Three Leadership's Qualities

These three qualities are invaluable to the leader:

* Compassion for all creatures
* Material simplicity or frugality
* A sense of equality or modesty.

A compassionate person acts in behalf of everyone's right to life. Material simplicity gives one an abundance to share. A sense of equality is, paradoxically, one's true greatness. It is a mistake to consider a person whose only interest is self-interest as either caring or courageous. It is a mistake to rationalize that excessive consumption contributes to the well-being of others by giving them employment. It is a mistake to imagine that a person who acts immodestly or in a superior way is, in fact, a genuinely superior person. These are all egocentric behaviors. They isolate a person from the common ground of existence. They produce rigidity and death.

Compassion, sharing, and equality, on the other hand, sustain life. This is because we are all one. When I care for you, I enhance the harmonious energy of the whole. And that is life.

Water

The wise leader is like water. Consider water: water cleanses and refreshes all creatures without distinction and without judgment; water freely and fearlessly goes deep beneath the surface of things; water is fluid and responsive; water follows the law freely. Consider the leader: the leader works in any setting without complaint, with any person or issue that comes on the floor; the leader acts so that all will benefit and serves well regardless of the rate of pay; the leader speaks simply and honestly and intervenes in order to shed light and create harmony.

From watching the movements of water, the leader has learned that in action, timing is everything. Like water, the leader is yielding. Because the leader does not push, the group does not resent or resist.

The Leader's Teacher

They practice meditation. Meditation made them good at seeing how things happen. Meditation grounded them in the infinite. That is why they sometimes appeared deep and inscrutable, sometimes even great. Their leadership did not rest on technique or on the theatrics, but on silence and on their ability to pay attention. They moved with grace and awareness, and they were able to negotiate complex situations safely. They were considerate. They did no injury. They were courteous and quiet, like guests. They knew how to yield gracefully and how to be natural and inconspicuous. They were as open and receptive and available as the valleys that lie among the hills. They could clarify events for others, because they had done it for themselves. They could speak to the depths of another persons, because they had known their own deeper conflicts and blocks.
Because they had given up selfishness, they could enhance others. They were not trying to become enlightened, because they were enlightened.

**Giving Up Selfishness**

To become more profound, give up your selfishness. Let go of your efforts to be perfect or rich or secure or admired. Such efforts only limit you. They block your universality. Letting go is like dying. Everything emerges, becomes formed, and dies. You, too. When you die, you give up selfishness. You become one with everything else. My deeper self knows that I am one with everything else anyway. All creation is a single whole which works according to a single principle. I let my selfishness go and give up the illusion of being separate. I act in behalf of the whole. I benefit me and I benefit you. I am at odds with no one. I am at peace, and have energy to spare, because I am not resisting what is happening. Death is not frightening, because I know how to let go, and I know the nature of the Eternal.

**Be Still**

The wise leader speaks rarely and briefly. After all, no other natural outpouring goes on and on. It rains and then it stops. It thunders and then it stops. The leader teaches more through being than through doing. The quality of one's silence conveys more than long speeches. Be still. Follow your inner wisdom. In order to know your inner wisdom, you have to be still. The leader who knows how to be still and feel deeply will probably be effective. But the teacher who chatters and boasts and tries to impress the group has no center and carries little weight.

Tao works for those who follow Tao. When you are in touch with the single principle, you can consciously cooperate with the single principle, your actions will be effective. But if you are simply being egocentric, or if you are just trying to be dramatic, you will neither do good nor look good. Remember that the method is awareness-of-process. Reflect. Be still. What do you deeply feel?

**The Creative Process**

The wise leader knows about pairs of opposites and their interactions. The leader knows how to be creative. In order to lead, the leader learns how to follow. In order to prosper, the leader learn to live simply. In both cases, it is the interaction that is creative. Leading without following is sterile. Trying to become rich by accumulating more and more is a full-time career and not free at all. Being one-sided always produces unexpected and paradoxical results. Being well-defended will not protect you; it will diminish your life and eventually kill you.

Exceptions to these examples of traditional wisdom are very hard to find.

**Be Open To Whatever Emerges**

The wise leader does not impose a personal agenda or value system on the group. The leader follows the group's lead and is open to whatever emerges. The leader judges no one and is attentive to both 'good' and 'bad' people. Being open and attentive is more effective than being judgmental. This is because people naturally tend to be good and truthful when they are being received in a good and truthful manner.
Perhaps the leader seems naive and childlike in this uncritical openness to whatever emerges. But openness is simply more potent than any system of judgments ever devised.

**Being a Midwife**

The wise leader does not intervene unnecessarily. The leader's presence is felt, but often the group runs itself.

Lesser leaders do a lot, say a lot, have followers, and form cults.

Even worse ones use fear to energize the group and force to overcome resistance.

Only the most dreadful leaders have bad reputations.

Remember that you are facilitating another person's process. It is not your process. Do not intrude. Do not control. Do not force your own needs and insights into the foreground.

If you do not trust a person's process, that person will not trust you.

Imagine that you are a midwife; you are assisting at someone else's birth. Do good without show or fuss. Facilitate what is happening rather than what you think ought to be happening. If you must take the lead, lead so that the mother is helped, yet still free and in charge.

When the baby is born, the mother will rightly say:
"We did it ourselves!"