



Practical Leadership:

Inspiring *Action*, Achieving Results

Jim Clemmer's Leader Letter

July 2004, Issue 16

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A Little Summertime R & R (Reflection and Renewal)

Summer is a great time to invest in personal renewal. Whether it's baking on a beach, relaxing at a cottage or cabin, spending time with nature, getting away on a traveling holiday, or just lazing in a park or backyard, it's the perfect time to review where we've been so far this year, and think about the busy fall ahead.

This issue of the *Leader Letter* is focused on the Timeless Leadership Principle of **Authenticity** – especially around the leader's lifelong quest of exploring "the real me." Most of the exercises and applications this month are taken from my new [Growing the Distance: Personal Implementation Guide](#).

Complimentary Briefing Now Available for Download

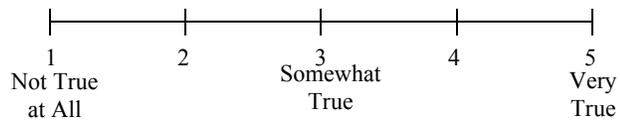
I just completed a 45 minute complimentary teleconference, giving an overview of my latest personal growth tool that moves from the inspiration of [Growing the Distance](#) to self-assessment and practical application of its principles and approaches. You can review the new [Personal Implementation Guide](#), download the extensive handout I provided free of charge, and replay the audio of the June 23rd teleconference on our web site, at http://www.clemmer.net/events/gtdpgtc/gtdpg_ra.shtml

The Real Me

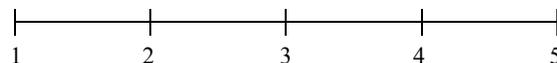
Following is a self-assessment on **Authenticity** taken from the [Growing the Distance: Personal Implementation Guide](#):

Rate how true the following statements are:

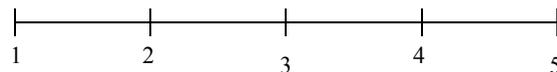
1. I often resist peer pressure and take a stand for what I feel is right.



2. I usually recognize which emotions I am feeling and why.



3. I generally see the connections between what I am feeling and what I think, say, and do.





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- | | |
|---|---|
| 4. I have developed my own unique style and approach. | -----
1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. I tend to let my actions speak louder than my words. | -----
1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. I have strong beliefs and convictions that I act upon, regardless of what others think. | -----
1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. I spend time reflecting upon and assessing my likes/dislikes, strengths/weaknesses, and personal style. | -----
1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. People trust my word and consider me almost obsessive about my honesty and integrity. | -----
1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. I clearly know my core values and beliefs, and remain steadfastly true to them. | -----
1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. I pass up projects, promotions, or other opportunities that don't really fit me or my values. | -----
1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. My reputation, personality, and character are one and the same. | -----
1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. I am very comfortable with who I am. | -----
1 2 3 4 5 |

Add up your scores for each item above, and compare to the following:

45 - 60 points – You're being true to yourself.

30 - 44 points – Keep striving to be real.

12 - 29 points or lower – Get to know and love yourself. Live the life you (not others) want to live.

What areas do I want to strengthen?



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To Be or Not to Be

Following is another self-assessment taken from the [*Growing the Distance: Personal Implementation Guide*](#):

Have:

- Prestige and status
- Positions and titles
- Material possessions
- Security and certainty
- Perks and privileges
- Power and authority

Do:

"You shoulds" coming from:

- Family (spouse, parents, relatives)
- Society
- Organizational culture
- Peers/friends/neighbors
- Dogmas/traditions
- Institutions

Be:

- Aware and in-the-moment
- Aligned with my strengths/passions
- Loving and giving
- Living my values
- Following my inner voice
- Serving others
- Spiritual/philosophical

% of My Focus Now	% I Want to Focus Here

What do I need to do differently to be my authentic self?

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Why the Thumb Stands Alone

Below is a description and link of one of my favorite fables on resisting peer pressure and following what I feel is right. I once had a gymnasium of high school kids applaud this story after I told it (holding the attention of 300 grade nine kids was stretching the bounds of my professional speaking comfort zone!). They recognized the timeless wisdom it illustrated.

Ringin' True to Me

It's often difficult to be true to ourselves - it generally means we don't follow the crowd. Standing up and standing firm for our beliefs can be lonely and unpopular. Find out why the thumb stands apart from the other four fingers in this excerpt: http://www.clemmer.net/excerpts/ringin_me.shtml

Personal Application Ideas for Spirit and Meaning

- Are your values truly your own beliefs or are they what other people or institutions have said you should care about? Are they your true, internal "bone deep" beliefs or an external "should" value? We often don't recognize a lifetime of conditioning that has left us with other people's belief systems. We need to replace any "should" values with our own.
- Spend twenty minutes per day writing out your deepest feelings and reflections on the day in a personal journal. This can be especially helpful if you're going through difficult changes or have suffered a serious setback or loss in your life.
- Learn how to be quiet and listen to your voice within. Follow where it leads.
- Complete tests like the Kolbe Index, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Gallup's Strength Finder Profile, Social Styles, and the like to determine your personal style and how you can maximize your preferences and strengths while working with varying styles on your team.
- When giving or receiving feedback, keep it in balance. Point out the strengths or things going well. Use your own "blessings and brag list" to keep your perspective if you've been given some painful personal feedback.
- Contribute to authentic conversations in an authentic workplace. Speak the truth as you see it. Obviously the time and place needs to be appropriate. Diplomacy and tact are also critical. Help others (especially your peers and those above you) to see the Moose-on-the-Table. (Click here if you're not familiar with this term: http://www.clemmer.net/excerpts/authentic_comm.shtml)



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Thoughts that Make You Go Hmm...on Authenticity

"Our personalities, we may discover, are a veritable patchwork quilt of bits and pieces picked up along the superhighway of life from friends, relatives, even magazines and movies, then sewn together into a single artificial cloak we wear each day and call 'I.' When this realization begins to dawn we start to ask, 'Where's the real me?'"

- Harry Moody and David Carroll, *The Five Stages of the Soul: Charting the Spiritual Passages That Shape Our Lives*

"A man has many skins in himself, covering the depths of his heart. Man knows so many things; he does not know himself. Why, thirty or forty skins or hides, just like an ox's or a bear's, so thick and hard, cover the soul. Go into your own ground and learn to know yourself there."

- Meister Eckhart

"Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it's time to pause and reflect."

- Mark Twain

"To be nobody but yourself – in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else – means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight; and never stop fighting."

- E(dward) E(stlin) Cummings, American writer

"One of my role models is Bob Dylan. As I grew up, I learned the lyrics to all his songs and watched him never stand still. If you look at the artists, if they get really good, it always occurs to them at some point that they can do this one thing for the rest of their lives, and they can be really successful to the outside world but not really successful to themselves. That's the moment that an artist really decides who he or she is. If they keep on risking failure, they're still artists. Dylan and Picasso were always risking failure."

- Steve Jobs, Founder, Apple Computers



JIM CLEMMER

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Improvement Points Subscribers' Top Picks for July

Of the short quotes with links to full articles that were e-mailed out as complimentary **Improvement Points** last month, the most popular with subscribers were:

"Are you ready to pay the price of leadership? The pathways to outstanding performance and ever-higher leadership levels are lengthy and difficult. The time, energy, and discipline to be successful are intense."

- from ***Blazing Our Own Unique Leadership Path***

www.clemmer.net/excerpts/blazing_path.shtml

"Leadership and communications are inseparable. Our ability to energize, inspire, and arouse people to ever higher levels of performance is directly related to our ability to communicate. Strong leaders are strong communicators."

- from ***Communication Strategies, Systems, and Skills***

www.clemmer.net/excerpts/communication_strategies.shtml

"It's so easy to get stuck in Pity City. Since misery loves company, Pity Parties become popular as everyone points fingers at their favorite targets on the other side of the we-they gap found in many organizations . Problems, setbacks, and disappointments are often wailed about in a rousing game of blame storming: 'They're doing it to us again.'"

- from ***Test Your Career Health***

www.clemmer.net/excerpts/test_career.shtml

Subscribe or view the archives by topic area here: <http://www.clemmer.net/improvement.shtml>.

Your Thoughts on Helping Staff Who are Losing Their Jobs

Please send me your suggestions for "Mary" from the correspondence below. I'll reprint your ideas and input in future issues.

Jim,

I wonder if you can help me.

Due to the integration of (our two companies) the work performed by two of my teams will be transferred to other locations. One team of 70 staff will lose their positions by Q2 2005. The second team of 65 staff will lose their roles by Q4 2005. The two teams are not in the same location.

While I have a great deal of material related to leading in times of change, I do not have anything that it is directly aimed at leading teams that are being disbanded.



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Can you suggest some resource material that I could read and apply?

Keep up the great work. The Leader Letter is an invaluable resource.

"Mary"

Hi "Mary,"

I don't know of any resources that specifically address your challenge. You may recall that we had some discussions about Navigating Change and staying "above the line" rather than sinking into Pity City in the March 2004 issue of the Leader Letter. You can review that at <http://www.clemmer.net/news/mar2004.html>

If you're the leader of these groups, you need to counsel them on a personal basis. My new *Growing the Distance: Personal Implementation Guide* could be a lot of help for individuals to use in refocusing and staying in control of their lives as they go through what could be traumatic changes. You can see some of the *Personal Implementation Guide* at http://www.clemmer.net/books_main.shtml

I will run our correspondence (disguising you and your company) in the July *Leader Letter* and ask for input from readers. We may get some good suggestions.

All the best in your turbulent times!

Jim

Feedback and Follow-Up

I am always delighted to hear from readers of the *Leader Letter* with feedback, reflections, suggestions, or differing points of view. I am also happy to explore customized, in-house adaptations of any of my material for your team or organization. Drop me an e-mail at Jim.Clemmer@Clemmer.net.

I hope to connect with you again next month!

Jim

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