues. The external emotional actions can be

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[22] Ibid.

[23] Don Gorman, "Maslow's Hierarchy and Social and Emotional Wellbeing," *Aboriginal & Islander Health Worker Journal* 34, no. 1 (2010): 27, accessed October 17, 2017, Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost.

either positive or negative depending on the leader. As this dissertation is concerned with

the management of tension, so will be the focus of a leader's external emotional well-

being. Negative emotional response patterns include agitation, anger, quiet withdrawal,

avoidance, or physical ailments. Positive emotional response patterns, opposite of the

negative, include a calm, composed, steady voice or decision making; contemplative

interaction; and engagement of people, process, and work product.

The internal factors are less identifiable because of the lack of external

prominence. The following is drawn from Dr. Gorman's work on emotional well-being:

> The term "social and emotional well-being" has been used in Australia since the
> 1980s. The term has encouraged people to take a more holistic view of mental
> health by incorporating broader socio-historical and personal choices (Garvey
> 2008). It incorporates mental health, defined by Garvey (2008) as "a state of
> emotional and social well-being in which individuals can cope with the normal
> stresses of life and achieve their potential. In such a state, individuals may also
> contribute to community life, and engage in positive and beneficial relationships
> with others."[24]

Based upon Gorman's perspective, how a leader responds to the "stresses of life" or

tension directly connects to internal factors of emotional well-being. This is the classic

understanding that the fruit of a tree gives insight to the root of the tree; that is, healthy

fruit comes from healthy roots. In a leader's life, the tension bears the fruit of the root.

Therefore, a leader's well-being emotionally is enhanced by the successful management

of leadership tension.

Spiritual Well-Being

The spiritual well-being of any leader is much akin to emotional well-being, in

that it is more difficult to quantify than the physical or mental. Spiritual well-being is not

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[24] Ibid.

a typical effect of leadership tension in a secular setting, but in the life of a spiritual leader or an individual leading a spiritual organization or mission, it is undeniable. "Measuring spiritual well-being among clergy is particularly important given the high relevance of God to their lives, and yet its measurement is prone to problems such as ceiling effects and conflating religious behaviors with spiritual well-being."[25]

Because this is a doctor of ministry dissertation, I felt it pertinent and necessary to include spiritual well-being in the benefits of successful leadership tension. Also, due to the lack of secular need on the subject, less scientific data is available to draw from, but plenty of spiritual leaders past and present resound with the positive effects of leadership tension upon spiritual well-being. Research supports the value of spiritual well-being in the life of leaders. "In the measurement of holistic health, it is important to assess not only physical and mental health, but also some form of spiritual well-being. In studies of clergy, measuring spiritual well-being becomes that much more important because of the high importance that clergy themselves give to it."[26]

The successful management of leadership tension in the life of a Christian leader produces spiritual well-being because, first, it increases faith. Second, it increases the leader's personal relationship and walk with God because it is based upon a journey of growth in faith and in the image of God. Third, it decreases pressure in the leader's life because it focuses not on strength but on weakness. Last, it confirms a leader's calling.

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[25] Rae Proeschold-Bell et al., "Closeness to God among Those Doing God's Work: A Spiritual Well-Being Measure for Clergy," *Journal of Religion & Health* 53, no. 3 (2014): 878, accessed December 14, 2017, Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost.

[26] Ibid., 891.

The successful management of leadership tension in the life of a Christian leader produces spiritual well-being because it increases his or her faith. Faith is established as the basis of relationship with God: "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him" (Heb. 11:6, NIV). However, faith must and will be tested, and the testing of faith (tension) is what produces spiritual growth. James 1:2–4 (NIV) says, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

The successful management of leadership tension in the life of a Christian leader produces spiritual well-being because it increases his or her personal relationship and walk with God. The truth of this is demonstrated throughout the Bible: Abraham willing to sacrifice Isaac, Noah building the ark, Moses leading the Exodus, Joseph becoming a leader in Egypt, David journeying to become king. The struggles of the walk increase a person's relationship with God.

The successful management of leadership tension in the life of a Christian leader produces spiritual well-being because it decreases pressure in his or her life; the focus is not on strength but on weakness. Paul speaks of this struggle in his writings to the church in Rome (Rom. 6–8). He captures the essence in his own life as he reveals his unnamed struggle and his management of the tension as recorded in 2 Corinthians 12:8–10 (NIV):

> Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is make perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

The essence is that the struggles and weaknesses God uses in an individual's life actually produce the strength and growth. Therefore, the pressure of being something that a leader is not or that is beyond a given strength set is off. The management and realization actually work in favor of the leader and benefit him or her.

The successful management of leadership tension in the life of a Christian leader produces spiritual well-being because it confirms his or her calling. As defined in Frederick Buechner's book *Wishful Thinking*, God's *calling* is "the kind of work (a) that you need most to do, and (b) that the world most needs to have done. … The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."[27] The fulfillment of that calling is formed best in the diversity and healthy tension that Christian community offers. Dr. Laceye Warner of Duke Divinity School explains this connection: "Christian leaders (like Christian disciples) are not formed or commissioned in isolation but in Christian communities. John Wesley, in his 'Sermon on the Mount IV,' urged that authentic spiritual formation could not take place "without society, without living and conversing with [others]."[28] Through this process, calling is confirmed, and spiritual well-being is established.

Leaders are not one dimensional; they have multiple facets. The chapter examined four of these facets: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. The first two, physical and mental well-being, present themselves in a manner that is objectively observable. In this way, individuals see the external connection and benefit that successful management of

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[27] Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Seeker's ABC*, rev. and expanded ed. (New York: HarperOne, 1993), 118–119, quoted in Laceye Warner, "Leading Christian Communities," *Divinity* 12, no. 1 (Fall 2012): 21.

[28] Laceye Warner, "Leading Christian Communities," *Divinity* 12, no. 1 (Fall 2012): 21.

tension can bring to a leader. The second two, emotional and spiritual, are observable

only over years of time-tested leadership—a journey that presents the positive effects of

tension management.

Finally, since tension creates an imperative to act and to elaborate strategy, information, and adaptability, enabling leadership also works to foster *tension*. *Internal* tension can be enhanced by heterogeneity, a stimulus of interdependency and conflicting constraints. Heterogeneity refers to differences among agents in such things as skills, preferences, and outlooks (McKelvey, in press; Schilling & Steensma, 2001). When couched within a context of interdependency, heterogeneity pressures agents to adapt to their differences. At the upper echelon and organizational levels, enabling leadership promotes heterogeneity by (among other things) building an atmosphere in which such diversity is respected, with considered hiring practices, and by structuring work groups to enable interaction of diverse ideas. Enabling leadership also fosters internal tension by enabling an atmosphere that tolerates dissent and divergent perspectives on problems, one in which personnel are charged with resolving their differences and finding solutions to their problems (cf. Heifetz & Laurie, 2001).

Enabling leadership not only fosters internal tension, it judiciously injects tension as well—tension that derives *externally* in that it is not a natural function of informal dynamics. Upper- and mid-level enabling leaders inject tension with managerial pressures or challenges, by distributing resources in a manner that supports creative movements, and by creating demands for results. Enabling leaders can impose tension by dropping "seeds of emergence" (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001; McKelvey *et al.*, 1999), or perturbations that have the potential of fostering learning and creativity. Such "seeds" include ideas, information, judiciously placed resources, new people, and the capacity to access unspecified resources (*i.e.*, gateways that permit exploration; access to the internet is an obvious example). Seeds are intended to stimulate the networked system, and their impact may be unpredictable.

At the individual level, agents can engage in enabling leadership by recognizing the creative value of tension and using it to foster productive discussions and interaction. They would not look to authority for answers, but rather commit to engaging in the process of adaptive problem solving. Enabling agents recognize the difference between task (or ideational) conflict (which can produce creative outcomes; Jehn, 1997), and interpersonal conflict (which is disruptive to social dynamics) and work to promote productive, task conflicts (Heifetz, 1994; Jehn, 1997; Lencioni, 2002). They contribute ideas and opinions, they play devil's advocate, and they address the "elephants on the table" that others try to ignore (Parks, 2005). They also recognize when a group is bogged down by consensus (Lencioni, 2002) that comes from lack of diversity, and

expose the group to heterogeneous perspectives, bringing other people and ideas into the dynamic as necessary.[29]

The understanding that leadership affects the person of the leader and not just the vocation is of utmost value because a person and a profession cannot be, nor need be, separated. However, the tension of leadership can work in concert with the leader to grow and build him or her to the highest level of leadership for himself or herself and those he or she leads. The ultimate well-being comes only through the crucible of the journey of leaning into and managing the tension; it never results from avoiding or denying the leadership tension.

The next chapter will explore how leadership tension affects leaders relationally. The chapter will look at the relationships leaders have with followers and colleagues and the positive role that tension plays in those relationships. It will also offer a positive framework for how leadership tension can build a leader's person and relationships.

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[29] Mary Uhl-Bien, Russ Marion, and Bill McKelvey, "Complexity Leadership Theory: Shifting Leadership from the Industrial Age to the Knowledge Era," *The Leadership Quarterly* 18, no. 4 (August 2007): 311, accessed December 27, 2017, https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/4c37/852b4d65e681dcd0795e10bd0b439c11b624.pdf.

CHAPTER 6

A LEADER'S RELATIONSHIPS AS A RESULT OF LEADERSHIP TENSION

Every leader is an individual, a person, before he or she ever assumes a leadership role or position. Therefore, a leader's need for relationship is no different than a follower's. However, the complexities of leading oneself and others can create personal and internal issues for a leader. The additional stresses of leadership tension can affect a leader to the degree where he or she can find it difficult to manage and lead people, projects, and himself or herself personally. At this point, a leader responds relationally. The relational strengths or weaknesses appear in the leader's life and ultimately affect his or her leadership.

The chapter will explore and develop the subject of a leader's relational weaknesses and strengths, as well as the effects leadership tension adds to or changes in the leader and the people surrounding him or her. First, the chapter will explore the negative responses and effects of leadership tension on a leader's relational strength. Second, it will examine the positive characteristics of leaders who manage well. Last, key strategies for healthy and long relationships in the life of a leader will be discussed.

As this dissertation has explored and substantiated, the presence of leadership tension is real, and its effects are prominent. As in every other aspect of a leader's life, tension has the ability to strengthen and accelerate a leader or to destroy and minimize him or her. This truth is evident in a leader's life, especially as he or she matures and ages. The evidence is displayed in a leadership resiliency, which will be further explored and substantiated in this chapter.

Negative Relational Responses

The relational consequences from the failure to manage leadership tension

correctly are common with the emotions or reactions to any type of failure in leadership,

because ultimately failure in leadership resides with the leader. These emotions and

reactions are also common to anyone facing failure. According to the medical

community, the common response to stress or tension is for an individual to respond in

fight, flight, or freeze.[1] Such a response is common in leaders. It is not premeditated but

is a natural reflex that is true of leaders, unless it is analyzed and evaluated with

intentional adjustments implemented.

Olivia Fox Cabane, director of Innovative Leadership for Stanford University's

StartX program, and Judah Pollack, founding partner at Riverene Leadership, explain

these common responses in a leadership context: "These three represent the classic stress

responses you've undoubtedly heard of before: fight, flight, and freeze. In all three cases,

fear of failure activates the sympathetic nervous system. Godzillas respond to that

activation with anger; hummingbirds and deer react with fear. It's that fear and anger that

destroy our emotional momentum."[2] Using Cabane and Pollack's findings as a

framework, this chapter will define and explore the Godzilla, hummingbird, and deer

responses and relate them to the negative relational responses to leadership tension.

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[1] Harvard University, "Understanding the Stress Response: Chronic Activation of This Survival Mechanism Impairs Health," Harvard Health Publishing, last updated March 18, 2016, accessed November 25, 2017, https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/understanding-the-stress-response.

[2] Olivia Fox Cabane and Judah Pollack, "Three Common Reactions to Failure That Don't Help Matters—And One That Does," Fast Company, April 20, 2016, accessed November 8, 2017, https://www.fastcompany.com/3059000/three-common-reactions-to-failure-that-dont-help-matters-and-one-that-does.

Anger

The Godzilla response, according to Cabane and Pollack, is one of an angry, fire-breathing annihilation or destruction. Here, the leader goes to the extreme and destroys anyone in proximity to him or her. Such an explosion can be triggered for numerous reasons, but the resulting response of volcanic anger is the same. At this point relationships are severed, and bridges are burned. Cabane and Pollack say, "Godzillas want to throw out everything and start from scratch. They lose their emotional momentum by focusing like a laser on what didn't work. Anger drives them to erase the whiteboard, slam the door, and storm out of the office."[3]

Avoidance

The hummingbird response is one of avoiding the situation and the people that surround the failed attempt. According to Cabane and Pollack, these leaders pivot to another project, relationship, or opportunity. Instead of working through the tension and finding relational outcomes, the leader flies on to new opportunities and relationships almost without acknowledgement of the previous situation. Here, avoidance and self-imposed ignorance become the coping mechanism, and existing relationships are nullified. "Before anyone can even utter the word 'pivot,' the hummingbird changes direction and is off. 'What's over here? What's over there? Is that nectar?' While this may seem like maintaining momentum, it's actually pointless acceleration."[4]

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[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

Fear

The deer or "deer in the headlights" response is one of paralyzing fear—fear of the situation, the people, the future implications, and the leader's own ability. Such fear produces two relational effects: paranoia and insecurity.

Paranoia says that others may be to blame, that a conspiracy resulted from the mismanagement of leadership tension, or that someone has sabotaged the leader. Morten Hansen states that paranoia can be productive: "Productive paranoia is the ability to be hyper-vigilant about potentially bad events that can hit your company and then turn that fear into preparation and clearheaded action."[5] However, in a relational setting, paranoia can be destructive.

Insecurity is a paralyzing-fear response that causes the leader to question himself or herself. Thus, it produces instability and withdrawal in relationship. "Those of us who become deer in headlights immediately freeze when faced with having to change and lose all momentum. We go quiet, sit at our desks, and fret."[6]

Paranoia or insecurity in the life of a leader produces mistrust in the leader and in his or her relationships. Trust is key in relationships. When mistrust is produced in leadership, it drives the leader away from the mission and those he or she is endeavoring to lead. "Building trust is considered an essential activity in managerial leadership. … A leader's traits, behavior, leadership style, and skills all matter in building trust and

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[5] Morten T. Hansen, "Three Leadership Skills That Count," *Harvard Business Review*, October 20, 2011, accessed November 8, 2017, https://hbr.org/2011/10/three-leadership-skills-that-c.

[6] Cabane and Pollack.

creating an impression of trustworthiness … trust is built and maintained by a leader's 'daily deeds.'"[7]

The result of damage to a leader's relationships due to the inability to successfully manage leadership tension is extensive to the leader and those around him or her. Anger, avoidance, paranoia, and insecurity all result in a bitter, lonely, isolated, and failed leader.

Positive Relational Responses

The dissertation has explored various nuances and caveats to both the positive and negative effects of managing leadership tension and the relational responses and effects. Numerous benefits emerge from the leader's ability to successfully manage leadership tension. In this section of the chapter, I will explore and support the position that leadership tension benefits and contributes to the relational strength of a leader. The benefits explored in the section will include resilience, endurance, and character.

Resilience

Resilience is "(1) the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness; (2) the ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity."[8] Author Maria Konnikova explains the process of resilience: "It's only when you're faced with obstacles, stress, and other environmental threats that resilience, or the lack of it,

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[7] Taina Savolainen and Sari Häkkinen, "Trusted to Lead: Trustworthiness and Its Impact on Leadership," Technology Innovation Management Review, March 2011, accessed November 25, 2017, http://timreview.ca/article/429.

[8] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "resilience," accessed November 20, 2017, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/resilience.

emerges: Do you succumb or do you surmount?"[9] In chapter 3, the dissertation explored

and defined resilience, based on research provided by Diane Coutu, a senior editor at

Harvard Business Review, as the possession of three characteristics: a defined reality, an

embedded belief or value system, and an ability to improvise.[10] The current section seeks

to offer the benefits from the aforementioned characteristics that produce resilience.

These benefits are the ability to manage adversity, flexibility, and rest or recovery.

The ability to manage adversity is a benefit of resilience. Here, leaders do not let

the pain that all leaders face harm or destroy them; rather, they let it work for their

benefit. Hara Estroff Marano, editor in chief of *Psychology Today* explains: "Resilient

people do not let adversity define them. They find resilience by moving towards a goal

beyond themselves, transcending pain and grief by perceiving bad times as a temporary

state of affairs."[11]

Flexibility is the second benefit of resilience. Here, the ability to bend and not

break to leadership tension becomes beneficial in the life of a leader. The American

Psychological Association describes the flexibility benefit of resilience:

> Resilience involves maintaining flexibility and balance in your life as you deal
> with stressful circumstances and traumatic events. This happens in several ways,
> including:
> - Letting yourself experience strong emotions, and also realizing when you may
>   need to avoid experiencing them at times in order to continue functioning.
> - Stepping forward and taking action to deal with your problems and meet the
>   demands of daily living, and also stepping back to rest and reenergize
>   yourself.

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[9] Maria Konnikova, "How People Learn to Become Resilient," *New Yorker*, February 11, 2016, accessed December 27, 2017, https://www.newyorker.com/science/maria-konnikova/the-secret-formula-for-resilience.

[10] Coutu, 5.

[11] Hara Estroff Marano, "The Art of Resilience," *Psychology Today*, May 1, 2003, accessed December 27, 2017, https://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200305/the-art-resilience.

- Spending time with loved ones to gain support and encouragement, and also nurturing yourself.
- Relying on others, and also relying on yourself."[12]

The third benefit of resilience to note is rest and recovery. The need for proper rest and recovery is well substantiated by both medical and scientific communities. The focus here is to connect rest and recovery as a benefit of resilience. Shawn Achor and Michelle Gielan of *Harvard Business Review* explain,

> The very lack of a recovery period is dramatically holding back our collective ability to be resilient and successful. Research has found that there is a direct correlation between lack of recovery and increased incidence of health and safety problems. And lack of recovery—whether by disrupting sleep with thoughts of work or having continuous cognitive arousal by watching our phones—is costing our companies $62 billion a year, in lost productivity.[13]

Dr. Jack Groppel, cofounder of the Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute, describes the activity of resilience that affects rest and recovery:

> The key … is to recognize that you will never eliminate stress from your life. Instead create regular opportunities for the body to recover from stress—just as you would rest your muscles between weight lifting repetitions. … "Stress is the stimulus for growth, and recovery is when the growth occurs. … That's how we build the resilience muscle."[14]

When a leader possesses resilience personally, it naturally flows relationally to those he or she leads. A leader's resilience, with its effect on followers, is not only useful but also needed. Amy Modglin, president and chief inspiration officer of Modglin Leadership Solutions, explains:

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[12] American Psychological Association, "The Road to Resilience," APA Help Center, accessed November 20, 2017, http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx.

[13] Shawn Achor and Michelle Gielan, *Harvard Business Review*, June 24, 2016, accessed November 20, 2017, https://hbr.org/2016/06/resilience-is-about-how-you-recharge-not-how-you-endure.

[14] Tara Parker-Pope, "How to Boost Resilience in Midlife," *New York Times*, July 25, 2017, accessed November 20, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/25/well/mind/how-to-boost-resilience-in-midlife.html.

> These are only a few examples of the hard times I have endured that have helped me to become a resilient leader. During these challenging times, my teams relied on me to be strong, composed and to focus on the intended goals. They needed me not to reflect any of the negativity that was surrounding us. They needed a leader who would support them and listen to their concerns, but not allow them to stray from what we were trying to accomplish. They also needed someone who could stand up and be the voice for them and ensure their best interests were kept in the forefront of everything the team did.[15]

Therefore, resilience benefits not only the leader but also his or her relationships in every direction.

Endurance

The Marine OCS blog defines *endurance* as follows: "Endurance comes from pushing yourself beyond physical or mental limits. Through many tests at OCS [Officer Candidates School], candidates exceed what they thought they were capable of. However, endurance refers not only to pushing past these limits but also to finishing strong."[16] Thus, endurance is the ability to push oneself and to finish strong. It is a benefit from successful management of leadership tension that brings relational strength to a leader.

Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz wrote about developing endurance in leadership in an article entitled "The Making of a Corporate Athlete."[17] Loehr and Schwartz prescribe an "integrated theory of performance management [that] addresses the body, the

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[15] Amy Modglin, "Why Resilience Is Necessary as a Leader," *Forbes*, July 11, 2017, accessed December 27, 2017, https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2017/07/11/why-resilience-is-necessary-as-a-leader/#4a26f39b4ad3.

[16] Marine OCS Blog, "Marine Corps Leadership Traits: Endurance," *USMC OCS Blog*, November 16, 2012, accessed December 27, 2017, http://officercandidatesschool.com/blog/2012/11/16/marine-corps-leadership-traits-endurance/.

[17] Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz, "The Making of a Corporate Athlete," *Harvard Business Review*, January 2001, accessed November 25, 2017, https://hbr.org/2001/01/the-making-of-a-corporate-athlete.

emotions, the mind, and the spirit. We call this hierarchy the *performance pyramid*."[18]

The performance pyramid is labeled the Ideal Performance State (IPS), which is

necessary for long-term leadership endurance. The key to IPS is the successful

management of energy that occurs through the management of tension (stress) and

release (renewal).

> Our own work has demonstrated that effective energy management has two key components. The first is the rhythmic movement between energy expenditure (stress) and energy renewal (recovery), which we term "oscillation." In the living laboratory of sports, we learned that the real enemy of high performance is not stress, which, paradoxical as it may seem, is actually the stimulus for growth. Rather, the problem is the absence of disciplined, intermittent recovery. Chronic stress without recovery depletes energy reserves, leads to burnout and breakdown, and ultimately undermines performance. Rituals that promote oscillation—rhythmic stress and recovery—are the second component of high performance. Repeated regularly, these highly precise, consciously developed routines become automatic over time.[19]

Therefore, as with a high-performance athlete or high-capacity leader, leadership

endurance is a product of the successful management of leadership tension. "The same

methods that enable world-class athletes to reach IPS under pressure, we theorized,

would be at least equally effective for business leaders—and perhaps even more

important in their lives."[20] The resulting energy capacity affects the leader's life

physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. It leads to endurance not only in the

leader but also in his or her relationships, benefitting the leader positively. "Close

relationships are perhaps the most powerful means for prompting positive emotions and

effective recovery. Anyone who has enjoyed a happy family reunion or an evening with

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

good friends knows the profound sense of safety and security that these relationships can induce. Such feelings are closely associated with the Ideal Performance State."[21]

Character

   Character is defined as "the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual."[22] The value of character is noted and not debated in leadership circles. However, how it is produced in the life of a leader is a question addressed in this dissertation. Character can be produced in a leader's life in multiple ways. One of those is struggle, which this dissertation directly connects to an expression of leadership tension. In early editions of their book *The Leadership Challenge*, James Kouzes and Barry Posner state, "You cannot lead others until you have first led yourself through a struggle with opposing values."[23]

   Character is not a quality that a leader is born with but one that is created. "Leadership can only be character. Character is not forced on us by nature, however. We are not stuck with it. It is something we can shape and mold and strengthen. … We strengthen our character through the habitual practice of sound moral habits, called ethical or human virtues."[24] Character is formed, and leadership tension is part of that formation.

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[21] Ibid.

[22] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "character," accessed November 25, 2017, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/character.

[23] James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations,* 1st ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1987), 302.

[24] Alexandre Havard, *Virtuous Leadership: An Agenda for Personal Excellence* (New York: Scepter Publishers, 2007), xiv.

"The nineteenth-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche once wrote, 'I believe it is precisely through the presence of opposites and the feelings they occasion that the great man—the bow with great tension—develops.'"[25] Dr. Joseph L. Badaracco Jr., professor of business ethics at the Harvard Business School, explains this tension-based formation: "Defining moments bring those 'opposites' and 'feelings' together into vivid focus. They force us to find a balance between our hearts in all their idealism and our jobs in all their messy reality. Defining moments then are not merely intellectual exercises; they are opportunities for inspired action and personal growth."[26] Such action and growth is how the management of leadership tension produces character in the life of a leader.

Keys to Relational Health and Longevity for Leaders

The relational strength of leadership begins with a foundation of trust formed by the leader, usually through the successful navigation of tension. Ken Blanchard states that trust and trustworthiness are foundational for healthy relationships in leadership. "Being trustworthy is one of the keys to leadership success and an essential component of successful working relationships between leaders and followers. When a leader is considered trustworthy, he or she enables cooperation, encourages information sharing, and increases openness and mutual acceptance with the people he or she manages."[27]

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[25] Joseph L. Badaracco Jr., "The Discipline of Building Character," *Harvard Business Review*, January 2006, accessed November 25, 2017, https://hbr.org/2006/01/the-discipline-of-building-character.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ken Blanchard, "Trust: An Essential Ingredient for Leadership Success," Perspectives: Building Trust, January 4, 2017, accessed December 27, 2017, https://www.amtisinc.com/sites/default/files/blog -pdfs/Blanchard%20White%20Paper%20Trust-An-Essential-Ingredient-MK0834.pdf.

Blanchard and coauthor Cynthia Olmstead believe the following four attributes create a framework that builds leadership trust relationally: "Able. You are competent to solve problems and get results. … Believable. You act with integrity and honesty. … Connected. You care about others. … Dependable. You do what you say you will do."[28] These four attributes are keys to strong, healthy relational leadership and are predominately forged through the successful navigation of leadership tension. They also give structure to healthy relationships in a leader's life. "All trust is contextual. What's expected of you will depend on the setting, circumstances, roles, and expectations of those involved. Thus, as a boss (leader), you need to know not just *what* to do and *how* to do it, but also how to get it done *in the organization* and the world where you work." [29]

Able

First, a leader must demonstrate ability in skill set and in missional accomplishment. The leader must be deemed "able" in his or her competency to solve problems and get results. Such ability must aid not only the leader but also those who follow and who directly benefit from or are connected with his or her leadership.

Randy Conley of The Ken Blanchard Companies describes how a leader's ability is displayed. It is not singular but dual; it concerns not only a leader's ability to complete a given skill set with competency but also his or her ability to convert the skill set to tangible results.

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[28] Ken Blanchard, "Trust Works!" *How We Lead* (blog), May 1, 2013, accessed December 27, 2017, https://howwelead.org/2013/05/01/trust-works/.

[29] Linda Hill and Kent Lineback, "To Build Trust, Competence Is Key," *Harvard Business Review*, March 22, 2012, accessed December 4, 2017, https://hbr.org/2012/03/to-build-trust-competence-is-k.

One way leaders demonstrate their competence is having the expertise needed to do their jobs. Expertise comes from possessing the right skills, education, or credentials that establish credibility with others. Leaders also demonstrate their competence through achieving results. Consistently achieving goals and having a track record of success builds trust with others and inspires confidence in your ability.[30]

Conley also communicates net bonus indicators that an able leader offers a team and organization: "Able leaders are also skilled at facilitating work getting done in the organization. They develop credible project plans, systems, and processes that help team members accomplish their goals."[31]

Believable

Being believable is about the leader acting with character, based upon integrity. Believability displays a respect for others, acknowledgement of a leader's own mistakes, and confidentiality and honesty with relationships. Conley states, "A *Believable* leader *acts with integrity* … keeping promises, not lying or stretching the truth, and not gossiping are ways to demonstrate integrity. Believable leaders … walk the talk. Finally, treating people fairly and equitably are key components to being a believable leader.[32]

Lynn S. Paine, the John G. McLean Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School, explains that the key to believability as a leader is based upon integrity. Paine refers to integrity as a "governing ethic" on an organizational as well as a relational basis.

A strategy based on integrity holds organizations to a more robust standard. … organizational integrity is based on the concept of self-governance in accordance

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[30] Randy Conley, "Your Success as a Leader Depends on This One Thing," *Blanchard LeaderChat* (blog), May 28, 2015, accessed December 4, 2017, https://leaderchat.org/2015/05/28/your-success-as-a-leader-depends-on-this-one-thing/.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

with a set of guiding principles. From the perspective of integrity, the task of ethics management is to define and give life to an organization's guiding values, to create an environment that supports ethically sound behavior, and to instill a sense of shared accountability among employees. …

> An integrity strategy is characterized by a conception of ethics as a driving force of an enterprise. Ethical values shape the search for opportunities, the design of organizational systems, and the decision-making process used by individuals and groups. They provide a common frame of reference and serve as a unifying force across different functions, lines of business, and employee groups. Organizational ethics helps define what a company is and what it stands for. …

> An integrity strategy is broader … in that it seeks to enable responsible conduct. Deeper in that it cuts to the ethos and operating systems of the organization and its members, their guiding values and patterns of thought and action. And more demanding in that it requires an active effort to define the responsibilities and aspirations that constitute an organization's ethical compass. Above all, organizational ethics is seen as the work of management.[33]

Therefore, Blanchard's framework and Paine's thesis confirm the reciprocal relationship between integrity and believability; one begets the other. The reciprocity is predicated upon the leader and his or her relational commitment to himself or herself and to those he or she leads. Such commitment reinforces the believability of a leader and the relationships in his or her life.

Connected

A leader must be connected, meaning he or she must possess and demonstrate a genuine care for and interest in others. The ability to connect as a leader benefits both the worker and the work environment. Concerning how a leader's connection works, Randy Conley of The Ken Blanchard Companies states:

> Leaders create a sense of connection by openly sharing information about themselves and the organization and trusting employees to use that information responsibly. Leaders also build trust by having a "people first" mentality and building rapport with those they lead. … Recognition is a vital component of

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[33] Lynn S. Paine, "Managing for Organizational Integrity," *Harvard Business Review*, March–April 1994, accessed December 4, 2017, https://hbr.org/1994/03/managing-for-organizational-integrity.

being a connected leader, and praising and rewarding the contributions of people and their work builds trust and goodwill.[34]

Linda A. Hill, professor of business administration at Harvard Business School, and Kent Lineback, a manager and an executive in business and government, have cowritten on the subject of trust and how it is created by the initiation of a leader and his or her ability to connect to others. Hill and Lineback have assigned three elements to a leader's knowledge to connect through leadership: technical knowledge, operational knowledge, and political knowledge.

> Technical knowledge covers what you need to know, not only about the work performed by your unit but also about the basics of management. … Operational knowledge might be called "practical" knowledge. It covers not *what* but *how* you and your group do what you do. … Political knowledge is the knowledge required to get anything done in a political environment, such as the organization where you work.[35]

In essence, the leader utilizes his or her knowledge to connect with those whom he or she leads and influences. The ability to connect allows for the health not only of the leader but also of those relationally connected to him or her.

Dependable

Finally, a leader must be dependable, meaning his or her words are consistent in action and progress. The leader is therefore accountable for himself or herself, those he or she leads, and the result of his or her actions. Randy Conley states, "One of the quickest ways to erode trust is by not following through on commitments. Conversely, leaders who do what they say they're going to do earn a reputation as being consistent and

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[34] Conley.

[35] Hill and Lineback.

trustworthy."[36] In a practical sense, dependability manifests itself in leaders' ability to "be organized in such a way that they are able to follow through on commitments, be on time for appointments and meetings, and get back to people in a timely fashion."[37] Such dependable leaders "also hold themselves and others accountable for following through on commitments and taking responsibility for the outcomes of their work."[38]

As this chapter has discussed and explored, a leader's need for relationship is no different from that of a follower. However, the complexities and tensions associated with a leader's relationships increase the hardship for a leader to obtain them. The complexities and tensions of leadership become the arena of issue for relationship. Therefore, the response to leadership complexity and tension, not the absence of it, results in positive or negative relationships for a leader.

A poor response to leadership tensions results in poor relationships. A leader cannot control the possibility or sometimes the present circumstances that results in a negative environment in which to lead. However, he or she does have the power of choosing how to handle the negative environment and whether it affects him or her relationally. The relational responses of anger, avoidance, and fear are always within the control of the leader. These negative responses lead to negative outcomes, resulting in poor leaders and relationships.

A good or healthy response to leadership tensions results in good or healthy relationships. As previously stated, a leader cannot always control the existence of a

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[36] Conley.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

negative environment, but he or she can control himself or herself. The response, not the environment, is the key to healthy and good relationships. As presented in this chapter, good relational response results in a leader's resilience, endurance, and character. The framework in which to facilitate such results emerges from a leader's ability to engender and develop trust from others. Trust is built through a leader's ability, believability, connectibility, and dependability.

The essence is that, although tension is a reality in the life of a leader, it does not have to negatively affect the quality and health of a leader's relationships. The quality of a leader's relationships and the meeting of a leader's relational needs are not a result of external activity but of the leader's internal processing. How the leader manages the tension of leading determines how he or she manages his or her relationships as well.

The next chapter will explore the principles for successful management of leadership tension. It will offer principles that facilitate a positive management of leadership tension and discuss how these principles benefit leaders.

CHAPTER 7

PRINCIPLES FOR THE SUCCESSFUL MANAGEMENT
OF LEADERSHIP TENSION

The chapter will look at the principles for the successful management of leadership tension. It will explain and explore how the understanding and use of these principles work within the context of the management of leadership tension. It will give insight to the benefits of each given principle.

It is predicated on the understanding of insights, definitions, and conclusions formed from previous chapters and will build on the basis of these ideas. The support will sometimes offer a counter perspective to allow for a dissenting voice and opinion. There is also an understanding that, due to human interaction with the material presented, the following is not an exact science but rational conclusions drawn from observable principles.

The principles given for the successful management of leadership tension are provided as a framework, giving a leader the basics of how to allow the use of leadership tension to work for and not against him or her. The framework is given as a tool to demonstrate the practical fundamentals of how to apply the previous six chapters. It is also an attempt to make the material applicable to the everyday leadership issues that are faced by a managing leader.

The principles that will be discussed are as follows: failing forward, power of community, liberating control, focus on strengths, and healthy self-identity through the use of boundaries. Each of these will be defined and developed. Also, corresponding

examples of use will be provided, as well as acknowledgement of variables of the given principles.

A fictional narrative will grow and develop as this chapter continues. It will serve as an unfolding example of each principle and how to apply it. Although the narrative is fictitious, it is realistic and based on real-world experiences. Due to the ministry nature of the doctorate, the example will involve a local church context, pastor, board, and leadership.

Failing Forward

The first principle is failing forward. Failure is something that every person faces and that every leader will face more than once on his or her respective journey. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *failure* as the "lack of success; the neglect or omission of expected or required action; the action or state of not functioning."[1] Every leader has experienced a lack of success with intentional or unintentional neglect of a responsibility that results in an inoperable situation.

Why is failure so common in the life of a leader? How does it work to benefit the leader and the organization he or she leads? Failure is common even for highly compensated CEOs. For example, in the last decade, 38 percent of CEOs from the top five hundred companies with the highest-paid executive officers were either fired from their positions or terminated on the grounds of unethical behavior.[2] Failure is common in

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[1] Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "failure," accessed December 27, 2017, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/failure.

[2] Sarah Anderson, Scott Klinger, and Sam Pizzigati, "Bailed Out, Booted, Busted: A 20-Year Review of America's Top-Paid CEOs," *Executive Excess*, The Institute for Policy Studies, August 28, 2013, accessed December 27, 2017, http://www.ips-dc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/EE13-FINAL.pdf; David L. DeVries, "Executive Selection: Advances but No Progress," *Issues & Observations* 12 (1992): 1–5.

leader's life. However, its consequences are manageable and can be helpful if a leader leans into them and does not run from failure. The momentum of failing can propel him or her toward a given goal or aspiration. Dr. John C. Maxwell frames failure as an asset instead of a liability: "The more you do, the more you fail, the more you learn. The more you learn, the better you get."[3]

Leaders of all shapes and sizes face failure and encounter it from time to time; however, it can be helpful. For instance, consider a failed meeting or initiative. The new senior pastor of Community Church, who is in his first position, learns the valuable lesson that leadership is more than a title when he chairs his first board meeting full of vision and passion, only to be upstaged or stopped by a senior board member who is the "influencer." The senior board member does not like or endorse the senior pastor's new vision and uses his influence to slow or stop it. In that moment, the senior pastor must decide how to handle the tension arising from the failure of the presentation of his new vision. His options are (1) to ignore the senior board member and his influence and try to press forward with the vision without support, or (2) acknowledge the tension of difference, self-reflect on personal responsibility, seek to understand, and work through the given influence of the senior board member in the meeting. The leader can grow from the failed initiative by not avoiding or ignoring the tension but seeking to understand the dynamics of influence on the board and the board member himself. The meeting or initiative has not failed and died; rather, it has allowed the leader and his or her plan to fail forward to be refined and presented in a future meeting or in a different fashion.

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[3] John C. Maxwell, *Failing Forward: Turning Mistakes into Stepping Stones for Success* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 141.

Failure truly occurs only when the leader refuses to learn from the tension. Denis Waitley states, "It has been said that failure should be our teacher, not our undertaker. Failure is delay, not defeat. It is a temporary detour, not a dead-end. Failure is something we can avoid only by saying nothing, doing nothing, and being nothing."[4] By refusing to learn from the tension, the leader sets himself or herself up for future failure.

Some would say that the above scenario is an oversimplified version of the facts and that use of failure is more intricate and harrowing than the example shows. That would be true in the simplification of the scenario. However, the example presents a far-too-common beginner's mistake that can lead to hubris and arrogance, not an oversimplification of the incident. Although leadership is not easy, it is far more simplistic than often regarded.

Failing forward requires the leader to be mindful of several ideas. First is the ability to laugh at one's own leadership. Such a degree of humor is supported by scientific research and data: "Affiliative, self-enhancing, and moderate self-defeating humorous approaches can be considered as positive humor styles since they are positively related with psychological well-being, self-esteem, intimacy, and relationship satisfaction (Martin et al., 2003)."[5] Second is the ability to have and retain perspective, not only by the leader but also by the followers. When tension is present in leadership, it is easy to react or avoid, yet neither is helpful. Instead, perspective helps the leader stay in the tension and understand before moving forward. Third is the ability to self-reflect and

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[4] Denis Waitley, *The Psychology of Motivation* (Niles, IL: Nightingale-Conant, 1997).

[5] Rod A. Martin et al., "Individual Differences in Uses of Humor and Their Relation to Psychological Well-Being: Development of the Humor Style Questionnaires," *Journal of Research in Personality* 37, no. 1 (2003): 48–75.

analyze with objectivity the voices of oneself and others. This allows the leader to get maximum growth from the failure and not to repeat it. Last is the ability to roll with the failure. It is a commitment not to quit but to learn from the failure. The commitment ensures future growth and forward progress in one's leadership.

Power of Community

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *community* as "a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common; a group of people living together and practicing common ownership."[6] The ability to understand and harness community's power has unlimited potential for growth and the successful navigation of the management of leadership tension.

Community in the life of a leader is about relationships—not one but many. It is especially crucial in the dynamic relationship between leader and follower. Dr. V. J. Bentz "catalogued the themes associated with failure (e.g., playing politics, moodiness, dishonesty) and concluded that the failed executives had an overriding personality defect or character flaw that alienated their subordinates and prevented them from building a team."[7] For community to be a realized value in the life of a leader, he or she must recognize its existence, view it as a value, and be vulnerable to experience its resources and allow the journey of community to shape and energize him or her. All these actions

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[6] Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "community," accessed December 27, 2017, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/community.

[7] Robert Hogan, Gordon J. Curphy, and Joyce Hogan, "What We Know About Leadership: Effectiveness and Personality," *American Psychologist* (June 1994): 15, accessed December 28, 2017, http://www.davidwoollardhr.co.uk/uploads/news-documents/10-2-12-What20We20Know20About 20Leadership.pdf; V. J. Bentz, "A View from the Top: A Thirty-Year Perspective of Research Devoted to Discovery, Description, and Prediction of Executive Behavior" (paper presented at the 93rd annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles, CA, August 1985).

are not necessarily sequential in nature, nor are they all experienced simultaneously. Rather, valuing community is a journey a leader encounters and benefits from through experiences and openness.

Before exploring the beneficial actions of community, it is important to give a narrative context to the material to be discussed. The dissertation has spent much time on the darker side of the absence of community in a leader's life, especially a ministry leader. Chapter 1 introduced relational hurt and its negative effects of pain, depression, criticism, avoidance, and indifference, and chapter 2 explored, developed, and documented the negative. When leadership tension is not successfully managed or productively channeled, it leads to a reduction of the leader. However, this chapter and narrative will explore the opposite perspective. Here, the leader faces the same tension but allows the potential negative to benefit himself or herself as a leader.

In the continuing narrative, the new pastor of Community Church has experienced a three-year run of success and growth. Yet in year four, growth is slowing, criticism is growing, attendance is plateauing, staff is departing, and the pastor is unable to figure out why. The tension of leadership begins to present itself personally ("Can I do this? Am I qualified?"), organizationally ("Have I reached my leadership lid here, or has the church or the geographical area reached a saturation point?"), and collegially ("What will my ministry friends think of me? Those leading fewer will think I should be grateful; those leading more will say, 'Why can he not keep up with us?'"). Here, the pastor faces two choices: ignore and deflect the tension or acknowledge the tension's existence and seek help from the community of fellow pastors and leaders that surrounds him or her. The first option leads to the leader's reduction as explored in chapter 2. However, the second

option grows or develops the leader by allowing the management of leadership tension to expand through the relational benefit of community.

The Bible speaks much about the power of community; this concept was biblically demonstrated in chapter 4, "A Biblical Basis of Leadership Tension." However, for context to the subject at hand, it is fitting to give reference to humanity's basic need for community. In the beginning at Creation, God himself states, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him" (Gen. 2:18, NKJV). King Solomon says, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up" (Eccles. 4:9–10, NKJV).

The value of community is also emphasized in the New Testament. Jesus instructs that his power is present in community: "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven" (Matt. 18:19, NKJV). The New Testament church is built upon community. "Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:46–47, NIV). Paul teaches that Christ followers exist only in the context of community: "For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another" (Rom. 12:4–5, NKJV). Lastly, believers are instructed to practice community until the end. "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but

exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" (Heb. 10:24–25, NKJV).

For a leader to positively manage leadership tension in a way that allows him or her to harness the power of community, the leader must first recognize the existence of community. A Christian leader can acknowledge the biblical precedent of community yet deny its existence in his or her world. "It is ironic that the role of pastor can de-humanize the pastor. The pastor may envision that he or she has less need for care or support, yet pastors may require much support given the demands and stressors of pastoring. The pastor at core is no different than people in the congregation."[8]

The existence of community appears rather simple in the equation. However, it requires a leader to identify personal inadequacies and expose himself or herself to a level of relational vulnerability that is often uncomfortable.

> Though clergy desire and need friendships (Eckart & Goldsmith, 1984), many have difficulty forming close relationships outside their immediate family because they perceive themselves to be "put on a pedestal" (viewed as paragons of Christian virtue) and "boxed in" by parishioners' expectations of ways pastors should behave (Blackbird & Wright, 1985). These expectations can have an isolating effect. For example, a pastor having a difficult day may be expected to pray about it, whereas a surgeon may have a drink or two with his coworkers. Moreover, parishioners may disapprove of pastors who form exclusionary or special relationships with congregation members (Blackbird & Wright, 1985). As a result, clergy sometimes experience relationships that lack depth and intimacy (Blackbird & Wright, 1985; citing Perlman & Paplau, 1981).[9]

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[8] David Pooler, "Pastors and Congregations at Risk: Insights from Role Identity Theory," *Pastoral Psychology* 60, no. 5 (2011): 705–712, accessed December 5, 2017, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, EBSCOhost.

[9] Mark R. McMinn et al., "Care for Pastors: Learning from Clergy and Their Spouses." *Faculty Publications—Grad School of Clinical Psychology*, paper 152 (2005): 5, accessed December 5, 2017, http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1197&context=gscp_fac.

Yet vulnerability opens the door of community where the leader can share the burden of tension, allowing it to push him or her to receive help rather than to flounder or drown in pain.

The second need is for the leader to value the potential positive input and wisdom that relationship community brings. Here, the leader identifies the present and potential relationships around him or her. "However, the only way to honestly assess where you stand in terms of others' perceptions is to ask for candid input. A leader should 'always have someone who can tell the emperor that he has no clothes.' So, ask those closest to you. Be open to what you learn and do not be surprised if employees say they simply do not know."[10]

Usually, what is needed to accomplish the mission is found in proximity or is connected to a leader's sphere of existence, although it may not be immediately apparent. The aforementioned research also leads to the deduction that community is based upon mutual benefit. Such mutual benefit is based upon an ideology and action that a leader needs to invest in and develop relationships without seeking anything from fellow leaders.

Identification and realization of community and its power in the leader's life open the door to unlimited resources necessary for him or her to find answers to the tension that produces questions and issues in his or her situation. Dr. Steve Graves illustrates the power of community in concert with leadership:

> In the Book of Acts, when the early church was beginning to explode with growth, one of the first things the church did was to identify some new leaders,

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[10] Linda Klebe Treviño, Laura Pincus Hartman, and Michael Brown, "Moral Person and Moral Manager: How Executives Develop a Reputation for Ethical Leadership," *California Management Review* 42, no. 4 (Summer 2000): 140, accessed December 14, 2017, https://doi.org/10.2307/41166057.

delegate duties, and structure for growth (see Acts 6 for this story). This is also why the apostle Paul tells the Corinthian church that each individual must identify his/her spiritual gift and then use that gift to uplift the church body—so that everyone wasn't chasing down the same part in the play.[11]

In conclusion, community is a powerful and relationally unlimited resource to any leader. The key is to acknowledge its existence and run to it, not away from its power, when seeking to manage the demands of leadership tension. When leadership tension arises, the leader must unlock community's benefits by being humble, listening after inquiring, and learning to benefit from those who have walked before and not to suffer the same mistakes.

Liberating Control

The idea of liberating control can occur only if a leader has first committed himself or herself to the idea of the power of community. For a leader to lead, he or she must have a great deal of self-awareness that leads to a realistic assessment of personal strengths and weaknesses. In the discovery of his or her individual abilities, the leader has the opportunity to focus on what actually matters and to discard or delegate what is nonessential to his or her leadership. The process begins with an honest, personal assessment of what the leader should hold and concludes with what the leader should release. Such a process is the journey of liberating control.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *control* as "the power to influence or direct people's behavior or the course of events; the restriction of an activity, tendency, or

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[11] Steve Graves, "Are You Swimming at the Right Beach?" accessed December 8, 2017, http://stephenrgraves.com/articles/read/beach/.

phenomenon; the restriction of an activity, tendency, or phenomenon."[12] Liberating

control should not lead to absenteeism or inactivity over a leader's responsibilities but to

a release of nonessential functions while retaining the responsibility of leadership.

Liberating control becomes crucial in times of leadership tension, either internal or

external. Such a mind-set allows the leader to stay focused on the essentials while

releasing the activity that does not drive net missional achievement for the leader or the

organization he or she leads.

The practice of liberating control is difficult for most leaders to achieve because it

is counterintuitive to the nature of a leader. In many settings, the practice of liberating

control in the life of a leader could be viewed as "servant leadership." Sen Sendjaya and

Brian Cooper state that servant leadership "starts with the internal orientation of the

leader, which implies that, contrary to the natural inclination of leaders to get ahead,

servant leaders exhibit a readiness to renounce the superior status attached to leadership

and embrace greatness by way of servanthood."[13] Dr. Glenn Williams explains the

practical use of servant leadership:

> This does not mean that they neglect or abdicate their responsibilities as leaders
> but rather recognize the fundamental importance of people being fulfilled by the
> use of their gifts and experience and empowered in their respective roles that
> directly and indirectly generate a corporate commitment to meeting the objectives
> of the organization. It creates a type of self-perpetuating empowerment vortex
> where organizational growth and efficiency become a long-term byproduct of the
> *followers'* growth. … The focus is on empowering followers to meet
> organizational objectives instead of the followers' development. It is therefore
> easy to understand how some leaders consider the concept of servant-leadership
> to be an oxymoron in that its service-orientation and follower-centric approach is

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[12] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "control," accessed December 28, 2017, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/control.

[13] Sen Sendjaya and Brian Cooper, "Servant Leadership Behaviour Scale: A Hierarchical Model and Test of Construct Validity," *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 20, no. 3 (2011): 417.

in stark contrast to the more traditional, rules-based, hierarchical style of leadership. Robert Greenleaf, long regarded as the founder of the servant-leadership paradigm, states this is largely due to the problem "that *serve* and *lead* are overused words with negative connotations." In practice, it is dangerous to divorce the two words or try and weight them as two distinct constructs. As Fons Trompennars and Ed Voerman state, "The secret of the servant-leader lies in the hyphen between 'servant' and 'leader.' The hyphen represents the essence." While Greenleaf argues that the leader needs more than inspiration to be an effective leader, I would suggest that the *follower* also needs more than merely the leader to be inspired. The leader may initiate direction, bring ideas and allocate resources, but it is the leader's capacity and ability to utilize the ideas and resources of the followers and then share in the risk of failure or the chance of success instead of blaming the followers when failure results, or taking the credit when success is achieved. Of course, in order to utilize the ideas and resources of others, the leader must first be able to listen and respect, because "true listening builds strength in other people." Essentially this becomes a necessary process for identifying a commonly accepted frame of reference from which the leader and followers are operating, and from which similarities become the focal point rather than the issues that have the potential to divide. Again, this cannot occur unless the leader chooses to use authority to initiate this process, and in doing so subordinate the ego and power inherent within the position he or she holds.[14]

In perspective, the definition of leadership consists of the leader's focus not being about the leader but about those he or she is called to lead. Leadership is about the change he or she is called to bring about; it is not about the person (leader). Servant leadership becomes the practice to fulfill a leader's need to liberate control.

A principle of organizational and personal growth is that a leader must be willing to "give up to go up"[15] A growing organization will regularly demand that the leader make a choice to release control to others so as not to cap or bottleneck the organization. If the leader refuses, growth slows or stops, because an organization cannot grow beyond the capacity of the leader.

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[14] Glenn A. Williams, "Does the Presence or Absence of Virtues Define the Character of a Leader and Impact Performance?" (DMin diss., George Fox University, 2013), 31–32, accessed November 1, 2017, http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1062&context=dmin.

[15] Maxwell, *21 Irrefutable Laws*, 222.

Nevertheless, a number of leaders fail for personal rather than structural or economic reasons. They may be skilled in a particular area, such as accounting, engineering, or sales. They fail because they can no longer rely solely on their own skills and effort; that is, they have been promoted into positions that require them to work through others to be successful. Because they are unable to build a team, their management careers come to a halt. Derailment is curiously understudied given the frequency with which it occurs.[16]

The pastor planted Community Church in a growing suburban environment full of young families and opportunity. The pastor began Community Church with a core group of fifty in a new local elementary school. As the church expanded, it quickly outgrew the elementary school and moved to the high school auditorium, seeing hundreds of attendees each weekend. The church plant has taken root and is growing rapidly, demanding more from the pastor. At first, because of the newness of the organization, a leadership adrenaline was present. However, over time and with continued growth, the church has quickly superseded the ability and capacity of one leader. Although the pastor has navigated rookie failures well and has learned the power of community, he finds himself with a crucial decision: hold power and control or release control to others. If the pastor holds onto power and control, the church growth will begin to slow and plateau. However, if the pastor releases control to other leaders whose capacity may even be greater than his in a particular field of expertise, the church will continue its growth. Apple founder Steve Jobs directly explains the dynamic. "We hired truly great people and gave them the room to do great work. A lot of companies … hire people to tell them what to do. We hire people to tell *us* what to do. We figure we're paying them all this money; their job is to figure out what to do and tell us."[17] Jobs further describes his management

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[16] Hogan, Curphy, and Hogan, 15.

[17] Steve Jobs, interview by Terry Gross, *Fresh Air*, NPR radio, 1996, audio 26:30–31:05.

philosophy as follows: "The management philosophy here really is to give people enough rope to hang themselves. We hire people to tell us what to do. That's what we pay them for."[18]

Liberating control involves variables; church growth is not so pragmatically simple. The variables include, but are not limited to, the following: size of community, facilities, and financial strength where the church is planted; quality of support leaders surrounding the pastor; amount of finances to hire additional support leaders; the ability of support leaders to follow the pastor's example of liberating control; and unknown external limitations that threaten the existence of any organization.

Liberating control is a process that begins with the senior leader. The process begins and is based upon, first, a fair and accurate assessment of a senior leader's strengths and weaknesses. Second is the ability to identify and attract quality leaders to join the senior leader. Third is the senior leader's ability to identify and develop leaders that surround him or her. The last aspect is elementary but essential: the senior leader's ability and timing to liberate control to other leaders.

Focus on Strengths

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *strength* as "the quality or state of being physically strong; the capacity of an object or substance to withstand great force or pressure; a good or beneficial quality or attribute of a person or thing."[19] From a

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[18] "Apple's Steven P. Jobs Talks to IW," *InfoWorld*, March 8, 1982, 15.

[19] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "strength," accessed December 29, 2017, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/strength.

leadership perspective, Timothy Hodges and Donald Clifton of The Gallup Organization

exhaustively define *strength(s)* as follows:

> A strength is the ability to provide consistent, near-perfect performance in a given activity. The key to building a strength is to first identify your dominant themes of talent, then to discover your specific talents within those themes, and to lastly refine them with knowledge and skills. Talents are naturally recurring patterns of thought, feeling, or behavior that can be productively applied. One of the three "raw materials" used in strengths building, talent naturally exists within you, while skills and knowledge must be acquired.[20]

Every leader has a unique and particular set of strengths that form the basis of his

or her leadership. He or she must understand, develop, and operate that set of strengths

and minimize weaknesses. Peter Drucker supports this perspective: "Most people think

they know what they are good at. They are usually wrong. More often, people know what

they are not good at—and even then more people are wrong than right. And yet, a person

can perform only from strength. One cannot build performance on weaknesses, let alone

on something one cannot do at all."[21] The utilization of these strengths allows a leader to

excel, especially in times of tension. In actuality, times of tension allow a leader's

strengths to be displayed. Author and CEO Devora Zack states: "Successful leadership

means working with, rather than fighting against, your natural strengths. The only way to

be a successful manager is by understanding, accepting, and capitalizing on your unique

style. "[22] Zack recommends, "Do what is authentic for you. Accept and work with your

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[20] Timothy D. Hodges and Donald O. Clifton, "Strengths-Based Development in Practice," in *Positive Psychology in Practice*, eds. P. Alex Linley and Stephen Joseph (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2004), 257.

[21] Peter F. Drucker, "Managing Oneself," *Harvard Business Review*, January 2005, 1, accessed November 20, 2017, http://www.img.kerala.gov.in/docs/downloads/managingself.pdf.

[22] Devora Zack, "Lead from Your Strengths," *T+D* 67, no. 2 (February 2013): 72–73, accessed December 14, 2017, Professional Development Collection, EBSCOhost.

natural temperament. Your inherent strengths are your leadership assets. Reframe your previously perceived leadership liabilities into your best assets rather than attempting to fit yourself into a role never intended for you in the first place."[23]

A leader's internal tendencies are to focus on his or her weaknesses, but this proves to be a waste of time and energy. Author and leadership expert on strengths Marcus Buckingham emphasizes a leader's need to focus on strengths and minimize weaknesses: "People don't change that much. Don't waste time trying to put in what was left out. Try to draw out what was left in. That is hard enough"[24] A leader should focus on his or her strengths all the more as leadership tension arises.

Although the pastor of Community Church has effectively navigated the first principles of failing forward, the power of community, and liberated control, he finds himself facing another challenge. As the church has grown and the staff has developed, the church now needs to build a permanent location. The move will involve land acquisition, new construction of a facility, multiple millions of dollars in fund-raising, and the relocation of Community Church to her new home. All of these actions were not covered in the pastor's ministerial training and education. He finds himself at a place where the focus of his strengths is tested. Will he spend his time, energy, and focus on things that are beyond his strength and are his weaknesses? Or will he focus on his strengths and delegate these new responsibilities to those more qualified?

These are the questions and temptations that create leadership tensions in local church arenas. In reality, when a leader gets beyond the boundaries of his or her

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[23] Ibid.

[24] Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman, *First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 57.

strengths, their value and contribution diminish. "Successful leadership means working with, rather than fighting against, your natural strengths. The only way to be a successful manager is by understanding, accepting, and capitalizing on your unique style."[25] The key is for the leader to work within the parameters of his or her natural giftings and be authentic in leadership style and substance. "Do what is authentic for you. Accept and work with your natural temperament. Your inherent strengths are your leadership assets. Reframe your previously perceived leadership liabilities into your best assets rather than attempting to fit yourself into a role never intended for you in the first place."[26]

Some have a broad set of abilities that allow for the aforementioned scenario to be within the realm of their strengths, thereby allowing them to stay with their focus and not divert. Others will argue that denominational structures may facilitate such examples, which may also be true. However, for every leader there is a set of circumstances that tempt to divert his or her focus from personal strengths; herein lies the potential for loss.

There are some basic fundamentals for focusing on personal strengths. Hodges and Clifton of The Gallup Organization outline the process:

> At the individual level, strengths-based development involves three stages: Identification of talent, integration into how one views himself or herself, and behavioral change (Clifton & Harter, 2003). This process involves many steps, including identifying things done at excellence, claiming them as strong points, naming them, sharing them with others, consciously thinking about how performance can be maximized if behaviors and talents are aligned, adding necessary knowledge and skills, and actively using the talents whenever possible.[27]

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[25] Zack, 72–73.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Hodges and Clifton, 258.

Thus, according to Hodges and Clifton, first a leader must identify his or her strengths. Second, the leader must spend the majority of time within the arena of his or her strength. Third, the leader must beware of the temptation to move beyond his or her strengths, especially in times of tension caused by a new opportunity or problem. Additionally, based upon the given research of this dissertation, the leader should continue to recruit and delegate his or her weak areas to others who hold strengths in those particular disciplines. Remember that this is not a sign of weakness but rather of strength on the leader's part.

Healthy Self-Identity

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *self-identity* as "the perception or recognition of one's characteristics as a particular individual, especially in relation to social context."[28] Self-identity is of itself neither healthy nor unhealthy; rather, it is neutral. However, its effects for positive or negative are far from neutral. The way an individual views himself or herself definitely affects him or her, but as a leader the effect is much greater, because it extends to the people he or she leads. Based on common conclusions and understandings, if a leader's self-identity is healthy, then the people he or she leads will benefit from the health. Conversely, if a leader's self-identity is unhealthy, then the people he or she leads will suffer at some level. No leader leads in a vacuum; what the leader does and thinks indeed affects those he or she leads.

To offer depth, support, and construction of the value and benefit of self-identity, the Commonwealth of Australia, in partnership with the Queensland University of

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[28] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "self-identity," accessed December 29, 2017, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/self-identity.

Technology, studied the effect of healthy self-identity on education, in particular, but with implications for the population as a whole. The study concluded that several major dominant characteristics are involved in the formation and outcome of healthy self-identity.

First, healthy self-identity contains dual concerns of "both who we are, and what we think of who we are. That is, self-identity has both a knowledge and an evaluative component (Tajfel, 1982; Berry, in press)."[29] The study explains these two components as follows: "The knowledge component (often referred to as self-concept) pertains to the total set of perceptions one has of oneself. The evaluative component (usually referred to as self-esteem) is the value judgment a person places on him or herself. It is how good a person thinks he or she is (Pedersen, 1994)."[30] The essence is that self-identity can produce positive or negative results in an individual and therefore in a leader as well.

Second, the study defines healthy self-identity as having a "multidimensional nature—that is, there can be no single conceptualization of self that encapsulates one's total being."[31] "Baumeister and Muraven (1996) described [self-]identity as 'a set of meaningful definitions that are ascribed or attached to the self, including social roles, reputation, a structure of values and priorities, and a conception of one's potentiality.'"[32] In adolescence the research shows a tension and possible dichotomy between a student

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[29] Queensland University of Technology, "Positive Self-Identity for Indigenous Students and Its Relationship to School Outcomes," Commonwealth of Australia, July 2000, 4, accessed December 29, 2017, http://www.aboriginalstudies.com.au/content/uploads/2012/07/2000-Purdie-etalDETYA-Self-Identity-and-Outcomes.pdf.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid., 4–5.

peer's (workplace colleague's) relational view and a parental view (family/personal) and how each affects or forms self-identity. In a mature or non-adolescence perspective, these views have the same dynamic, although instead of forming self-identity as in adolescence, they now build upon it. Still, the net cause and effect are the same in dynamic.

The third characteristic is the role of external influences. The volume and diversity of these influences are key in shaping and keeping self-identity, regardless of age or position. "Although identity can be conceptualized as a sense of self that derives from private and personal factors, it also derives from public and social experiences (Hudspith & Williams, 1994)."[33] Note that self-identity is not static in nature but kinetic. As an individual grows and develops, so does his or her self-identity. "Finally, because both personal characteristics (such as physical appearance) and context are constantly changing, self-identity is also generally conceived of as a dynamic rather than as a fixed phenomenon; it is something that is always in process and constantly being formed (Groome & Edwardson, 1996; Grotevant, 1987)."[34]

The pastor of Community Church has successfully planted and launched the church while failing forward through rookie mistakes and missteps. He has embraced the power of community in his life with meaningful and wise, life-giving relationships that empower him and his leadership. He has also perfected the art of delegation and empowerment by liberating control to the leaders in Community Church and by staying focused on his strengths while allowing others to operate in theirs. He is now a successful

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[33] Ibid., 5.

[34] Ibid.

and tenured leader and pastor, yet the greatest tension lies before him. It is not an external

tension of leadership, congregation, or expansion but the tension of leading himself. The

greatest person to lead is oneself. "History's great achievers—a Napoléon, a da Vinci, a

Mozart—have always managed themselves. That, in large measure, is what makes them

great achievers."[35] Self-management becomes a determining factor in the leader's health

or lack thereof. It is also a principle born of character and virtue.

Again, the greatest person to lead is oneself. As discussed previously in this

chapter, the leadership of self emerges from self-identity.

> It's up to you to carve out your place, to know when to change course, and to
> keep yourself engaged and productive during a work life that may span some 50
> years. To do those things well, you'll need to cultivate a deep understanding of
> yourself—not only what your strengths and weaknesses are but also how you
> learn, how you work with others, what your values are, and where you can make
> the greatest contribution. Because only when you operate from strengths can you
> achieve true excellence.[36]

The self-identity of any leader is a personal tension that will always be managed

because it is never static. "We will have to learn to develop ourselves. We will have to

place ourselves where we can make the greatest contribution. And we will have to stay

mentally alert and engaged during a 50-year working life, which means knowing how and

when to change the work we do."[37]

Individuals hold varying views on the value or significance of self-identity, and

some believe the subject is overdone. However, when Erik Erikson's definition and view

on the subject is integrated with the conversation, the health of the person or leader

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[35] Drucker, "Managing Oneself," 1.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

becomes the unifying factor. Erikson stated, "An identity is rooted in the very core of one's being, involves being true to oneself in action, and is associated with respect for one's understanding of reality."[38] Evaluating and reviewing the statics of ministerial attrition and the number of clergy being disqualified for misconduct begs the question of health. Health is not something that can be faked or manipulated for a long period of time; it originates in an individual's being or person. Health stems from character and virtue.

> According to Bass and Bass (2008, p. 219), "character of a leader involves his or her ethical and moral beliefs, intentions and behaviors." Bass and Bass further suggest that leader character is linked to virtuous traits such as integrity, justice and fairness. In their definition, we can see that character is defined as a disposition or trait, a way of thinking, being guided by a set of rules or principles, and a behavior or action.[39]

As this chapter has explored and endeavored to demonstrate, a given leader's health and healthy self-identity are affected either positively or negatively by the management of leadership tension. Leadership tension is inevitable, but the management of it makes the difference. From the management of such tension, leaders rise and thrive or explode or implode. When a leader successfully harnesses the tension, an originating formation of character develops virtues in his or her life and leadership. However, just as the fruit of the Spirit that the apostle Paul references to the church in Galatia must be developed and is not automatic in the life of a Christ follower, so leadership character

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[38] Erik Erikson, *Insight and Responsibility* (New York: Norton, 1964), quoted in Karl Aquino and Americus Reed II, "The Self-Importance of Moral Identity," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 83, no. 6 (December 2002): 1424, accessed December 14, 2017, PsycARTICLES, EBSCOhost.

[39] Sean Timothy Hannah and Bruce Avolio, "The Locus of Leader Character," *US Army Research*, paper 264, *The Leadership Quarterly* 22 (2011): 979, accessed December 29, 2017, http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1263&context=usarmyresearch first page

develops in the life of the leader through the successful management of leadership tension.

The current chapter has sought to substantiate the benefits and characteristics that form through the successful management of leadership tension, as well as how these principles are developed and applied in the life of a leader, especially a ministerial leader. The work has by no means been exhaustive but has sought to give an adequate platform of understanding from which to form an educated and applicable point of view.

Note that the benefits given are by no means chronologically progressive in that a leader must experience or master one over the other; rather, the fruit of character will form and produce when a leader navigates the inherent tension that accompanies leadership. The principles and benefits discussed (failing forward, power of community, liberating control, focus on strengths, and healthy self-identity through the use of boundaries) serve as points of hope and inspiration to a leader that his or her work, regardless of the leadership arena, is not in vain but has life-producing value.

A leader should understand and know that the work of leadership he or she performs for a group of people, organization, or church has benefit not just for the people whom he or she services and ministers to but also for himself or herself. The accompanying leadership tension is not a trial only for the sake and benefit of others but for himself or herself as well. Such a perspective of the aforementioned principles and benefits allows the leader to see the "win-win" scenario that will help focus and energize him or her. It assures the leader that his or her work is not in vain or temporary; rather, it serves a higher purpose and benefits the leader as well as the people he or she serves.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this dissertation was to research how the presence and management of leadership tension affects leaders and the organizations they lead. As stated in the introduction, tension is present in every part and aspect of the world. Therefore, it is present in leadership and the organizations individuals lead. What, then, is tension's effect on leaders and organizations? In the perspective of ministry, how does tension present itself, and how do leaders manage it? Does the managing of leadership tension have a positive or productive value? Are the presence and management of leadership tension new issues? Or do the existence and management of leadership tension have a biblical and historical precedence? If so, how does a person translate that truth into the twenty-first century? These are the questions and findings that informed the writing of the dissertation.

In ministry, the attrition rates of clergy continue to climb, the complexity of issues faced by clergy continue to increase, and the frustration and solitude that exist do not diminish. These observations and findings from almost twenty-five years of full-time service as a credentialed minister fueled a quest to find answers to these questions. The findings of the dissertation suggest and support the thesis that, not only does leadership tension exist, but it also can actually help and not hinder leaders and their organizations if it is managed correctly. This is true in any leadership environment, including ministry.

Chapter 1 presents the basis for the dissertation by defining leadership tension and its path to accelerate or decelerate one's leadership. Leadership produces tension that, in turn, produces friction, which can produce pain and stress. At this point the leader has a choice: (1) allow the leadership tension to decelerate his or her leadership and/or

organization into hurt, depression, criticism, avoidance, and indifference; or (2) allow the leadership tension to accelerate his or her leadership and/or organization into growth, resilience, and leadership identity.

Chapter 2 investigates the pain caused by leadership tension. Although not all leadership tension produces pain, it is common. The chapter researches the causes of pain as a result of leadership tension. The common causes researched include stress, depression, criticism, relational hurt, betrayal, and departure.

Chapter 3 focuses on the response to leadership tension—the choice a leader makes when faced with tension. At this juncture, a leader responds in avoidance and apathy or resilience and growth. The findings are the power behind this decision, which is critical to how the tension affects the leader and his or her organization.

Chapter 4 explores the biblical basis of leadership tension and the management of it. The chapter focuses its scope on the New Testament church, with most of its collective recorded activities found in Acts. The findings of leadership tension and the need to effectively manage it are conclusive.

Chapter 5 examines how leadership tension and the management thereof affect the leader personally. It considers a leader's personal well-being. The chapter breaks the leader's well-being into four parts: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. The tension of leading does affect leaders, but how it affects them is based heavily on their personal perspective (positive or negative), which informs their choices about how they manage the tension. Again, this chapter shows that leadership tension is present and that the pivotal issue is the management of it.

Chapter 6 explores the positive and negative effects of leadership tension upon a leader's relationships. The chapter opens with the possible negative responses to tension of anger, avoidance, and fear. However, most of the chapter focuses on the positive results relationally. The positive results make the leader resilient and enduring, exhibiting character that produces relational health and longevity for the leader and the organization served.

The last chapter offers principles for how a leader can successfully manage leadership tension. Chapter 7 briefly researches the power of failure, community, delegation, natural strengths, and healthy self-identity. It also explains how a leader can leverage the aforementioned principles for his or her benefit.

We can conclude that leadership tension is real. Leadership tension can accelerate or decelerate a leader's performance and affect the progress of the organization served. The power to accelerate or decelerate tension's effect is a decision of the leader. Thus, leadership tension is neutral, but the power for good or bad is found in the management of it. The management of leadership tension is a choice of the leader, not of the organization or the individuals served. Therefore, regardless of leadership capacity or organizational size, any leader can effectively lead and manage in a manner that benefits not only himself or herself but also the individuals served.

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