

## William Tyler | Can Leadership Be Taught

- Okay, so welcome everyone to this tour which is outside of my series on France, which we'll resume tomorrow. I've been asked to speak on the question of "can leadership be taught?" Now that's a very interesting question for anyone who is still at work and is receiving or about to receive management training or indeed is giving out management training. But it's a particular interest to me as an educator and as an adult educator in specifically 'cause a lot of management training adult educators feel uncomfortable with simply because trainers tend to say, "This is the way to do it." While us adult educators say, "Well, what is your problem? How many answers can there be?" It's a different sort of approach.

Now I have written something which I think you've all received about can leadership be taught, and I'm going to use some of those paragraphs as headings as I go through this talk. My first paragraph read "Not until the 19th century was a serious effort made to train people for leadership roles." Unsurprisingly, this occurred mainly in military circles. Sandhurst in Britain and West Point in the States were both set up in 1802, but actually the Navy got there first, both in Britain and in America. That's not surprising because the Navy was the primary force for defence for all countries with a seaboard in the 19th century. But in fact, the Royal Navy in Britain established a naval academy as early as 1733. It's from that period on until we reached Trafalgar in 1805, which are the glory days of the Royal Navy, and they set up a naval academy at Portsmouth Dockyard to train officers for the Navy. In 1836, it became the Royal Naval College and School for Naval Architecture. Well, it had much opposition. You see, you got an appointment as an officer through contacts. I mean the word today will be networking. There are other less, there are other less, some salubrious words to use through patronage, family ties, cash or whatever. And there was a view that only gentlemen should be officers. And really we shouldn't train officers because our lads, our sons are born to lead. That was the view. And although they set up a training, you didn't have to do the training and most people did not do the training. For example, Nelson didn't. It was felt better and more advantageous to learn on the job. We say in English, learning from Nelly, learning on the job. King William IV, who served as a junior officer under Nelson in the Caribbean and was known as the Sailor King, was one of those that objected to training. And this is a quotation from William IV. "There is no place superior to the quarter deck of a British man of war for the education of a gentleman." In other words, learn from Nelly, learn from the others around you. Finally, the training of naval officers was removed to Dartmouth in 1905, shortly before World War I. In America, the first move was made as early as 1819. In 1819, a man called Commodore Arthur Sinclair was in charge of the Navy yard at Norfolk, Virginia. And he was very keen on the idea of having trained officers. And he opened a training

course on board a frigate in 1821, recruiting 40 or 15 midshipmen. That's the lowest rank in both the Royal Navy and the American Navy. But again, it was a voluntary thing. And it wasn't until 1845 that the United States Naval Academy was finally up and running. The Army, both in Britain, America, lagged behind all of that. And there were very specific reasons for that. In Britain, the reasons were class and money. If you were a young man who decided to go into the army or whose parents, father said, "You will go into the army," then you bought your way in, you bought a commission to become an officer, and the more money your father paid out for you, the better the regiment you were in. It sounds extraordinary. And once in, to get promotion, your family could buy that for you as well. It really wasn't the way to run any sort of army at all. But that's how we did it. And it wasn't until we established Sandhurst in 1802 that we really begin serious educational officers in the British Army. Although there had been courses run for the Royal Artillery and Engineers at Woolwich in London. And that had been set up in 1741. But it's really with the setting up of Sandhurst that we begin to see a change. It's also true that the 1802 is the... And again it was voluntary in England. Now in America, interestingly during Washington's presidency, Washington and most of his cabinet argue that we should train officers. We need to establish an officer training base because we are likely as this new nation to find threats from outside as well as internal threats from the indigenous population. But the Secretary of State opposed it and the Secretary of State won the argument and the Secretary of State was none other than Thomas Jefferson.

Now, Jefferson's argument against professional training is a very interesting one. He said, "Look, if we introduce professional training, we shall set up an officer class just like the British. And if we set up an officer class, we shall look no different than the British. And this is not the America that I think of where equality is unimportant. We do not want to establish in America a class system." Well, of course, as we all know, Jefferson becomes president and changes his view immediately. On becoming president, he established West Point in 1802. Why? Well, because he felt that without it, America would be, as I said before, and as Washington had argued, would be open to possible defeat from invading forces, and Jefferson's thinking of Mexico and Canada of course, as well as from sea. But he's also thinking of the problems of America expanding ever westwards. They needed an officer corps. So it's very interesting. It's always interesting to look at any sort of area of study and see the dates in which post-American Independence, America and Britain are pretty well shoulder to shoulder on the introduction. It isn't that anyone phoned up as it were, without a phone. Of course, in 1802, phoned up the States and said, "Look, we've got this wonderful idea of setting up Sandhurst or equivalently someone phoning from Washington saying, "Look, we've got this fantastic idea of an officer training corps." Of course, at West Point, it just naturally arose. Now 1802, of course not to forget is in the middle, nearly to the end, well not quite, but

in the middle of the war against Napoleon that although America wasn't involved in it, Jefferson was well aware of the potential of being involved in it. So I find that absolutely fascinating. It's not surprising that it is the military that first looked at training. Now I'm going to take you right back in time and I'll read you a paragraph from what I think you've all got. And it's on my blog anyhow.

"Although in the main, management courses are relatively modern, mid-20th century, analysis of leadership have been around for a very long time. Marcus Aurelius, Emperor of Rome has, in order to assess his own leadership, wrote a book of notes and observations. After his death in 180 CE, his jottings were published under the title 'Meditations.'" And as you all know, you can go into a bookstore anywhere, into a library anywhere and either purchase or borrow Marcus Aurelius's book on "Meditations." It is one of the most practical philosophical books you can come across about leadership.

Now, I'm sure that many of you listening to me were pushed through at the end of our, if you're my age, at the end of our professional lives, to do this thing about self-assessment. You had to put down all the things you've done wrong and a few things you've done right, and then somebody else would assess whether you've made an accurate oh, all of that. But Marcus Aurelius was doing this from his time as emperor from 161 to 180 CE. But Marcus Aurelius was more than an emperor. He was a stoic philosopher, an academic if you like. And he wrote this "Meditations" or what was later published as a book, "Meditations", because he was anxious to see if he was living up to the demands of being emperor that the stoics would want him or that stoic philosophy would want him to live up to. In the book, "Meditations", he begins with a long list of family, teachers and friends who helped make him the man that he became. He had of course no formal leadership training, but what he did have was informal training. You all know the phrase nature or nurture. Well, in his case by I think he was a natural leader, that's the first thing to say. Secondly, he improved or built on his natural leadership abilities through this early nurture that is by family, teachers and friends, but that was informal. And he writes this in his book. I can't read you all of the things that he says because it would take too long, but to give you a flavour, this is a flavour of some of the people he owes things to. "From my grandfather, Verus, I learned good morals and the government of my temper, from the reputation and remembrance, my father, modesty and a manly character. From my mother, piety and beneficence and abstinence, not only from evil deeds but even from evil thoughts and further simplicity in my way of living, far removed from the habits of the rich." That's what he says about his family. He goes on to say this, "From Rusticus, I received the impression that my character required improvement and..." He's one of his teachers. "And from him I learned not to be led astray to sophistic emulation, not to writing on speculative matters, not to delivering little hatery orations, nor to show myself up as a man who practised his much discipline or does benevolent acts in order to make a display and to

abstain from rhetoric and poetry and fine writing. And not to walk about in the house in my outdoor dress, nor to do other things of the kind. And to write letters with simplicity like the letter which Rusticus wrote from Sinuesssa to my mother. And with respect to those who've offended me by words or done me wrong, to be easy disposed to be pacified, and reconcile as soon as they have shown a readiness to be reconciled and to read carefully and not to be satisfied with a superficial understanding of a book nor hastily to give my ascent to those who talk over much. And I'm indebted to him for being acquainted with the discourses of Epictetus, which he communicated to me out of his own collection." Wonderful. We've had a change of prime minister today in Britain. I'm very tempted to send a copy of Marcus Aurelius's "Meditations" to Rishi Sunak. And maybe my American listeners will get a couple of copies in order to send to the presidential candidates in the next presidential election. Although if one is Trump, we know he would never read it cause he doesn't read books. But maybe you can find a picture version of Marcus Aurelius's "Meditations". But they are important. It's not religious and that's interesting. It isn't based upon religion, but some of the stoic philosophy was adopted both by Christianity, Islam and Judaism. So was this stoic philosophy, stoicism that marks Aurelius followed both intellectually and in practise as emperor, what was it, this? What was stoicism? Well, this is a little book I've got on stoic philosophy, just the short circuit this, it says this, "The most important development in Greek philosophy is called stoicism." And it goes on to say what it is. "Stoicism is characterised by the rejection of pleasure as the standard of human happiness and human felicity. Stoicism takes the position that the wise man, the good man, the philosopher is a man who lives in accordance with nature. He fears only abdicating his moral responsibility. He's not afraid of pain, he's not afraid of death, he's not afraid of poverty, he's not afraid of any of the vicissitudes of the human condition. He fears only that he should let himself down and that he should be less than a complete human being. Now I don't think anybody listening tonight, whether you're religious, what religion it is or whether you're not religious, would say a word against that. That's the ideal. And it's an ideal that was also taken up by Plato. And Plato had the concept of a philosopher king, and a philosopher king is exemplified in the life of Marcus Aurelius, an emperor and a stoic philosopher. And what does a philosopher king mean? Well, to Plato, the concept was explored in his book "The Republic", which was written long, long before Marcus Aurelius lived. It was written as early as 375 BCE. And Plato argued in "The Republic" that the ideal state, one which ensured the maximum possible happiness for all its citizens. Think about the beginnings of the United States, which ensured the maximum happiness possible for all its citizens, could only be brought to be into being by a ruler who possessed of absolute knowledge obtained through philosophical study. Hence a philosopher king. Socrates wrote, "Until philosophers are kings or the kings and princes of the world have the spirit and power of philosophy, cities will never have rest from their evils. No nor the

human race as I believe. And then only will this our state have a possibility of life and behold the light of day."

Now the trouble with that is philosopher kings are rather few on the ground, and in both a modern British and American and all the other countries that people are listening to me talking from, it's not possible. We don't have a system where one person is the supreme ruler, if you like, the ayatollah. We don't have that. So our chances of having a philosopher king-style prime minister or philosopher king-style president probably is unlikely to happen. I would argue from a British point of view that the nearest we have got in modern times to such a person was Churchill during the course of the Second World War. Americans, Canadians, Australians, some may have examples from their own countries, but it's an ideal.

Now, that's what philosophy is trying to say here, to work to an ideal. And that's what these management training and management assessments are that many of us have been through. The management assessment is not saying, "Oh William, you are absolutely fantastic principle." It is, William, where have you failed in this last 12 months? And then, having identified all the things you've failed at, what are you going to do about it?" is usually the question. And then you have to mount something about, "Oh, well I should go on the course. I should try and control my temper." All the things besides the course that Marcus Aurelius talks about. He looks into his soul, if you like, to see where he's failed. Now, I would argue that very few of us are honest enough with ourselves to do that. And if we are honest enough with ourselves to keep a reflective diary, which is in the fact what "Meditations" is, we're unlikely to want to express that to other people, particularly other people who have the ability to fire and hire us. So what did Marcus Aurelius say in his book about leadership itself? And it's really, again, I can only give you some examples 'cause we don't have time, but really it's not a long book and it's translated in many different ways in English that you can get your hands on. "It is the responsibility," wrote Marcus, "of leadership to work intelligently with what is given and not waste time fantasising about a world of flawless people and perfect choices." Isn't that true? How many of you have taken over the running of anything and thought, "My God, if I'd started from scratch, I had never appointed her or him or them or whatever." But you have to work with what you've got, says Marcus Aurelius. I think that's as good as your advice as you'll get from any very expensive management course in 2022. He says, "A real man doesn't give way to anger and discontent, and such a person has strength, courage and endurance. Unlike the angry and complaining, the nearer man comes to a calm mind, the closer he is to strength." Well, that's what they're saying in Britain today. Those who voted within the Conservative party for Rishi Sunak to become our prime minister. They talk about he's calm. He's calm in a crisis. Well, I think that's good advice as well. Marcus Aurelius, "No random actions, none, not based on underlying principles." So what are

you trying to achieve in this firm, in this hospital, in this school, in this whatever field of work you are in? Whenever you are about to find fault with someone, ask yourself the following question, "What fault of mine most nearly resembles the one I am about to criticise?" That's a very difficult thing to do. "Let men see, let them know a real man who lives as he was meant to them." And then what excellent advice for leading politicians. It is true that leaders should take their leadership role seriously, but not in a way that makes them feel god-like in some way." Wow, we've had enough of god-like politicians in high office. So in the end, Marcus Aurelius's stoicism tells us that leadership skills are both acquired from one's own childhood and adolescence and then subsequently from quiet personal reflection. There is no formal instruction. Marcus Aurelius doesn't say management courses should be set up in every city of his empire. There's no training. Leaders simply benefit from a good upbringing and then leading one's life according to the stoic philosophy. If we could have philosopher kings, then elected absolute monarchy would be the ideal form of government, or the elected absolute president would be the ideal form of government. But we can't find such men or women. And if we did, half of us would not approve.

I've already said leadership can be learned informally as in Marcus Aurelius, his own case from his family, his teachers and his friends. And that was in the minds of 19th century English school masters within the public school system. Now for Americans listening, I'm sure you all know, and I'm teaching grandmother to suck eggs and I apologise, but I need to make sure everyone's singing from the same hymn sheet. Public schools are what Americans would call private schools. They're not public in the sense of we would use the term in England state schools. They're not. These are private, independent schools. Think Eton, or I prefer never to think of Eton. But you know about it. In his book, "Philosophers and Kings", the New Zealand academic, Gary McCulloch observed this. McCulloch wrote, "The historiography of 19th century English education has rightly emphasised the theme of leadership and in its social and political implications, especially in relation to public schools. Historians such as Wilkinson, Mangan and Gerard have vividly depicted an ideology that asserted the necessity to train a cohesive, enlightened elite to rule nation and empire. Now, Americans would rightly say, as well as the large number of critics of a public school system in Britain, this has bedevilled England in particular, England, not in only in the 19th, but in the 20th and 21st centuries to perpetuate an elitist group that divides society. There was criticism made of Boris Johnson's government in Britain where large numbers of his cabinet were educated privately. And where Liz Truss of late memory maintained that because she didn't go to a public school, she was a quite different sort of leader. Tony Blair went to a public school, for example. Well that's an English argument, but the argument that an elitist education divides society is still one, sadly, in my view, that exists in England today. Now, the public schools of the 19th century were very

different from those of the 20th century. The Victorian public school started really, the renaissance of public schools in England began with Arnold of Rugby School and right the way to we're basically saying for about a century between 1840 and 1950, 1960, they were following the Victorian view of how you produce leaders. The system has changed since 1960s, although there are a disproportionate number of public school boys and girls as judges, for example, in our courts as well as in cabinets. So what was the idea of the 19th century school masters in public schools and their view spread into the state grammar schools as well. And actually McCulloch, the New Zealand academic, argues that it spread right the way through the British system. And I think that's probably true. So what were they? They were Victorian values. Values of duty. Values of duty. I went to a public school and I can never bring myself as a teacher, ever, not with adults that I know, ever to push in front, even for a lunch or coffee. When they say, "Oh no, you've been talking, you are the teacher, you must go," I can't do it. I can't. I just can't. It's ingrained in me that I mustn't do. And that's a strange thing. It's like ingrained in me that in adult education, I seem to have spent most of my life moving chairs in rooms and halls. And I couldn't ever just let the caretakers do it, a sense of duty, but also taking responsibility, which was driven into us. You might not have the responsibility to begin with, but if it fell to you, you took it. You didn't argue, you didn't say, "I can't do it." So when we had Army Corps and the British one, the CCF, Combined Cadet Force, for Americans, it's a army cadet force, which was in schools, mainly public and grammar schools. And if we had a field day, that's a whole day exercise out somewhere in the countryside, if your leader was "killed", inverted commas, and you were asked to take over, you couldn't say, "I don't know. I don't really want to." You had to do it, a sense of duty, a sense of taking responsibility and a sense of honour. Don't betray others. The worst thing in a public school is to say, "It wasn't me, it was him." You can't do that. You have to accept that it's the lot, has fallen on you. The phrase used was, "Take your punishment as a man." That's what they used to say when they caned us. "Take your punishment as a man. Whoo." No tears. Even if you were as young as a five, you weren't expected to cry if you were caned. There was a phrase that came into use. It's not used in public schools today, but it was used in the 19th century of "muscular Christianity", a very odd sort of phrase. There was also a phrase that there still isn't quite dead of "effortless superiority". It's dreadful when you think about it.

Now, those of you who are Jewish are sitting there, if you are not British Jewish, but you are Jewish Americans or whatever, and saying, "Well, yeah, typical, that's a typical sort of Christian thing to do. I'm sure no Jew would..." Really? There was a Jewish public school at Carmel. There was a Jewish house at Clifton College, but more than that, many Jews of my age went to public schools and still do. I have a friend in London who went to a public school, a public school called Haileybury and Imperial Service College. You get the message about

empire. And my Jewish friend, I asked him, I said, "Well, it must be quite difficult for you." He said, "No, not difficult at all." So I said, "Well, why not?" He said, "I'll give you two examples. He said, "When we had a school run in the middle of winter with snow on the ground and no one wanted to do it," he said, "I had the perfect excuse. I used to go and say, I'm sorry, I can't possibly do it. I really wanted to do it, but this is a Jewish holiday, and I can't." He said, "Of course cause it wasn't a Jewish holiday, but they didn't know, and I never did a run." And the whole time I was there," and he said, "I even read in chapel as a senior prefect." So I said, "Well, you're Jewish." He didn't have to go to chapel, of course. And he, he said, "Oh, no, no, no, I did it because of my role in the school." So I said, "You didn't." He said, "Oh, well I didn't read from the New Testament, William. I read from the Old Testament. So it was quite proper." And you may, if you're not British, you might find all that very strange. But the truth is, we were all brought up in the public schools as late as the late 50s when I went to public school at 13 through to the early 60s. It's in the middle of the 60s. All this really disappears. But we were the last generation to be taught, if you like, on principles that would let us rule an empire. By the time we were old enough to rule an empire, there was no empire to rule. Now I've said they've come in for a lot of criticism, elitism, old boy and old girl networks, buying a privilege. The schools cost a lot of money, helping prop up a class system, which we still suffer from and which we should get rid of. Well, you'll have your own views. I think personally, they're past their sell-by date by about quarter of a century now. And although I enjoyed my time, I would not, I did not send my children. I would not want my grandchildren to go and I won't support in all those claims for "can you pay this money?" I don't. I pay it to my Oxford College who is making huge strides in trying to reach out to people in the country who previously had no chances of getting to Oxford. I'm happy to pay monthly, I'm happy to pay whatever, but I'm not happy to support a system I no longer believe in.

The high or low point of public schools is also interesting in terms of leadership. And that is the First World War. The First World War, at least in Britain, had a more profound effect than anything else in the 20th century, much more than World War II. World War I really changed Britain forever. We emerged from World War I, a broken empire. We emerged from World War I shattered economically, we emerged from World War I with our economy sinking, with the country sinking. And we still don't quite have got over it. Liz Truss, the previous prime minister of 44 days, was talking about making Britain great in this great, no, no, no, no, that's gone. Interestingly, the new prime minister is first-generation British. His parents are Indians, and therefore his view is quite different. He takes the view that Britain provided opportunities for his family, which he might not otherwise have got. And that may change. I hope it will. And I'm not politically saying I agree with him. I don't know that I do. But what I'm saying



is I think he might change the level of debate because we haven't moved on, in my view, since 1914. Gosh, that's over a hundred years ago. We need to move on and fast. But I was going to say a word about the First World War. and there was some very interesting sort of figures, if I may share some with you. First of all, 35,000 public school boys out of 900,000 British and Dominion dead, 35,000 public school boys out of 900,000 British and Dominion dead. And in a book by Anthony Seldon and David Walsh called "Public School in the Great War", World War I, I read, "Public school boys were to die at almost twice the average for all those who served. Whereas some 11% of those who fought overall were to die as a direct result of the fighting, the figure for public school boys was over 18%. Those who left school between about 1908 and 1915 were to die at even higher rates as they were the most likely to serve in the front line as junior officers and as pilots in the Royal Flying Corps." These were the men who went over the top knowing they were facing certain death. Not behind them then, but always in front. They were a generation. It's common to say a generation, we won't see their light again. I don't think we will. And you may laugh at them. Many people now do. Why did they do it? They did it out of duty, duty to their regimen duty to their king, duty to their comrades, but most importantly of all duty to themselves, which had been inculcated in them as children. And it's a most moving story. My school had won a Victoria Cross in the First War when the man who won it was a colonel, not a junior officer at all in 1918. And he was looking out for where the enemy were to give messages back to the artillery from where they should fire. And he came across a group of British soldiers hunkering down in a trench with no officer. And he got them not to run but to stand. And he took a machine gun and he advanced alone against a German position, which was shelling them. And alone he took it out and was killed in doing so. And after his death, he was awarded a second military cross, which had been awarded before he could receive it. And he also posthumously received the Victoria Cross. It's just one example I know. Every public school in England can repeat those examples time and time again. But you see, as McCulloch says, "World War I was a triumph of the system, but it was also a terrible negative of the system."

Many of those young men knew when they were ordered to go over the top that it was suicide for them and their men." And they did it. They did it. Should they have done it? That is the question. Was this the wrong type of leadership and the leadership of them by the senior officers? Was that really good enough? Would Marcus Aurelius have fought the First World War? I don't think he would. Well, certainly not in the way that we fought it on the Western Front. So you have to be careful with leadership. That's why the management courses have to be careful. What are you trying to get, trying to hold together the concept of leadership. It's like holding a jelly. It's how do you keep holding it? I think about my own career in adult education. I first had a management role in adult education in 1971. I was given no training, no advice. I simply went into an office on my own and was told to get

on with it, to oversee the adult education programme of the college, which was beginning in three days' time. I had no idea who the tutors were. I didn't know the programme, I didn't know anything. No one gave any advice. I ended my professional employment career in 1996. And between 1971 and 1996, I received half a day's management training. And I have to say it was appallingly bad. Looking back over my own career, when I reached a senior management position, one of my greatest regrets is how little training I offered my own managers, middle and senior management. And that's something that I have to live with. Why didn't I? I've asked that since I wrote this. I thought why didn't I? And I suppose the answer is it never occurred to me. I had been thrown in at the deep end and had to swim and swam. And I assumed everyone could be thrown in at the deep end and if they didn't swim, they sunk. And that's bad luck. Well, with a bit of help they might have swum. So long, has the emphasis in Britain, and not only Britain, been simply on the learn on-the-job theme. I don't think anyone, well I think few, people in senior management, either in public or private sectors would dismiss management training so easily today. In fact, we offer management training before people become managers to prepare them for management. We offer management training along with the job. It's expected whatever job you do that you will be expected to undertake some training every year. And many professionals have to do it and present a piece of paper saying there. My daughter's a dispensing optician. She has to, in order to keep her qualification going, she has to do x amount of courses per annum. Whereas nobody ever asked me, never, extraordinary when you think about it. So we can be rather pleased, can we? But now there is management training for everyone. Hmm, can we? This was a letter published today in the "Times" of London. It's written by a lady called Dr. Christina Dykes, who was the former Director of Diversity and Development at the Conservative Party Central Office. So she was a paid employee of the Conservative Party. We've been through how many, I'm losing count, how many prime ministers, three this year. And her letter says, "Sir, there was a moment when the Conservatives could have been saved from the curse of the ineffectual leader," from the poor prime minister in other words. "Plans were afoot for continual professional support." I don't know what Americans call it, but in Britain we call it continuous professional development, but she uses the phrase, "continual professional support for people who wish to represent the party as candidates." In other words, you could not be a candidate for the to party in an election unless you've gone through the course. Well, it never happened. She says, "Then MPs and ministers," so candidates, MPs and ministers, would receive training. "The idea was to provide politicians with the competence and tools needed to be effective implementers, managers and leaders. Such plans were sunk by nepotism, implementers..." Sorry, "such plans were sunk by nepotism, favouritism and fashion."

Now, I don't think there will be anyone listening outside of Britain who doesn't recognise that in their own democracies. "Such plans were

sunk by nepotism, favouritism and fashion." It means politicians have to learn as they go along. Learning from Nelly, sink or swim, is what I've said. "It is a relic of the age when sportsmen were valued for being glorious amateurs rather than skilled professions, the thing that undermines the Olympic games," she said, right. How extraordinary that the leader of the country receives no initial training and no ongoing training. It doesn't happen in big global organisations like Shell. It doesn't happen in small businesses anymore. It doesn't happen in family businesses very much. It doesn't happen in the public sector. It doesn't happen with lawyers, it doesn't happen with doctors, it doesn't happen with opticians. And the story goes on and on and on. But politicians, who actually lead us, and make the decisions that affect every one of us, no training, but that's Britain. You must tell me where you live, whether that's a similar situation for you or not, but it makes one think.

Now, there was an article in the Royal Society of Arts in Britain, of which I remember called, in their magazine this month. called "The Incomplete Leader". Now it was written about the public sector, but I think it's as valuable in the private as in the public sector. It was written by a man called Justin Russell, and he was the Chief Inspector of Probation from the Probation Service for criminals. He writes, "There are thousands of books about leadership." Well, you know that, go into any bookstore. "There are thousands of books about leadership, very few of which seem to have been written by people who led major public sector organisations." He's talking about the public sector, but I say it's applicable to the private sector. " Professor David Pendleton of Henley Business School has said 'Leaders have to operate effectively in three domains. There's a strategic domain, which is all about tomorrow, strategy of tomorrow.'" Where, where are we really going? Well, that's the long term. "'The world, which is all about tomorrow and the world of possibilities. There's the operational domain, which is all about today, about goals and budgets. And then there's the interpersonal domain.' Because irrespective of where you are working or what timescale you are working on, the key thing is to bring out the best in people.'" Well, that's what Marcus Aurelius had argued a long, long time ago. Now that's interesting. I think that's a fundamental three things. A strategic domain, looking to the future, a present domain, the problems that actually we have to deal with in terms of issues and budgets. And then the one that gets lost, which is the interpersonal. In adult education, I'd been used to wandering around. I was very often in adult education, you were on your own as a full-time. And I was used to wandering around, talking to part-time tutors. I was used to walking around talking to part-time students. So when I became a principal with a large number of full-time staff, I did the same thing. And my vice principal was, one of my vice principals, a very, very clever young woman, said, "Well, I think we should do some management training." So Muggins says, "Oh wow, I've never done management training, I don't know anything about management." And she said, "Well, I know what sort of manager you

are." I thought, "No." She wasn't one to pull her punches. I thought, "Here it comes." And she said, "I've been reading this American book and I know exactly what sort of manager you are. The Americans call it ambulatory management." And I said, "What the hell is that?" And she said, "Well, you wander around talking to people." After that, I felt much better about how I was running the college. I believed in ambulatory management, but funnily enough, that's exactly what this third domain is, goes on to say, This is a man called Stephen Radcliff who's created a model called Future Engage and Deliver for management training. And in this article on the Royal Society of Arts Journal, "The Incomplete Leader" Radcliffe is quoted as saying, "As a leader, you've got to talk about where we're going or what we are building. You've then got to interact with people. So they want to come with you, then you've got to get on and do it." Well, a silly personal story. I was with one of my vice principals at a big meeting of all the principals in London when the whole thing was being closed down by the government, the educational authority was being closed down. Many people were losing their jobs. We didn't really know what was going to happen. And one of our colleagues came up and said, "How are you two coping with all this disaster? I've got my college virtually in mutiny." And we said, "Well, we haven't, we said, it's difficult, but we haven't got mutiny." They said, "Well, I don't believe you, so what have you done?" And we said, "Well, we've done what adult educators do. We've gathered groups of students, we've gathered part-time teachers, we've gathered full-time teachers, we've had meeting after meeting, and we've told them the truth. We've told them what we know as we know it. And they trust that we will do that. Doesn't mean say we can save their jobs, but they know we're trying to save their jobs. We're trying to save the college." And it's simple things. I don't claim, I certainly don't claim to have been successful but I do claim that adult educators often know what they should do, even if we're bad at doing it. There's a final quotation on this, which brings us to the ultimate test of a leader, "Growing the generations of leaders that will come after you." The generation of leaders that will come after you. Now, many extremely successful men and women fail to do that. Politicians in particular, they say in Britain that Johnson pushed Truss into becoming prime minister because it will make him look so much better. And we've got lots of examples of that. Lots. Even Churchill succeeded by Eden said, "Anthony will fail within 12 months." So why on earth did he allow Eden to become prime minister? Because it was his turn. 'Cause he was a good old sort. We don't plan for succession very well.

Interestingly, the only people that plan for succession in Britain is the monarchy. Charles has been learning for 70 years about the succession and judging by the first few weeks or so, he's doing brilliantly. But then he's had 70 years of training for it, of preparation for it, of thinking about it. But we don't train other people to follow us very successfully. And politicians are particularly bad with that. I always used to joke with people, if you

ever lunch with the Queen, would you ask her, "Do you think Charles will make a good king?" That is absolutely a forbidden question. You can't ask Charles if you dine with him, "Do you think your son will be a good king?" You can't because it presupposes their death. But you can't in organisations either because it presupposes you are going to retire or you're going to be kicked out. These are very difficult questions to answer. More difficult still is for me was how do I end this? And well, I found a quotation, and I'm going to quote two politicians, first an American and then a British. The first is Dwight Eisenhower, who in 1988 said, "Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it." That's very military, I think. "Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it." I think that's very good. The second is Churchill. In the war, this is a true story. In the war, a new secretary was in the typing pool, and she was typing a memo, which Churchill had handwritten, and she went up to the head of the typing pool and said, "I'm sorry, I don't understand. Mr. Churchill has written at the bottom "KB0", what does that mean, what do I type?" And the head of the typing pool said, "Oh, Mr. Churchill means keep bugging on." And that was what Churchill thought of leadership. You just kept bugging on. Well, I would've thought many people would think of Eisenhower and Churchill as successful leaders. But I'm going to finish with a story if I can find it. This is, if I can find it quickly. This is a... Ah, here we are. This is a book called "Leadership Can be Taught" by an American academic called Sharon Parks. But the foreword is written by another American academic called Warren Bennis. He's university professor at University of Southern California. Bennis writes this, I thought this was a wonderful story. It's by an American about British prime ministers. Well, I can't be more equal-handed than that. "In discussing various approaches to leadership, I often note a distinction made between two 19th century British prime ministers. It was observed that when you had dinner with William Gladstone, you left the dinner thinking that Gladstone is the wittiest, the most intelligent, the most charming person around. But when you had dinner with Benjamin Disraeli, you left thinking, I'm the wittiest, the most intelligent, the most intelligent and most charming person around. Gladstone shone, but Disraeli create an environment in which others could shine. The latter is the more powerful form of leadership and adventure in which the leader is privileged to find treasure within others and put it to good use." Isn't that fantastic? "This is a more powerful form of leadership to create an environment in which others can shine, an adventure in which the leader is privileged to find treasure within others and put it to good use." I leave you with that thought. Thank you very much for listening. If you've still kept on to the bitter end, I will see you all tomorrow or many of you on the French course. But I've got some questions which I shall try and answer or you may have made points.

## Q & A and Comments

Oh, Esther, that's a very good one. Esther writes, "It is important for a leader to have a sense of timing, capital letters, and be prepared." Very good.

– Rose says, "All the leaders today are anything but, capital letters, philosopher leaders. And as for the kings and the autocracies, they only think about themselves. Let them not mentor anyone. It will be a tragedy. should they do that." Absolutely right.

– Susan says, "It's called going out on the field with the team that you have." Absolutely. Use the people you have. Don't criticise. Make them better.

– Sorry, Shelly says, "Even though I'm an American, I knew all about the class nepotism and cash system of the British Navy and Army from reading Jane Austen." Absolutely right. Jane Austen's brother was a naval officer.

– Sally says, "As for management's assessment of your letters, I will award you." No, no, no, I don't think... Any teacher will tell you that they are always extraordinarily self-critical of whatever they do because we never do it as well as we want to do it. I can hack out a talk, which isn't too bad. I can sometimes do a bit better than that, but I cannot, I cannot reach the sort... I used to row as a child, proper rowing in an eight. And there's a thing called a bell stroke in rowing. That is when the crew, when your oar goes in absolutely perfectly and it makes a sort of sound like a bell. And if I could do that every time I talk, then I would be happy, but I don't.

– Oh, who is it, sorry, Tema. "In Judaism before Yom Kippur, we are commanded to make right our misdeeds in person with those we have wronged before God will forgive us. This includes identifying unkind thoughts et cetera. I take this seriously and literally" That is, yes, I did know about that and I'm very pleased you take it seriously and literally. I'm just amazed that all my Jewish friends in Britain, not one of them rang me up and apologised. Anything. Perhaps, perhaps. Well, we won't go down that line.

– Alfred and Yana,

Q: "The common view of central government as it is taught is to make laws, thus reading law tends to be the direct path to achievement in a governmental system. Is philosophy a required course of study as part of a law degree?"

A: Well, funnily enough, it was for me, but it isn't anymore. I had to do a paper in jurisprudence, which is the philosophy of law. And yeah, you make a good point. Alfred and Yana, I don't know which country you

are writing from. In Britain, there is a lot of criticism of how many lawyers, accountants are in parliament, both in both of the major parties and it is not a representative group. Therefore, if the members of parliament not represented within our system, the government isn't represented. But I think whichever system you have, you can say the same thing.

- Oh, Phil, that's wonderful. You've quoted Auden, the poet. "I and the public know what all school children learn. Those to whom evil is done, do evil in return." Fantastic.

- Adrienne, the answer is yes, I did go to a public school.

- Jennifer. Oh right, she's apologising for going out early. Well, this is on Zoom, Jennifer, I can't see you leaving. It's not like a classroom. I don't know your new land, there's no need to apologise.

- Marion, "My late husband went to King's Canterbury, which is the oldest public school in the country dating back to the seventh century 'cause it was formed next to the cathedral. He and his brothers were Jewish, but they were told not to say it." Oh goodness. Well, who told them not to say it? Their parents or the school?

- "The public school I attended," said Harvey, "had an officers' training corps that changed to the CCF in 1949. My, oh, he says, 'That rather dates me.'" Well, I'm so sorry to have upset you, Harvey. Yes, it does, rather date you. "My father went to a grammar school, Bristol Grammar School, and he was in the OTC, but no, I was only in the CCF because it changed its name. It changed its name because they thought it was a bit. They thought Officers' Training Corps was a bit snobby and so they called it Combined Cadet Force. But I wasn't in Officer's Training Corps because I joined it when I was at university at Oxford, mainly because it had cheap lunches right next door to the law library when you could go in and have a three course lunch for almost nothing because the army subsidised it. It was really nice."

- Yes, Naomi says "Surely, William, the First World War changed life for women in general more than any other event." Absolutely. The vote, for example. But more than that, it changed attitudes towards women, and they could not be made to return to the circum and the old routine. Absolutely right.

- Oh, Victoria says,

Q: "How do you reconcile your statement we should get rid of the class system with your very positive attitude towards a queen. and all the institutions of monarchy?"

A: Deference for starters. I can only say what a commentator, I guess you are not British. what a commentator in Britain said is, "It suits

us." We like it. We don't feel subjects. We like having a monarchy. It's nice going to the palace. It's nice meeting members of the royal family. We enjoy it. We don't see any advantage in it and we see a lot of disadvantages in a presidential system. But there are those who are Republican who believe exactly you do. But this is not going to be a class system in the coronation. It's not going to be like 1953 coronation. The aristocracy will not be present as aristocracy. People will be present for what they've done or who they are. Sadly, I shan't be one of them, but I would've loved to go.

– "Did you know modern Judaism," said Marcia, "is filled with Greek influence and stoic loss?" Yes, I actually did know that. Only because I've been told it before. Not surprising considering the centuries Jews and Greeks lived together in the golden age of Greece. "Yom Kippur, for instance, has communal self-reflection and vows to improve, disciple is required to fill the several requirements to keep in kosher." That's absolutely true. And the other thing, Marcia, is that in Judaism they had, they also embraced the concept of the philosopher king, which again was the Greek concept. You're absolutely right.

Q: "Haven't the French had two postgraduate candidates for the training of civil service leaders and engineering leaders?"

A: Yes, they have, very elitist as well. And there's arguments about that in France. We, in our civil service in Britain, we have moved away from taking people from Oxford and Cambridge with degrees in classics as believed to be the very brightest of all the bright. And we now have a very open system, and well, you have to make your mind up whether you think it's better. I think we need a real reform of our civil service. Now, the problem with the civil service is not the civil service, the problem is the appointment by politicians of advisors who are not civil servants but employed by the politicians. They're called special advisors, and these are the dangerous group in my opinion. I think we need, it's part of why we need a major reforming break.

– Sheila,

Q: "Do you think the role of the public school graduates in way could be compared to the role in the army in the early years of Israel? Only 4% of the population, but most of the officer corps."

A: Yeah, I think you can.

– Rosemary,

Q: "I went to a girls' public school from the late 1950s, early 1960s. It was definitely not a requirement to do any leadership training, but voluntarily, many of us were too shy to do this and only attempted



book learning. Any comments?"

A: Well, yes, there are girls' schools and girls' schools, I must say. Yeah, that would be an interesting conversation though. I would have to know a little bit more about which school you went to. You might have gone to one of those rather, what shall I say though, rather splendid schools for young ladies. "Rosemary, could you sit up straight, balance a book on your head and walk to the other end of the room?" Or is it one of those which was very religious? Was it a Catholic girls' school?

– Oh, Carol says, I like this. "The mafia has good management training. The students learn on the job, and the mafia promotes from within. P.S. Of course, I'm not in favour of the mafia from whatever country." Well, to be serious, the mafia is like, and it just happened to be a criminal organisation, but it's a business organisation plus being criminal, and learning on the job and promoting from within is what they do. They could hardly run in the local technical college courses for aspiring mafia members. But it's not that different from how many firms still operate.

– Marcia, "The ancient Hebrews originally chose not to have kings. Their kings were actually the judges who were expected to be very much like philosopher kings." Absolutely. They had to get into having a king only to defend themselves. True. "But our caution by God against the very sane tendencies, the self aggrandizing self-service that had took place when David and Solomon were anointed and then Solomon were anointed." Absolutely. That's a very, very well, if I might say so, I don't mean to be patronising, I just think, Marcia, you've written that so clearly in so few words. It's really good, and I agree with it.

– "No training for prime ministers, but they still get paid for life," says Sho. Oh yes, yes. Don't start us on that.

Q: "How has Zelensky done it?"

A: Well, that's another story. That is a long, long story. And Ukrainian politics is murky at the best of times.

– Oh, Jonathan, I'm happy to endorse what you say. I recommend "The Pity of War" by Neil Ferguson. I underlined that Neil Ferguson is a good historian.

– "There is a country," Noh says, "There is a country not only do not have training for politician, but also permit crooks and criminals to serve as leaders." Yes. List the following.

Q: "I heard it said in the US that former governors make the better presidents, presumably on the grounds that they actually know a little

bit about how to do the job." You asked whether, but that would exclude a lot of very good presidents, wouldn't it?

A: Yes, it would. It would exclude Kennedy, wouldn't it? It would exclude Washington. Jefferson. Oh, all sorts.

– Hmm. Jeffrey says,

Q: "You asked whether today men would obey the order to rise out of the trenches to almost certain death and said you thought that they wouldn't, but you didn't justify this. Can you? You surely didn't mean to imply that the order should be debated, did you? Or that the order should be refused?"

A: No, what I, sorry, I, Jeffrey, you make an extremely good point. What I was getting at is that in today's world, the leaders, that is the generals, the colonels behind the scenes, would not expect their men to do this. I don't know, Jeffrey, which country you are writing from. There was a comedy series called "Black Adder" in Britain, and the final episode was in the trenches of the First World War. "Black Adder" is a junior officer in the trenches and he's brought to a command post to be told by the generals what he has to do. And the general said, "Well, this is the plan." And he answers, "Well, I know the plan." "You can't possibly know the plan," they tell him, "it's secret!" And he said, "Well, I know the plan. When the whistle goes, we go over the top and we get slaughtered." "Well, yes," they say, and in the programme, that's how the whole series ends. They go over the top and they are slaughtered, and from being a comedy it ends in tragedy. It's an extraordinary thing. So I think now it wouldn't work like that. I would hope it wouldn't work like that and I don't think it would.

– "How extraordinary that UK's last prime minister was a financial illiterate thinking that GBP was still a reserve curre..." Oh, well, yes. Don't. Then the question is how on earth did she ever get to that position? In the US, many presidents," says Arlene, "had education, many were lawyers and came up in the ranks. That is, they were in government or leaders such as governors, legislative generals, then come, then along came Trump." Well, yeah.

– Shelly says "The idea of training or continued training only as good as the training itself." I'm with you, Shelly. I'm with you 100%. Many people have suffered bad training. Absolutely. Which can be a waste of time and money. Absolutely. Now, if any of you are still working and you want someone to run a proper training course, get hold of an adult educator, plenty in the States. Get hold of someone who knows how to run a session, and you do not run a session by putting up all those things on the the screen, which says, "Welcome, my name is William. We are going to be doing..." Oh, forget all of that. What they should do is to say, "Right. Now. I want you all to take a piece of paper, write

down on it the three problems you have managing in your situation or being managed in your situation." Then you put them up on the board. Then you start talk, grouping them together. Then you start asking people, "Well, how would you solve it?" Not top-down, but bottom-up education. Sorry. Yeah, I'm, I'll stop talking. I shall get carried away.

- "There's no training in Quebec, Canada. I think our prime minister was a drama teacher." Oh God. I've had many drama teachers. None of them I would ever put in the post of prime minister. Ambulatory training is also called in the US, MBWA, management by walking around. Oh, I love that. Can I put MBWA for my name, I wonder? Now, I think that's fantastic.

- Rob, "The best leaders of those who are able to recognise and gather the best people around them." That is where I basically ended and that I think we can all vote for.

- David,

Q: "What chance effective management training in the world of working from home?"

A: Well, that is interesting. That is very interesting. Well, the answer is that it's done. My son works in the finance industry and he works from home. His training is now done by Zoom. Now whether that is good or bad, I don't know, but like many people, he thinks a lot of his training is pointless. But on Zoom, he has one of these machines which allows the mouse to sort of move around so people think he's still listening and he's having a cup of coffee and not listening at all. So maybe, but is that any worse than going to sleep at the back of a lecture hall? Management training, whether by Zoom or in flesh, can be good. Any teaching can be good in either situation. The thing is how it's approached, and I am very critical of a lot of management training. I'm just not convinced. I think it's all, and, and it's using, I was, I did an economics at O level when I was 16 GCE at a low level, and we were told you'll pass if you learn these economic phrases. So we learned phrases and we put them in and we all passed. I had no idea, any more better idea about economics now than I did then. And so words, words, you've got to speak in simple language with people.

- And please tell us more about King Charles successful (indistinct). I would love to but I don't have time. He has been, I think he's being really... I think he's done everything correctly.

- "I've been told that leadership is helping worthwhile people do the things that they want to do." That's it. We must never forget innovation and eccentricity in people.

- Oh, that's nice. I'm glad you enjoyed the lecture 'cause it's not one I've ever been asked to do before and I'm, and it's a bit, sort of slightly what's, sorry, I've lost my clock now, I've got to finish soon. I've lost the thread of these, actually, I have to go down there. I'm always doing this. This is, this is the drawback of Zoom mind, John, I'm just as bad in the classroom falling over, knocking things over, but oh, here we are. I'm getting back to where I was.

- Yeah, here Gene. "In the USA, medical professionals have to do lots of annual continuing education specific to their specialty, but no management or leadership training. Doctors graduate, no education about starting, heading up and running a business or even how to evaluate a company group practise they will join." Gene, that is exactly the same in Britain. And there is a problem. There is a problem. It's what you say about general practitioners. It's absolutely right. That is to say the family doctor, that not how to run a company, group or practise. Absolutely right. But there is a wider problem which is shared in education as well as in hospitals in Britain. And that is the people at the top and maybe appointed as managers rather as educators. The second person to succeed me at my college in London was a retired rear admin. He had no experience of education at all. And I, that sort of thing worries me. I want to see a doctor in charge of a hospital, but a doctor in this day and age, a doctors receive management training.

- Where am I?

Q: "Are some people born leaders?"

A: Well, I think some people have the capacity to build on what they are. There is clearly some people who are never born leaders. Do we want born leaders today? No. We want, well, you see, this is difficult. Churchill was a born leader. I don't think anyone would question that. But he was never received any training. And the mistakes that he made might well have been lessened had he received any sort of training at all. But there aren't. But war is a different thing. The war, war requires a, well, that's another question for another day. Does a war require different sort of skills in a politician than peacetime? My answer will be yes. And the example I will give would be Churchill, who as a peacetime prime minister was a failure in every possible way.

Q: "How is central to morality? You didn't mention Machiavelli's "The Prince.""

A: No, I didn't. That would've taken me... I could have done, but it would've taken me in a direction that I... It wouldn't have given me a logical talk, and I was trying to do a logical talk. I could do another one and it would be different. But how is central is morality? Well, I guess most of us would think morality was important and one of

the things that brought Johnson down was personal immorality as well as public immorality. I think morality is important.

– "The best CEO we ever had in the organisation that I worked in," says Joe, "was, as you described, and got to know what was happening at the coal face."

– Barbara, "You'll have to have a good heart. The sense of morals to begin," I've lost it. Oh dear. How annoying. Where am I? Come on, come on. I think I've lost it. I'm sorry. Oh no. Here we are. "You have to have a good heart. The sense of morals to begin with." Thank you. Oh, well, yes. No, I think you are right. I think it's where you, and that morals comes from education, parents, teachers, church, synagogue or wherever. But that is important.

– Oh, Carrie is a Republican. "I'm a paid-up member of Republic. The ridiculous royals are the principle of our corrupt class system. Ensure this will remain a conservative society paying where a majority-thinker, prime minister should sound like Boris Johnson." We need to carry that argument on in another way.

– Jean says, "I'm Jewish. At my Johannesburg South African high school Parktown, I sang hymns for five years, so I could sit on a chair," I'm sorry to laugh, "so I could sit on a chair instead of on the floor for the manned entry morning assembly. I don't think it's scarred me." Oh, Jean, that's a wonderful story. You are the sort of person we need as a leader, who's pragmatic. The pragmatism is what I'm always looking for in a leader. That's a wonderful story. I'm sorry to have laughed in reading it. That is beautiful.

– Rosemary, "I went to one of the best academic schools who sent students to Oxford and Cambridge. To answer your questions, South Hampstead High School that you might not want to mention." Oh, I, yes, of course it's London. Of course I'm mentioning things in London.

– Jeffrey writes from the UK, "A great fan of 'Black Adder'." Yes, I am too, Jeffrey. I think it was absolutely wonderful. You could do some wonderful history courses around "Black Adder".

Q: "Isn't mentorship almost as important as other kinds of training?" says Jack.

A: Good question. But it depends upon the mentor. Our last prime minister slept with her mentor in the Conservative Party whilst married. Not a good advertisement for mentorship. At my school, we all had a personal tutor. We were not allocated a personal tutor. After a term at the school, we chose who the member of staff we wanted to be our personal tutor. So if you can choose your mentor, I'm happy, but I'm not happy about the company choosing the mentor for you. I have worries about that because of the power they have over you.

- Barbara. Oh, Judi,

Q: "What do you think about proposed leaders being subjected to a psychological examination?"

A: I'm all for that. I'm all for that. That is what the previous Labour Foreign Secretary, David Owen, has argued, that we need to have proper medical and mental assessment. Now I know that is done to some extent in the States. It isn't done here at all. But I'm not sure how successful it is in the States. Well, I'm sure it isn't successful from what we can observe.

- "The best training I had," says Sulmit, "is where I received feedback from direct and indirect relationships below, sideways and above. Individual names were kept private." Yeah, you can set up these things. You have to be very careful how you do.

- Oh, Barry, that's fantastic. "In Canada, you need training to be a dog walker or a dishwasher. But nothing is required to be a politician." I mean when you think about it, we shouldn't laugh. It is appalling in a democracy like ours. The same prime minister, this is Canada, isn't it? Same Prime Minister went to student parties in blackface. Yeah, no, I haven't.

- Tom. "Have you seen "The Secret of Santa Victoria" with Anthony Quinn? It's a fun film about a mayor in a small Italian town during World War II, played by Quinn, learning on the job to counter the Nazi occupiers. Instinctively he picks up some of those qualities you have mentioned today." Well, that may fall into this category of leadership in war, which I think is different.

- Well, I'm pleased you and I'm...

Q: "Wasn't Caesar a born leader?"

A: Yeah. Yeah. I think he, I think I've got to stop there. The time has really, it's gone on a long time. Anyway, I'm glad some of you enjoyed that. As I said, it wasn't... It was not an easy talk to prepare. And as somebody said about Machiavelli's "Prince", I could have done that and I could have talked, about it in another different ways. And I've got, you know, other material that I was looking at that I didn't, in the end choose to use. One of the difficulties about short education bits like an hour and, and you are not present with me in the room. The the best I can do is to find something logical that everybody can follow and disagree with or if you like, agree with. But hopefully it might get some of you thinking about it. And if you're still involved in management, thinking about your own situation, either as a manager or being managed.

So thanks very much for listening.