

LEADERSHIP *Warren Bennis* Excellence



THE MAGAZINE OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, MANAGERIAL EFFECTIVENESS, AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY

APRIL 2010

**Classic
Leaders**

**Universal
Principles**

**Abundant
Community**

Awakening Our Powers

**Peter Block
Leadership
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—WARREN BENNIS, AUTHOR AND
USC PROFESSOR OF MANAGEMENT

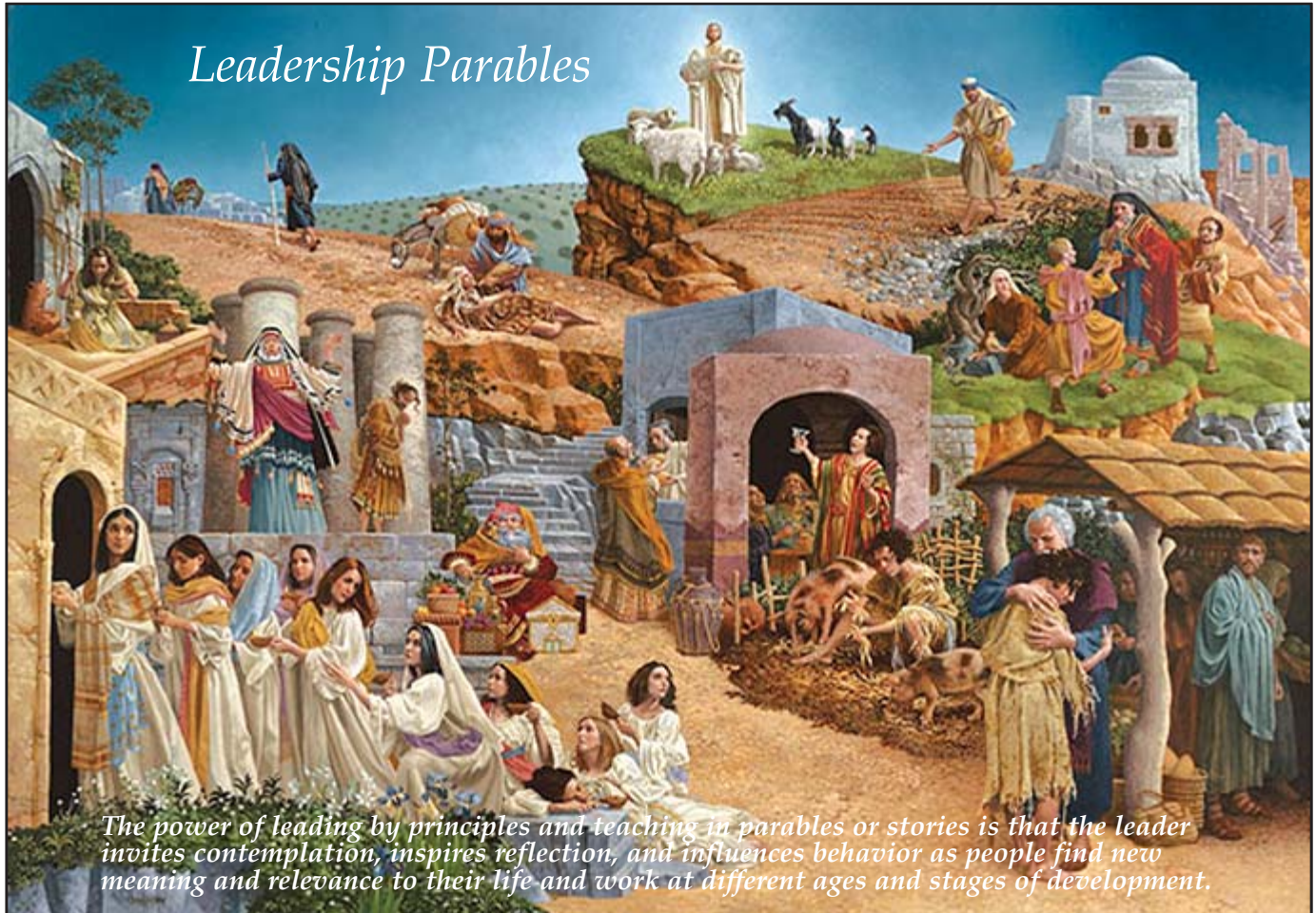
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LEADERSHIP Excellence



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Leadership Parables



The power of leading by principles and teaching in parables or stories is that the leader invites contemplation, inspires reflection, and influences behavior as people find new meaning and relevance to their life and work at different ages and stages of development.

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Inspired Leaders

Be the spark, flame, and torch.



by Lance Secretan

WE ARE EMERGING from a dark era of leadership wherein employee job satisfaction has plummeted to 45 percent; the number who find their work *interesting* to 50 percent (and the *greatest dissatisfaction* is among those under the age 25—tomorrow's leaders). The leadership style that gave us *The Great Recession* is not the style that can build an inspiring future.

Alarmed and chastened by these trends, a new kind of leader is rising to the challenge of restoring joy, significance, and personal worth in work and life. They have an aura about them, a presence, an ability to inspire others that gets things done and enables them to live meaningful and fulfilled lives. They are guiding us to higher ground, into a brighter time of hope, awakened to the wisdom of creating inspiring organizations.

What makes these leaders special, extraordinary, happy, and delightful to be around? What makes their teams, families, organizations, cities and countries remarkable? They understand that we all yearn to be inspired and to be inspiring. Their mantra is, "I will inspire in everything I do today." We have all the information, tools and skills necessary to live an inspired and inspiring life, and we can use these tools in ways that enable us all to live and lead in this way—and thus inspire the world.

My book—*The Spark, the Flame and the Torch*—is an integrated theory of how to inspire at every level, everywhere. I invite you to become torchbearers for a new era of enlightened leadership. The Spark ignites the Flame, and the Flame lights the Torch.

Part 1: First, the Spark is ignited. "The Spark" is the initial energy that kindles the embers of inspiration within each of us; that moves us to live large and to inspire others, to reach our real potential, to make a meaningful difference in our own life, the lives of others and the world. Without the spark, we are ordinary and dull, and our aim falls short of our dreams. This dullness is the absence of passion and energy, of

dreams and magic in our lives, of relationships that inspire, and of bearings that lead to meaning and fulfillment, excitement, and zest. The spark initiates fusion, combustion, and reaction.

The spark is awakened by a deep, inner awareness of *Why* we are here on Earth, how we will *Be* while we are here, and what we have been called upon to *Do*. Few people have discovered the answers to these questions, or have even cared to explore them. They are content to live the unexamined life—and as Socrates said, "The unexamined life is not worth living".

Great leaders are those who reflect thoughtfully on these questions, and define the right answers for themselves, and therefore ignite "the spark" within them. This is the often silenced voice of the soul speaking, and this we call



Destiny, Character and Calling—the *Why-Be-Do*—*why* we are here, how we will *be*, and what we will *do*. When we stand in the presence of someone who has a deep, inner-knowing of who they are—an awareness of *Why* they are here on earth, how they will *Be* while they are here, and what they have been called to *Do*—we stand in the presence of an inspiring person. This is *the spark* that flashes and radiates from within them. Their certainty about their path, and their passion for it, makes others want to be with and follow them, firing up their own hopes for living the same way. This inner awareness creates a fusion with their higher purpose and causes a powerful release of energy. It causes them to be inspiring—they can't help themselves, because it radiates from within them and stirs the hearts of others. With this inner knowing and inspiration, we develop a bold, audacious, thrilling, and inspiring *One*

Dream and pour all this into building powerful relationships that inspire.

Part 2: The spark ignites the flame.

The Flame is the fire within us that lights the way for others, that generates intensity and raises the temperature; that fires the spiritual and emotional rockets of our lives, that takes us to unexplored places of promise. *The flame* is bright and visible to all—it represents the values we practice, passionately believe in and model for others. The flame fuels a furnace that informs all our actions, and illuminates the path for others. It is our standard against which we calibrate our conduct. It represents the behaviors we model for others and teach to them, which in turn, encourages them to ignite their own spark and set fire to their flame.

The Flame is a set of values we call the CASTLE principles—an acronym for *six inspiring ways of being*: *Courage*: Reaching beyond the boundaries of our limitations, fears, and beliefs. *Authenticity*: Being genuine, transparent, and aligned with our inner voice in all aspects of life. *Service*: Actively supporting the good of the other. *Truthfulness*: Being honest and transparent in all thoughts, words, and actions. *Love*: Relating to others by touching their hearts in ways that add to who we both are as persons. *Effectiveness*: Achieving desired outcomes successfully.

As we live these principles, through example and actions, we are *the flame* by which others are warmed, guided, developed, comforted, and inspired.

Part 3: The flame lights the torch.

"The Torch" is the legacy we create and the wisdom we pass on, the gift of mentoring, coaching and growing others—how we convert the spark into a flame, using it to light the torch, which we share with others. The flame is used to light the torch, and the torch is used to carry fire to others. The torch is "paying it forward", teaching others, helping them to grow, and being an inspiring mentor for them. It is with our torch that we light the way for others. As Carl Jung reminded us, "As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being."

To live the inspired and inspiring life, we pass through three progressions: we become inspired (*The Spark*); we live an inspiring life (*The Flame*); and we share with others the opportunity to do the same (*The Torch*). **LE**

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ACTION: Ignite the spark, flame, and torch.