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Understanding A Familial Mentorship Model in Cultivation of Leaders Who Serve

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**UNDERSTANDING A FAMILIAL MENTORSHIP MODEL IN CULTIVATION
OF LEADERS WHO SERVE**

A Dissertation

Submitted to the National College of Education

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Herald “Chip” Johnson Jr.

National Louis University

National College of Education

June 2021

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By

Herald "Chip" Johnson Jr.

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06/25/2021

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to explore a lineage of leadership enacted through mentoring from individuals with respected reputations for excellence in leadership. Using a narrative inquiry approach, I explored how I used knowledge gained from past mentors to inform future leadership actions and decisions based on the examples through their leadership. An exploration of leadership models uncovered the interconnectivity among the life of the mentor, the lessons passed on to the mentee, and the manner in which the story is told. Resonant leadership, transformative leadership, and servant leadership theory provided the theoretical framework used to analyze in-depth interviews in which the researcher and his mentors explored their interconnected leadership journeys. The self-inventory conducted through the dismantlement and deconstruction of the researcher's life, and his life choices, was an essential part of understanding the leadership models inherited through mentorship and how they transformed into a servant leadership model. Implications for leadership practice and education are included.

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2021. He was also my rock. I thank God for bringing you into my life and I dedicate this to you!

Solomon

2005-2021

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

We shall overcome, we shall overcome, we shall overcome someday.

Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall overcome someday . . .

– Charles Albert Tinley, *We Shall Overcome*

Charles Albert Tinley’s gospel protest song had a significant impact early on in my life. I first heard this epic song as a child in 1964 and the lyrics left an indelible imprint that marked the beginning of my life’s journey—an expansive journey that would be heavily influenced by the civil rights movement, the music of the Black Church, and the leadership of several prominent figures within the Black community. This Negro spiritual was the cornerstone of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s civil rights movement that engaged many African Americans in the belief that their lives would get better. It was this Negro spiritual that propelled my interest in playing the piano, which inevitably morphed into a career of piano performance, conducting, and education. The music that touched me and the men and women who fought and sacrificed for me were my earliest informal mentors.

The early music of the Negro slaves was the “work” songs the slaves sang in the field while picking cotton and performing other essential duties pertinent to the field work. These songs were laced with undercover messages of attaining freedom from slavery and communicating that one day they would all be free. It was not until the emergence of the Underground Railroad that the songs were used to communicate across the fields that the freedom train would be riding tonight, so get ready. A very familiar song in the African American community was called “Follow the Drinking Gourd.” This song was used to communicate to other slaves that the Underground Railroad was

coming and to follow the North Star (referred to as the Drinking Gourd) as they traveled toward freedom. The lyrics stated,

When the sun comes back and the first quail calls,

Follow the Drinking Gourd.

For the old man is waiting to carry you to freedom,

If you follow the Drinking Gourd.

Harriet Tubman is considered the pioneer of the Underground Railroad and has been known to have ushered over 300 slaves to freedom during her time, though no one has been able to prove an authentic number of freed slaves. However, her leadership, strength, and tenacity were what encouraged and motivated other African American leaders to step up for the cause of civil and human rights for Black people, as well as all people in the nation. It was the demonstration of powerful and recognized leaders that positioned my influence and reflection of what a leader should be.

As a child, I remember admiring and looking up to many influential Black Americans who were friends or associates of my mother, who worked for John H. Johnson, the owner of Liberty Life Insurance before it became Supreme Life Insurance. Mr. Johnson was also the founder of the *Ebony/Jet Magazine*. This magazine was the center of the Black community and often included stories and pictures of the successes of Black people. These stories often walked readers through the lives of Black businessmen, entertainers, sports figures, and educational figures. It was this platform through which I became immersed in the pursuit of success and living a life equal to those I had read about.

In my local circles were influential figures like Vernon Jordan, Jr., former Chair of the National Urban League; Earl B. Dickerson, Chairman of the Supreme Life Insurance Company; Cirillo McSween, one of the first Black owners of McDonald restaurants; and faith leaders such as Rev. Jesse Louis Jackson, Jr., the founder of Operation PUSH; Rev. Clarence H. Cobbs, founder and pastor of the historic First Church of Deliverance; Rev. Addie Wyatt, minister and first Black Union official; and Bishop Arthur M. Brazier, Pastor of the Apostolic Church of God in Chicago's Woodlawn community, to name a few. Little did I know my musical talent would put me in the path of many of these great leaders. I had watched them from a distance build new businesses, lead labor unions, lead the country through civil rights, and help those in impoverished communities acquire essential services to develop a quality neighborhood. I played for many services and events where throngs of influential leaders would gather to celebrate the successes of their counterparts. During some of those meetings I was able to pick the brains of individuals and engage in conversations on a personal level during which they would give me guidance on my educational pursuits and career choices. They would tell me how to listen when people were talking to me so I could garner nuggets of wisdom that would contribute to the success of my path. Topics of conversation included respect for my elders, appreciating family members, giving back to the community through church tithes or community donations, and as much as possible, supporting Black businesses. This was where the small seeds of mentoring and coaching began to take root and eventually blossomed into a full-fledged commitment to seek greatness and never succumb to failure.

The early seeds that were planted in me for this kind of modeling and mentoring are described in later chapters, but it is necessary to note that the early influences I experienced as a young man enabled me to overcome some of the challenges and falls I would experience in later years. Moreover, the strength and endurance of those I watched and emulated would become the link to my survival when the throes of life would catch me unaware, causing me to fall into an abyss of confusion and weakness from which I would emerge an overcomer, a fighter, and a man with a purpose-driven life. Their strength would propel me to levels of success like those I looked up to and admired.

It was apparent to me that leaders who were successful and had the ability to make indelible changes to garner a better path for success and in their careers were those who knew how to take risks to reach their goals. Tubman took risks when ushering slaves to the North in the middle of the night. Dr. King took risks against the perils of injustices of civil rights and often endangered his life while speaking at public events, marching for the cause of social and civil justices, and advocating for people of color to have the same rights as all other Americans. Many leaders have demonstrated that taking risks is necessary to create positive change.

Introduction to the Participants

Bishop Brazier and Dr. Hines were leaders who took the necessary risks to create change in communities, schools, and in their own lives because of the vision they wanted to see become a reality. As I observed the lives of these two individuals while working for them in different capacities, I became interested in their management styles and how they worked with people of different cultures. These two strong Black individuals were a part of the Civil Rights era and often suffered from some of the challenges this era

brought to Black people, but mostly to themselves. I believe their witness and involvement at that particular time gave them the impetus to strive for better not just for themselves, but for those they serve.

Bishop Brazier fought against the gang culture in the Woodlawn community and marched against inequalities implemented by the Chicago Board of Education, where instead of creating classroom space in schools for more Black students to attend classes with White students, the Superintendent placed temporary structures outside of the main school buildings for the Black students so they could attend the schools, but not conjoin with the White students. Bishop Brazier organized a march on the Board of Education to advocate against what was known as the “Willis Wagons,” named after the Superintendent Benjamin C. Willis. The protest would lead to the removal of those wagons from the properties of those schools where they were placed. Had Bishop Brazier not had the nerve to address the injustice occurring within Chicago’s school district, the segregation and the racist injustices that haunted the school district might have ensured longer than was originally planned. I do not believe success can be achieved without certain risks involved, and Bishop Brazier’s life certainly demonstrates the risks that were taken in order for the achievements during his reign as a Pastor and civil rights leader to come to fruition.

Dr. Mahalia Hines began her teaching career when many of the schools in Chicago Public Schools were segregated. She did not let that get in the way of what she knew she could do for students and their academic progress as their teacher. Dr. Hines taught many White students who would often challenge her lessons around the slave trade, the Underground Railroad, and stories of Black individuals who contributed to the

Black life, but she said she never strayed from striving for excellence in her classrooms for all students. When she became the principal of John Hope Community Academy, she had a vision to expand the grade levels and move from Grades 4–8 to Grades 6–12. Dr. Hines felt that if she could hold on to her students while they transitioned from middle school to high school, the learning outcomes would be greater and students would achieve much more success because of the continuity of learning in a culture with which they were comfortable. Though her request was granted, the implementation of the structure was expansive and not without trouble. The school was located in one of the most impoverished communities in the City of Chicago called Englewood and many of the students were affiliated with gangs, came from low-income and divided families, and had no idea of respect or cooperation when working or learning with each other. Many behaviors had to be corrected and relationships had to be built so trust could be developed. After many years of modeling building relationships with students, parents, families, and community, the school was renamed John Hope College Preparatory High School because of its reputation in the community of demonstrating the success of high school students. Dr. Hines transformed the culture of the school through the intentional hiring of staff; ensuring relationships were being developed among teachers, students, and parents; and creating a culture where everyone in the building contributed to the success of students both academically and socially. Dr. Hines even had to have conversations with the local gangs in the neighborhood to let them know she needed their help keeping students safe and making sure they would come to school. These kinds of supports were able to build a positive basis for the structure and vision of the school. In

order for success to happen at Hope, Dr. Hines had to take risks that would prove to help everyone involved with, in, or around the school.

According to Wagner et al. (2006), “Leaders who act publicly and with purpose challenge individual behaviors and beliefs associated with a responsive system that continues to remain unfocused and largely unaccountable” (p. 15). Bishop Brazier and Dr. Hines had a history of going against the grain to make the necessary strides to effect change. It was their tenacity and determination that afforded me opportunities when developing my own leadership to reflect on their past actions, and when faced with a situation that would cause one to raise questions or create an adversarial affect, I would ask myself the question, “What would Dr. Hines (or Bishop Brazier) do?”

The reality of leadership is something I have heard time and time again, “It’s lonely at the top!” The scourge of loneliness can be daunting when the decisions that need to be made are unpopular with the mainstream audience—or even one’s boss!

Leadership as a Network Chief

When I was hired as a network chief within Chicago Public Schools, a supervisory position with direct management over elementary and high school principals, I managed a portfolio of 36 schools. It was rewarding to work with educational leaders in helping to shape the academic trajectory of their schools. I had a team that consisted of five instructional support leaders, a community engagement manager, and two case managers working directly with students with special needs. The team took critical assessments of the schools to make sure we provided targeted support to those schools that were underperforming, specifically in math and literacy. We looked at parent engagement and how parents were being supported to assist their children with

homework in content areas. After we assessed the needs of the schools, we developed learning plans according to the data and implemented the plans accordingly with accountability. We had moments of gratification when the academic data showed improvements in our underserved schools, and we had some feelings of defeat when we did not see the anticipated growth in some of our schools. However, the teamwork that existed created the synergy we needed to transform schools and move the needle on the academic data.

During the mid-part of my tenure as a network chief, an underperforming school was transferred to my portfolio of schools that was rated a Level 3 according to the district's School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP). This school had been engaged in a special program for struggling schools designed to help improve academic data, attendance, and other metrics to move them out of the low-performing level. I am not sure what type of support was given to this school while under prior management, but it came to the network as a Level 3 school, meaning it was at the bottom of the rating scale. When I met with my supervisor about this school, one of the immediate demands was to place the principal on a corrective action plan and get rid of him. After the initial shock of this demand, I thought about Dr. Hines and wondered what would she do in such a case. Dr. Hines was a leader who took chances on people and supported them until she had decided through convincing evidence what was the right action to take for that person. In my response to my supervisor, I said I could not agree with her decision to immediately remove the principal from his position without having ample time to work with him and the staff. My supervisor pushed back, and so did I, until we both came to the decision that

I would have time to work with the principal for a year and then make a move to keep him or remove him from his leadership position.

In reviewing the data at a granular level, I brought the Network team together to develop a plan for how we would support the school in math, literacy, and attendance as listed in the SQR. Our Instructional Support Leaders worked with the grade-level teams in each content area along with the assistant principal, and I developed a remediation leadership plan for the principal and I to work through together. Through scheduled meetings we listed on a master calendar, we went into the classrooms and started working with the students whose data we reviewed and targeted specific learning plans for underperforming students and teachers. We monitored the data weekly, provided concise feedback, and adjusted learning plans for students as needed. This process went on for the entire school year, and while engaged with the school holistically, we began to notice a change in the culture of the school. The relationships between staff and teachers began to gel and students began responding in a more positive manner because we kept them apprised of their own data and often communicated with them about how much farther they needed to move to reach their targeted goals. The students began to compete with one another because they felt empowered to learn. We were so grateful to see the joy and confidence in the students as they became more accountable for their own success.

As we ended the year, we saw a dramatic increase in the data from the students, increased attendance, more intentional leadership from the principal and his assistant, and a renewed school that was once being under supported for low academic performance. The district used the North West Educational Assessment (NWEA), which measures the growth of students through informal and formal exams. When the students completed

their end of the year assessments, we had a sense of the success students had achieved though the data had not yet been released by the district. But we knew they had done well. When the final data were completed and the new school levels were released, the school had risen to a Level 1 rating based on the growth achieved during the school year. Those in the school community were excited, but most of all, they experienced positive change. They saw that putting forth the effort to ensure every child in the classroom received the support they needed to grow from one data point to another and understanding how to learn with patience and determination made a big difference in their careers and to students. It provided a sense of empowerment for the students as they began to believe they could do more than what they ever expected of themselves. I thought back to my initial wonderings of what Dr. Hines would have done. She would have taken the chances I did to build hope, confidence, and faith in the school, the staff, and the students. You can imagine how I and the staff were feeling after we saw the final data reflecting our work with the school.

However, my excitement would only last until my next conversation with my supervisor. When we had our debrief about the data of the Network, she made a glaring remark to me that I will never forget. She asked, “How did the school go from Level 3 to Level 1 in a year? Did they cheat?” I was shattered and highly offended by the statement because it showed the lack of faith and belief in our own students and reflected the idea that students who experience learning challenges based on their environment do not possess the ability to achieve greater than what was expected of them. Though it bothered me, I reflected back on my initial thoughts of taking chances and found I was brave enough to take a chance on the students, on the administration, and on the staff and see

our efforts rewarded as we made a difference in the lives of those who seemingly had not been offered the options of hope, faith, and the opportunity to push toward the success that belongs to us when we do the work.

Mentoring From Hines and Brazier

The coaching and mentoring I received from Bishop Brazier and Dr. Hines provided the basis for many lessons in leadership that have occurred in my journey through the many levels of my experiences in education. The element of coaching was prevalent in my conversations with Bishop Brazier, who often prompted me to think about what I was doing or about to do instead of making recommendations as to what I should do. Because his style was persuasive and embedded with confidence, it made me listen intently when he “coached” me through different scenarios. It was as if he was telling me a story that would help me to apply strategies or options to decisions I had to make or professional moves that presented themselves in my career path.

Being mentored by Dr. Hines involved a different approach than what I experienced with Bishop Brazier. Dr. Hines was more “hands on” in showing and telling me how to deal with my leadership qualities and the best way to handle specific instances with staff (e.g., teacher conferences/evaluations), school-related matters (e.g., change in bell schedules, lunch schedules, ancillary time schedule), and difficult situations (e.g., misunderstanding of grades, problematic teacher–student relationships, etc.) that required immediate decisions for the staff or individual staff members.

While I worked in different roles at the school, including as a classroom teacher, Dr. Hines often asked me to perform administrative tasks for which she was responsible, such as adding context to the student handbook, writing and revising letters she sent out

to the community and even her peers, and leading efforts to revise the 2-year student improvement plan that informs the academic direction of the school and how to achieve the school goals. These opportunities became part of building my capacity as a leader, but they were also teaching me how to work collaboratively with others, develop and build relationships, and operate within systems and structures to work toward targeted goals.

In reflection on my work across my careers, the cross correlation between mentoring and coaching became quite clear to me. Where coaching seemed very independent and autonomous in its approach, mentoring demonstrated a more “hands on” approach with guidance and attention that offered advice, correction, and monitoring. My interactions with Dr. Hines were filled with suggestions and recommendations that guided my practice during the cycle of tasks I was asked to manage. Though the two leaders were somewhat different in style and intention, it was valuable to have these leaders as examples to reflect upon as I advanced through myriad administrative opportunities. The lessons I have learned from these leaders are something I have found essential to the trajectory of my own leadership. Leading with confidence comes from mirroring those who have come before you to demonstrate how the best practices of management can be replicated effectively when attention is paid to the respected leader. These are individuals who intrinsically show you how to manage systems and structures, daily operations, budgets, and other areas, but the most important value of the leader is managing people and building trust among teams. I would consider this to be the most successful element of servant and resonant leadership—the ones who make us think a little deeper and take risks when the appropriate time provides the space to do so.

Wheatley (2000) stated, “Those who help us center our work in a deeper purpose are leaders we cherish, and to whom we return love, gift for gift” (p. 133).

There is a statement that says, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care,” and this has become more and more evident as I have continued to lead larger teams in my career. Maxwell (2007) stated,

Good leaders are connecting with others all of the time, whether they are communicating with an entire organization or working with a single individual.

The stronger the relationship you form with followers, the greater the connection you forge – and the more likely those followers will be to want to help you. (p. 116)

Leaders who attract people to them are often sought after because of the integrity of their leadership and the examples they model. The long-term impact of these types of leaders often are embedded in the character, the actions, and the successes of those who had the opportunity to follow them and learn from their masterful skills in true leadership. Both Bishop Brazier and Dr. Hines exhibited this innate quality of attraction, which explains why so many of their mentees continue or continued to reach out to both of them beyond their active service.

Purpose of the Study

I acknowledge that my mentors and lessons from the past have helped me to support the teams I have led as well as guide the youth and members of my church family. During the course of my 27 years in education, I have learned powerful lessons that have guided my trajectory in different management positions. Learning from leaders who demonstrate effective styles of management, models of character who exude fairness

and equity, and the methods in which they operate with their staff has made an impact on my leadership, producing effective results and success. To communicate the professional engagement I have had over the years with two successful leaders, I wanted to be able to tell the stories of their impact and how important they have been to the development of my leadership experiences.

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways in which service leadership transcends from mentors to mentees to demonstrate how leaders and educators learn from one another and use self-reflection to lead and empower others. The impact of successful leadership, and how mentoring has added to the trajectory of my leadership experiences, may serve as a model for leadership cultivation.

Research Questions

I designed this study to examine the following research questions:

1. What can we learn about the principles of leadership from in-depth stories of two highly respected leaders?
2. What powerful lessons of leadership formation and mentorship processes can be learned from existing leadership cultivation relationships and outcomes?

Rationale

This study served two purposes. The first was to enhance the understanding of leadership cultivation through self-reflection and narrative inquiry to move toward building new culturally responsive educational theory. An additional goal was to motivate others to carry out and learn from new mentorship and leadership models that are reflective of an emerging population in educational leadership. This study provides an alternative to the traditional top-down management style as a means to empower leaders

to work collaboratively in a distributive and service capacity within an ever-changing field of diverse and empowered new educational leaders. By shifting our mentality in how we view ourselves and others as leaders, I believe great change can be accomplished in the field of education. The potential to become one with yourself in your spirit, in your beliefs, and in your actions can aid in the cultivation of the capacity to transform into an individual who demonstrates value, promise, and purpose.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this review of the literature, I discuss the similarities of three distinct styles of leadership. The elements of these three styles have commonalities that show how their impact can lead to the success of building teams, strengthening the skills of individuals in leadership positions, and building the patterns of mentorship and coaching for those in some form of management and educational administration. I discuss the traits that define two leaders I chose and the characteristics of the three components of leadership and what an impact they have made on the trajectory of my own leadership path. The literature review covers the following sections:

- An examination of transformational leadership and its characteristics that demonstrate goal-oriented attention and a constant drive for results to ensure the success of the organization and those who serve the organization.
- An examination of resonant leadership that demonstrates how this style of leadership shows the emotional intelligence and characteristics that drive for unity and collaboration, and aids in creating trust and integrity for teams to accomplish goals and outcomes for the greater good.
- An examination of servant leadership and how it has served to enhance the trajectory of leadership I have intertwined with the previous two styles. Servant leadership does not come without toil because it requires the servant leader to first serve others and put their own interests as secondary.

Leadership

Leadership is used to develop corporations, programs, ministries, organizations, and even people. It is an intrinsic element that helps to develop skills and character traits,

leading to outcomes that can either build capacity in what and how it serves, or tear down and denigrate in the same manner. “Leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers” (Gardner, 1990, p. 1).

The influence of a leader can have unyielding effects on an individual, which can cause emulation or even replication because of the nature and stature of the leader. Styles of leadership and the success of a leader can vary within different cultures and environments and are based upon the people or the culture the leader inherits. “One specific element within the realm of leadership is one’s ability to influence people, change, and results, as described in *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*” (Maxwell, 2007, pp. 16-18). Maxwell (2007) described seven factors that merge into action: character, relationships, knowledge, intuition, experience, past success, and ability. These elements are necessary to create realms of leadership that are binding, trusting, and sustainable.

Examples of true and authentic leadership are demonstrated through followers, or the endorsements attached to the leader and the “stamps of approvals” that are often associated with the leader or individual who possesses the magnetism and the ability to persuade and build trust in and through their values and standards associated with their leadership. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was able to convince the citizens of Montgomery, Alabama, to stop riding public transportation because of the segregation that occurred on the buses through requiring Black people to ride only in the back of the buses. After 381 days of a successful boycott, the Supreme Court ruled against segregation, stating it was unconstitutional. This style of leadership, considered servant leadership, was deemed so

authentic that many people put their lives on the line because of his principles of non-violence and civil and equal rights for all people, which became known as the civil rights movement.

On the opposite end of the leadership spectrum is a minister known as Rev. James (Jim) Jones, who is best known for his influence and transformational approach. Jones was able to convince many members of his California-based Pentecostal congregation known as People's Temple to relocate their ministry to Georgetown, Guyana, in 1977 after stories of abuse and other negative perceptions about the ministry were about to go viral in the media. A year later, over 900 members of the church, which later became known as Jamestown, were found dead because Rev. Jim Jones persuaded his followers to drink "Kool-Aid" laced with cyanide. Those who did not comply were shot or poisoned by the guards working for Jones. This example of leadership is considered authentic because of the persuasive ability of a leader who was able to convince over 1,000 people to follow him and trust his leadership to the point that they gave their lives for him. The transformational effect on the people who followed Jim Jones and succumbed to an unwelcomed death for their own beliefs continues to have negative effects on members of the families who have had to deal with the aftereffects of such a tragedy (Kopsa, 2018).

Leadership carries elements of responsibility and accountability to those who follow. The leader is responsible for the direction, gains and losses, integrity, respectability, and quality of their character when looked upon as a leader. Maxwell (2007) stated, "The true measure of leadership is influence – nothing more, nothing less" (p. 16). He also listed seven factors that accompany leaders and validate their leadership.

This short list is evident in the two leaders I discuss throughout this study, but also in most of today's prominent leaders. The seven factors are “**Character** - knowing who they are; **Relationships** – who they know; **Knowledge** – What they know; **Intuition** – What they feel; **Experience** – Where they've been; **Past Success** – What they've done; **Ability** – What they can do [bold added for emphasis]” (Maxwell, 2007, pp. 17-18).

Understanding the principles of leadership will hopefully help those who have been called to be leaders to understand the importance and value of their position. They should use their positions to uphold positive values and standards of excellence, help people and communities in need of resources, and use their knowledge and skills to continue to help build the bridges of sustainability in authentic paths of leadership. They should take notice of those who are watching and model their leadership practices based on example to ensure they are being prepared for the next journey, the next level, and their next purpose. The examples I provide in this discussion of transformational, resonant, and servant leadership represent an overview of how leadership can be perceived, but the experience of leadership will take you into your designated path and provide the tools necessary to become what the universe had intended for you all along. In the case of Bishop Brazier and his success as a civic and religious leader for over 60 years, one of his church members described his pastoral leadership in this way: “The rest of us make decisions on what we think God wants us to do. Bishop waits for a word from the Lord no matter how long it takes. That's why he has been so successful” (Dortch, 1996, p. 42).

Transformational Leadership

Change is something inevitable in every sense of the word. Many of us have desired change in many ways. Some people want to become better at speaking, dressing, writing, or working on their own personal appearance. Others have the desire to help other people change and give them tools to help them better themselves in their careers, their family life, and other essential areas needs of life. I served as the organist at the Christ Universal Temple Church in Chicago pastored by the Rev. Johnnie M. Colemon. She spent years teaching spiritual principles of how to live a better life by changing your thinking in alignment with the practices of metaphysics, a form of religious philosophy that the *Merriam-Webster dictionary* (n.d.-a) defines as “abstract philosophical studies: a study of what is outside objective experience” (para. 1). One of my favorite quotes by Colemon that has become a lifetime mantra for me personally is, “I am the thinker who thinks the thoughts, that makes the things.” This quote became a transformational pivot for me during my exodus from my drug addiction. Its influence and power helped to change the path of my thinking and allowed me a clear path to freedom from the bondage of insecurity and fear by placing value on the power of my own thoughts through transformational positive thinking. The example of Rev. Colemon illustrates the power of transformative leaders who have the ability to promote change and help individuals develop the confidence to promote their own growth. The power of transformational messengers like Colemon help to enlighten leaders to develop and deliver messages loaded with power, confidence, and hope that builds inspiration in others and provides a path to successful plans and strategies.

Transformational leaders who develop and communicate a vision and a sense of strategy are those who “find clear and workable ways to overcome obstacles, are concerned about the qualities of the services their organization provide, and inspire other members to do likewise.” (Swail et al., 2003, p. 14)

This transformational power is evident in leaders who demonstrate passion and intentionality for their work through their leadership. It appears they have an ability to drive outcomes to accomplish goals through strategic plans, daily operations, and relational connections. There is a sense of trust and confidence that exudes from the leader. Blane (2017) stated there are three dimensions of purpose that fuel greatness: love, talent, and value. These elements are demonstrated in the leaders I have chosen to highlight in this dissertation through their interactions and guidance within their areas of leadership.

Love

Love, being one of the most powerful elements, reflects appreciation, gratitude, and servitude. It defines how a person is received by peers and those who work for or with them. “When love is present there is a continual striving and leaning into whatever is required to learn, grow, and improve” (Blane, 2017, p. 14). Blane (2017) further stated, “At the heart of excellence lies love. Through your love of something, you are motivated to overcome challenges and achieve your biggest hopes, dreams, and aspirations” (p. 14). The framework of this element found in Blane’s book is guided by four questions that bring more clarity around love as a guiding element within transformational leadership:

1. What part of my job do I love doing? Why?
2. What part of my job do I find most rewarding?

3. What is the one idea, hope, dream, or aspiration regarding my work that has grabbed hold of me and won't let go?
4. What aspect of my work, if I were no longer able to do it, would make my work less fulfilling? (p. 14).

I remember my first time meeting Bishop Brazier. I was so impressed by his passion, dedication, and commitment to the work he was doing at the church and in his community. He had just moved into a new 3,000-seat sanctuary and wanted to ensure he was bringing quality music programming to the congregation, which is why he asked me to consider a position as music consultant of the church, a job I eventually accepted, not knowing at the time I would later join the church and remain there for over 25 years in various appointed roles. Bishop Brazier's passion is what drove my commitment to remain faithful and loyal to the work he executed as a church and civic leader. It has to be noted that when I was first introduced to Bishop Brazier, I was in my exodus from a drug addiction, something he knew about and yet took a chance on me to develop his current music program into one that was inclusive of liturgical music that was diverse and combined both traditional and contemporary worship music. He knew that in order to build a diverse and culturally relevant congregation, he had to model a service that attracted people of various worship experiences and lifestyles, which is a testament to his vision and mission as a transformational leader. It gives credence to the theory that most transformational leaders are able to do things that stand out and make a difference that creates change and makes people notice there is obviously something that has changed says this American sociologist,

Jack Mesriow (1978) states that the transformation theory identifies the processes by which adults come to question their assumptions and those of others, and arrive at new perspectives. In other words, transformation theory is about change-dramatic change that shapes people and organizations and makes them visibly different to themselves and others. (Allison-Napolitano, 2013, p. 2)

Change is needed within most schools and organizations to attain goals and missions, and to maintain a comprehensive vision that drives the school or organization forward and motivates its workers with consistency and sustainability.

Talent

Talent is another dimension of purpose that fuels the greatness and capacity of a transformational leader. Most people can see the value of a talented leader and therefore seek them out because of their skills, gifts, and talents. Leaders within the Chicago Public Schools sought out the leadership of Dr. Hines when the decision was made by the district leaders to transition a well-run middle school in the Englewood community of Chicago into a high school with accelerated programming, magnet programs, and sports activities. The chief executive officer of Chicago Public Schools at that time felt Dr. Hines was the right candidate to operate the school while maintaining the middle school program throughout the transition. A school once known as a community academy became a stellar high school in the area and was renamed the John Hope College Preparatory High School.

Leaders can often find themselves in a quandary about the specificity of their skillset and the trajectory of their leadership that causes them to journey out on blurred paths of undefined destinations. Blane (2017) developed some questions that can help

sharpen the direction and cause a leader to think more rationally about their pursuits.

Those questions include:

1. What are my five most important talents and skills?
2. What is my proudest contribution and/or accomplishment? Why?
3. What part of my work do I receive the most compliments about?
4. The five work activities I take great pride in are . . .
5. What part of my job do I plan to master? (p. 14)

During some of my mentoring sessions with Dr. Hines and Bishop Brazier, some of these questions came up in conversations and promoted me to think more critically about the direction and the path I was taking in my leadership journey. Having the talent to create, develop, and implement is an important element of leadership because it enables you to fulfill your vision and mission when executing your goals to accomplish the outcomes that can positively affect the organization or your specific area/department of expertise.

Value

Value helps to define your purpose so you bring understanding through your actions. One of the constant values of my leadership is to always be respectful of those I serve regardless of the situation. It defines my character and allows the people with whom I work to understand their interactions with me, collectively or personally.

Many companies/organizations have their employees create a value statement to assist with the direction that is being driven by the mission. The alignment of the mission and vision statement is important to many leaders because it provides insight to those working with or for you. Expressing this through a series of questions, Blane (2017) asked the following:

1. In my professional life, what are the most valuable contributions I make to my customers, my colleagues or coworkers, and my organization?
2. What aspects of my work are distinctive? What differentiates me from my colleagues who have the same role?
3. What part of my work, if I were no longer able to do it, would leave my customer bitterly disappointed?
4. How can I increase the value I bring to my organization? (p. 15)

Blane pointed out that the intrinsic elements of a transformational leader build quality and enable trust and integrity to become mainstream values.

In summary, evidence of transforming results is often seen through the attainment of goals, implementation of effective strategies, collective collegiality among coworkers and staff, and a general feeling of ownership and accountability to the organization. There is quite a stark difference between the boss and the leader because of the values and love that help to form the core of intentionality when interacting with staff through conversations, emails, texts, and other means. Tone can set the atmosphere for a positive experience or it can lead to a destructive and divisive one. It also differentiates between the boss and the leader and how they are looked upon. I can remember when I was being supervised by a person who had to manage everything with adamant control and power. The atmosphere was laced with fear and intimidation, which caused the individuals in the workplace to work with trepidation and not appreciation. Goodman (2019) highlighted some of the positive elements of leaders in his book, *The Solutions Oriented Leader*, and provided a contrast between a leader and a boss: “Leaders actually lead, listen, and empower, whereas bosses intimidate, think of themselves as above other employees, yell

at people, and focus on hierarchies” (p. 27). As I grew in my leadership path, I was able to learn what I needed to do as a leader and what I should never do as a leader. The experience I had with a “boss” showed me what to avoid doing as a leader. This proved to be an effective protocol of reflection that helped me gain respect and integrity from those I was leading.

Both Dr. Hines and Bishop Brazier demonstrated the qualities of a leader that promote integrity and alignment across an organization and allow for professional autonomy in fulfilling goals and a sense of accomplishment among individuals and teams. The transformational effects of their leadership were an asset to the development of my leadership style. I worked with some leaders (or should I say bosses) who clearly showed me what I did not want to become as I moved up the chain. However, those experiences were transformational because they enabled me to frame the elements of my style into what I knew was authentic and committed leadership. These demonstrations of authentic leadership and dominated leadership are quality moments that allow you to reflect on your own style and how and what you want to be recognized for as a leader. It helps to understand the perspectives of both of these styles of leadership because in the long run, you can be considered a leader, but will you have the followers who validate the quality of your leadership? In *Becoming Deliberate: Changing the Game of Leadership From the Inside Out*, Ellis (2015) provided some usable insights for leaders to ponder to help them assess the development and trajectory of their leadership. I have found these insights to be quite useful and something I practiced before reading Ellis’s book. Those insights include:

- Recognize the value of the struggles, obstacles, and difficult choices in your learning and development process.
- When you pay attention, you learn. When you learn, you grow. And when you grow, you create more opportunity. It is the challenges that make you stronger, resilient, and more savvy.
- Learn by watching how people use their power and recognize the difference between positional and personal power. Create your own powerful, positive voice and set your own agenda.
- Focus on recognizing and developing your strengths and those of others instead of “fixing” what is broken. (Ellis, 2015, p. 6)

Interestingly, transformational leadership has values that seem to work in two ways. One way is that it helps you to transform your own career path in leadership and incorporate some of the insights to build capacity in the way you govern yourself as a leader. It can also help others transform by watching you lead by example. I have found all work-related experiences are worth every minute of the good or the bad when it comes to understanding leaders. The transforming of your mind, behaviors, perceptions, and ideals helps to form a basis of reality as to how you want to lead or to be led.

Resonant Leadership

A resonant leader knows the strengths and weaknesses and even the internal variances of their team. The resonant leader understands the qualities, shortcomings, and even fears of those in their charge. This kind of leader knows and understands how to lead in a context that strengthens those around them while accomplishing the tasks at hand. Resonance is defined by Merriam-Webster (n.d.-b) as “a vibration of large

amplitude in a mechanical or electrical system caused by a relatively small periodic stimulus of the same or nearly the same period as the natural vibration period of the system” (para. 1). This definition aids in understanding the resonant leader in that the individual leader acts, themselves, as the vibration. This vibration creates the harmony, balance, and collaboration that are characteristic of resonant leadership. Resonant leadership is leadership that is attuned to the self and those around the leader.

Boyatzis and McKee (2005) noted great leaders build resonant relationships with those around them, and the development of self and others are the keys to resonant leadership. Within the construct of emotional intelligence, Boyatzis and McKee built out the domains and competencies as to how we manage ourselves and relationships. They stated,

The resonant style of leadership embraces reflection, revitalization, and renewal of the mind, body, heart, and spirit. The description of resonance and its relationship to music, vibrations, tones, etc., is symbolic of the fact that resonant leaders tend to create. Emotional Intelligence is a large element of the composition of the resonant leader. The four competencies of Emotional Intelligence Domain are: Self Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Management. The domain and competencies describe how well we understand and manage ourselves and our emotions in the first two, and the latter two describe how well we recognize and manage the emotions of others, build relationships, and work in complex social systems. (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005, p. 28)

In part one of the emotional intelligence competencies, the personal competence of these elements describes how leaders manage themselves. Social competence describes how leaders manage relationships. Resonant leadership encompasses both the personal and the social that illustrates the combination of strengths that provides a balance in managing operations as well as managing people.

In *Resonant Leader*, Boyatzis and McKee (2005) described the story of leadership by a resonant leader at a primary school. Mrs. Zikhali understood the importance of managing relationships, building partnerships, and developing teamwork when she had the idea to build the Nkomo Primary School in Zimbabwe, South Africa, based on hope and a dream. She was a resonant leader who was determined to fulfill her dream of building a school according to Boyatzis and McKee, who described it in this way:

In 1998, she looked around her community and saw the need to build an educational facility that would provide a quality education to the children in the area. All she had at first was some small land, a reed hut, and a makeshift classroom under trees, and whatever materials she could find. Sixty hopeful and eager children came to the school. For some people, this would have been enough-surely it was better than nothing.

Mrs. Zikhali's vision for a better future drove her into action. She decided to raise money to build classrooms quickly, in a way that involved the community. First, she wrote to heads of large corporations in South Africa, explaining the situation and her dream. They listened and responded. Surely hers was not the only request, but something about how she conveyed her message caught people's attention. (p. 148)

Mrs. Zikhali's passion drove her to execute her dream with determination to ensure she would make her dream a reality. The Nkomo Primary School now thrives with more than 760 children, 11 classrooms, and two teachers' rooms. Mrs. Zikhali made sure to keep the vision alive and working for the community of parents, teachers, and students to see when visiting and working throughout the school. The vision for the school was known throughout the community and provided a foundation for students, teachers, and the community:

The Nkomo Primary School's vision is to . . . provide quality education that will develop the potential of every learner . . . We are dedicated to transforming education in order to build a firm foundation. In doing this, we will insure that our school provides a relevant and quality learning experience to learners and all stakeholders in the school community. (p. 149)

This style of leadership that resonates with others is that the leader is attuned to the self and aware of their emotions and character that increases the value of trust in the eyes of those who are watching. The old adage of "actions speak louder than words" remains true today for those who are looking for authentic and trustworthy characteristics in a leader. Leaders are often "sized up" in times of conflict or crisis, and how they respond makes a big difference in whether the staff or organizational members will follow the leader. The spirit of a leader is expressed when the actions taken by that leader reflect actions being taken for the good of the organization, people, or communities. Successful leaders inspire others to trust and follow the path of those that express their credibility through their actions. Even in crisis it is critical that the leader is able to convey confidence and

demonstrate the strength required to establish belief and trust of the people. To be able to hone in and understand the needs of others is critical to keeping people on one accord:

To inspire others, the leader must be in touch with his or her own emotions, and no matter how difficult the situation, must also engage hope personally. Then the leader needs to communicate this hopeful state and spread it, consciously and unconsciously, verbally and nonverbally. In times of crisis, the leader has to convey enormously difficult information, acknowledging the traumatic emotional realities of the day, and simultaneously reassuring people that things are moving in the right direction – engendering hope, not fear; resilience and the sense of overcoming great odds, not confusion or paralysis. (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005, pp. 171-172)

Self-awareness lends itself to the adaptation of emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence. Self-management comprises emotional self-control, transparency, adaptability, achievement, initiative, and optimism. The qualities of personal management enable leaders who possess these elements to have a sense of being grounded in self. These qualities allow for introspection and reflection on matters they have to face while being aware of their own self-confidence and the trust from those they lead.

In part two of the emotional intelligence domain, social competence describes how relationships are managed. Social awareness encompasses empathy, organizational awareness, and service, all of which help to establish relationships and build upon them. This domain helps to balance the roles of the leader while incorporating qualities that directly affect the person. Leaders who seek to understand those on their teams through

listening, understanding their concerns, and even becoming involved in their lives when welcomed to do so are able to open doors of opportunity for growth, direction, and personal attainment of goals and strategies. Mentors and coaches can be equally good at this because of their ability to assess situations from not only the head, but the heart.

Managing relationships through the lens of emotional intelligence is a critical attribute as leaders try to move the milestones to accomplish goals within an organization. Leaders must use their influence, build relationships, provide guidance in creating teams and how they should work together, as well as building each individual's capacity that affords the progression of success for an entire team.

Participants as Resonant Leaders

I recognized many of the aforementioned leadership traits in Dr. Hines and Bishop Brazier as I observed how they weaved their emotional intelligence into their pathways of leadership and relationships. Both of these individuals had a strong constitution of their vision and mission. Bishop Brazier had an unyielding call almost from the beginning of his ministry to help people, invite sinners to Christ, and build a multi-purpose center to include two sanctuaries, a banquet hall, and a family center. His vision also included major community developments for the Woodlawn area that supported housing and street transformations that led to the removal of a main artery of transportation known as "The L," short for "Elevated Train" that was built over the east part of 63rd Street where the church was located. The removal of those unused train tracks paved the way for essential residential development in the area. Before Bishop Brazier's death in 2010, most of his vision had been fulfilled and the rest of the work was left to his son, Dr. Byron T. Brazier. Bishop Brazier's commitment and steadfastness

(self-awareness) to what he felt God told him to do was a mission from which he never strayed. Even in his work in Washington, DC, with the Center for Community Change where he was responsible for developing plans for community development (self-management) in major cities across the United States before leaving his post to go into full-time ministry, the competencies of emotional intelligence demonstrated the elements and characteristics of the essence of Bishop Brazier. From the time he became Pastor of the Apostolic Church of God in 1960 to his death in 2010, he exhibited social awareness through his counseling, his personal sessions with me, and his service to the community. He was a trusted mentor, confidante, Pastor, and civic leader to many, but most specifically to the 20,000+ congregants he led as Pastor of the church and civic leader of the Woodlawn community.

Educational leadership has many pathways to reach and teach students to attain positive outcomes in their academic pursuits. It takes leadership to carefully create and develop plans that lift a lesson off the page and into the minds of students striving for academic growth. When we describe how a leader knows the strengths and weaknesses of a team, Dr. Hines emulates one with characteristics of a resonant leader. When she was tapped to lead John Hope Community Academy in the low-income community of Englewood in the South Side of Chicago, she knew the task of taking a Grade 4–8 school model and re-creating a Grade 6–12 school would not be easy without the right people in place. When she was selected as the leader of the school, she made the decision to have every teacher re-apply for their positions to ensure they had certifications to teach within their content area. Of course, this did not sit well with the current staff at John Hope, and many of the veteran teachers decided to leave the school and find teaching positions

elsewhere in the district. The strategic method behind these actions was to validate the instructional capacity and the ability to serve as a quality teacher for the school, including those teachers she brought with her from her former school, which helped her accomplish the mission set before her. Also, her intentions for the students were non-negotiable—the students were the most important element in the whole picture and all she was after was academic success. She began to research the community and built relationships that were essential to the success of the school. Being located in an impoverished area caused many of the social ills associated with this culture to be pervasive throughout the community, and she addressed these issues head on by going out into the streets and talking with local gang members and store owners and seeking out ill-engaged parents of some of the high-risk students. She even brought her own security team over with her because she knew their strengths and how they could assist with some of the safety problems she would incur as the new leader. The descriptive resonance of her leadership would become known throughout the community, and her tenacity to stay at the helm and address problems as they emerged gave her a reputation of being a relentless leader who would attain excellence in the school despite the cost she would encounter from the naysayers and those who resisted her changes.

Though it was a difficult course of action to take to transform the middle school into a high school, Dr. Hines changed the name of the former John Hope Community Academy to the John Hope College Prep High School. The school's data, graduation rate, and attendance and enrollment rates would grow exponentially over the years as many eighth graders would apply to become students at the high school, which garnered a

reputation of academic success and lived up to the motto of “Excellence Without Excuses.”

Boyatzis and McKee (2005) referenced some poignant thoughts on resonant leadership, stating,

Resonant leaders live their values, and they truly care about people. They create a sense of hope about the future and excitement about the present, for themselves and others. So, how do you know if you are a resonant leader. Consider these questions:

- Am I inspirational? *and*
- Do I create an overall positive emotional tone that is characterized by hope? *and*
- Am I in touch with others? Do I know what is in others hearts and minds? Do I experience and demonstrate compassion? *and*
- Am I mindful – authentic and in tune with myself, others, and the environment? (pp. 202-203)

These questions provide context to the role of a resonant leader; however, there is a familiar crossover with the prior qualities of leadership that are very connected to the role of a servant leader, which I will discuss in the following section.

Servant Leadership

A servant leader values the ability to serve others, usually putting others first before considering themselves. Many servant leaders find comfort in ensuring their external roles and responsibilities include taking care of those around them, whether it is

their staff, community, church members, or students. It can be a sacrifice to be a servant leader because internal roles (e.g., family, social life, etc.) can become secondary.

There are many examples of leaders who have demonstrated their service for people and causes. Mother Teresa of Calcutta is a classic example of an individual who used her life to help people dying from HIV/AIDS, leprosy, and tuberculosis. She founded an organization in 1950 through the Roman Catholic Church entitled the Missionaries of Charity that included over 4,000 nuns who served the mission with purpose. Her entire life was dedicated to serving and helping others overcome difficulty or providing resources to help the underserved. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a renowned civil rights activist, spent his entire life working as a minister and took upon himself the torch of social justice to commit to transform a segregated nation into one where all men were created equal and in which Black people, specifically, would be treated as such. His life tragically ended fighting this battle. Though Dr. King knew his journey through the ravages and uncertainty of his plight could end this way, he dedicated his life to being a servant to many people across this nation, specifically those from the South. Dr. King and Mother Teresa demonstrated that servant leaders put service first. The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership (n.d.) stated,

The Servant-Leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant: first, to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test is: do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And what is the effect

on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or at least, not be further deprived? (para. 2)

The essence of servant leadership is knowing who is important and how you make them feel by being an example through your own leadership. In servanthood, the notion that the customer comes first is made to be true in many instances when there is a true servant leader. Blanchard (2018) described the dichotomy of servant leadership results when you turn the traditional hierarchical pyramid upside down, as instead of the people in the organization becoming responsible they become responsive, according to the implementation/servant role. They do not tend to serve from the top down but from the bottom up. Blanchard stated,

When you turn the organizational pyramid upside down, rather than your people being responsive to you, they become responsible – able to respond, and your job as the leader/manager is to be responsive to your people. This creates a very different environment for implementation. (p. 11)

This model is characteristic of true servant leadership when executed intentionally across organizations.

In my experiences with Dr. Hines and Bishop Brazier, they always demonstrated that the people in the organization should be the ones with the strongest voice of support or guidance. They depended on others to help them support their vision and implement the goals that were set forth for specific strategies. In my work with Bishop Brazier and Dr. Hines, the people (students) were always at the forefront of any idea, mission, or event. The engagement of others and keeping their interest and collaboration with the goals was a mindset that helped to develop programs, key initiatives, and support for the

successful accomplishment of well-developed plans that were implemented by both leaders. Their consistency and fortitude as leaders were the key ingredients to maintaining trust, building key relationships, and sustaining them throughout so goals and outcomes are accomplished simply because of the mindset of the followers—if there is faith in the leadership, there is nothing that cannot be accomplished. Blanchard (2018) indicated:

The servant aspect of servant leadership is all about turning the hierarchy upside down and helping everyone throughout the organization develop great relationships, get great results, and, eventually, delight their customers. That's what servant leadership is all about. (p. 13)

The evidence that an organization or school is led by a servant leader lends itself to the empowerment of the people it serves and the dedication and commitment they have to the leader. Attaining goals, ensuring the success of programs and events, and other responsibilities are a priority even if the leader cannot be present. The sign of trust and integrity from the leader marks itself as a common thread of success to the organization or school. The essence of the servant leader is the ability to create high-performing teams with a sense of independence and ownership, knowing that accountability of any sort is not exactly to the leader but to the team. Harris (2020) wrote in his book, *The Servant Leader's Manifesto*, about the value and the success of teams guided by a servant leader:

Because servant leaders are intent listeners rather than dictators, they:

- Gather the risks, fears, anxieties, and worries of the team related to the task
- Dedicate themselves to clarifying, coaching, and coaxing solutions out of each team member

- Master getting teams to self-organize around agreed ways of working to resolve disputes, makes decisions, reward progress, and mitigate risk
- Focus their team's attention on increasing the speed and efficiency of response to customer needs and overcoming inevitable barriers on the path to achievement. (p. 23)

I often talk to school principals about the culture and climate of their schools and how they can build support, oneness, trust, and academic success when everyone in the school is on the same page and speaking the same language. I learned how this works from Dr. Hines when she set up a system of “non-negotiables” for staff while students were in the school that included varied forms of demonstrating respect for the school, oneself, and the staff; dressing for success; demonstrating the importance of attending school and the value of studying; and more concepts that addressed the social development of the students. These virtues were apparent to every student in every classroom, and the teachers and staff were the ones to ensure they were adhered to by all. Though Dr. Hines was the leader, her virtues were implemented by the staff without them having to be told. If a new teacher came to the school, they were trained to incorporate the same virtues and carry the message forth in their classroom. The fulfillment of a school-wide mission and vision became pervasive and consistent from the staff to the students.

I have found servant leaders often have patience and tenacity, as well as a strong will to ensure their teams are developed and trained to understand the upside-down hierarchy and the importance of making sure the customer/student/team members come first. Their passion to lead themselves is usually the same way they lead their teams. They become part of the team, not one who will stand and admire from afar. They do not

ask anything of their team that they are unwilling to do themselves. One of the first examples of servant leadership can be found in the Holy Bible, Matthew 23:11, where Jesus gives a lesson to a listening crowd and his own disciples about following leaders who do not practice what they preach. After explaining to the crowd about people who want to be seen for their deeds and those who want to be recognized by many for the good they do, he warns them about exalting themselves too high, and they should try to understand the quality of humility as a servant. In verse 11 of the chapter, Jesus simply states, “The greatest among you shall be your servant.” This is the essence of servant leadership.

There is a large amount of literature on mentoring that supports its popularity and variety across artistic forms, in the medical field, in the business realm, and more recently in education. This research is used to connect the idea of mentoring as an inherent outcome of effective leadership and coaching. The research around mentoring mainly points to formal programs that have been developed to track outcomes and experiences for all stakeholders, including the mentor, mentee, and the specific organization. Relationships that are built through connections to mentoring and coaching are often long lasting and intentional to the course or path of the individual. Elements of trust, confidentiality, character, and other tangible factors lead to successful patterns of mentoring. Kent et al. (2013) stated:

In order for mentoring to commence, some type of relationship formation must occur and the quality of these relationships correlates to the effectiveness of the mentoring that ensues. Some mentoring relationships can be defined as “high quality,” as the mentee learns from the mentor and uses the knowledge gained to

have a more productive and meaningful life, while other mentoring relationships can be defined as “nonproductive,” as the mentor and mentee have a dysfunctional relationship that has proven to be non-effective as the mentor and the mentee has a dysfunctional relationship that has proven to be noneffective. (p. 3)

Over the years, I have noticed the most successful mentoring relationships are those that grow organically through a natural attraction between mentor and mentee. A mentor who has traveled this road will confirm that each and every mentoring relationship is different, with its own fresh set of challenges. Consistency is key in building successful relationships between the two. Steinmann (2017) recounted,

Sustaining a mentoring relationship does require some form of structure, a healthy dose of good old discipline, and some input for conversations. These conversations should be to gain a greater understanding of purpose and goals, and to explore career aspirations. Mentors need to intentionally create opportunities to make sense of and discuss their mentees’ performance. (p. 17)

Mentoring is a form of coaching. Similar to the collegial inquiry, it, too, creates an opportunity for adults to broaden their perspectives, examine their assumptions, and share their expertise and leadership; however, this occurs more privately—usually one-on-one versus in a group, although not always. Mentoring takes many forms, from exchanging information to providing emotional support to new and experienced staff or principals.

One essential element in structuring mentoring relationships in education is to consider the fit between the mentor and mentee and the fit between the principal’s expectations for teachers and teachers’ developmental capacities to engage in this

practice. A person's ways of knowing will influence what they expect and need from a mentor and the kinds of support and challenges that will help their growth. For example, if a mentee is a very large thinker (i.e., they tend toward broad thinking, largely outside of the box), they may need the mentor to help them reframe their thinking and bring it into a more targeted focus. In this way, the information is presented in a much more developmental approach, which allows the mentee to access the information in a way that suits their style for application in real time.

Conclusion

The styles of leadership discussed in this chapter characterize the distinctions of how beneficial these styles can lend themselves to the development of skilled and capable leaders. Being coached or mentored by one who incorporates the qualities of a transformational leader, and one who drives for results and success, fueled with love, talent, and value demonstrates their care and value for the organization. Creating a sense of ownership within an organization helps to drive success in ways that meets the goals, implements sound strategies, and provides a feeling of ownership that leads to a sense of inclusivity among the staff and sets forth a spirit of collegiality or even a "family-like" feel that gives teams a feeling of belonging. These elements of the three leadership styles are shown to make bold and promising results of success and team building because of their connectivity to each other.

In reviewing the characteristics of the two leaders discussed in this chapter, the combination of all three styles seemed to carry over into each other to provide strong and enlightening values that made them solid in their approaches to leading, mentoring, and coaching. The integrity of a person speaks a lot to the work they are able to do in building

structures within an organization or school district that can have profound impacts on those who are a part of or involved with the organization. Transformational, resonant, and servant leadership address the qualities and elements that create change and produce valuable results for academic or organizational success. When being mentored or coached by solid leaders of this kind as I have, one tends to reflect upon the course of an action before making any serious decisions or actions. I have often found myself taking into consideration some of the actions I have seen Dr. Hines or Bishop Brazier take before considering the direction I intend to take. Their counsel and advice have proven to be so beneficial and trustworthy that I have intentionally embedded some of their standards and values within my own service to people.

There are those who may not understand these strands of leadership because they desire to get things done at any cost and to advance themselves to a higher position for personal gain. Working with individuals who only consider their motives of professional advancement within an organization has produced envy, strife, disconnectedness within teams, and professional harm to persons deemed as valuable assets, causing frequent staff turnover and inconsistency in streams of work. Therefore, the powerful lessons of leadership as described in these particular strands continue to provide thought-provoking guidance and lead to creating more leaders who are attuned to the advancement of supportive and meaningful relationships in the workplace.

The literature reviewed in this chapter characterizes some of the attributes that define leadership and its values toward servant leadership. The traits discussed reflect leadership that is trustworthy and service-oriented with a strong display of integrity. They

also show how leaders demonstrate a presence of quality and effective leadership that sustains and drives for successful results within any organization.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes an examination of narrative inquiry and how this methodology provided a means to understanding servant, resonant, and transformational leadership. The telling of personal stories that helped to shape the trajectory of my leadership was intended to show explicit connections to my leadership development through the examples set by two of my mentors.

I chose to employ a narrative approach because it encompasses the art of storytelling in the form of retelling stories and incidents that have contributed to my leadership journey. Though the method has not been widely used in research in general, it has become an acceptable form of capturing lived experiences and using them to support teaching and learning in different models of leadership. Clandinin (2016) stated there are two starting points for narrative inquiry: beginning with living stories or beginning with telling stories. Clandinin described three ways to justify the study of narrative inquiry in this example:

Over the many years of engaging in narrative inquiry, and of working with others in designing and living out narrative inquiries, we have found at least three ways in which we need to justify our studies: personally, in terms of why this narrative matters to us as individuals; practically, in terms of what difference this research might make to practice; and socially or theoretically, in terms of what difference might make to theoretical understandings or to making situations more socially just. (p. 35)

I chose to begin with telling the stories, through interviews, of two people (one who is deceased) who were instrumental in moving me forward into successful leadership

positions. I used the adjacent participant interview method for Bishop Brazier. Adjacent participant interview protocols involve posing questions to a participant with extraordinary knowledge of the primary participant of interest. Adjacent participant interviews can be used as a substitute for the primary participant of interest in cases of incarceration, impairment, or death. In this case, the primary participant of interest, Bishop Brazier, is deceased, so I engaged his widow as an adjacent interview participant because of her extraordinary knowledge of his life and experiences.

In engaging the concept of familial mentorship, it must be understood that the narratives of the mentor and the leader are inextricably linked. The story of the mentor exists ecologically with the journey of the mentee. Understanding the cultivation process, its impacts, and the familial nature of the relationship demands an almost simultaneous narrative and self-narrative, in this case in particular as I was the leader in training.

This study demonstrates the impact of what is shared by the participants, how it is felt deeply, and how it has had a tremendous impact on my path as a leader. This approach to building knowledge around the phenomena of the cultivation of service leadership works in concert with participants' narratives toward a whole and honest understanding of the service leadership cultivation deeply rooted in the familial culture of the Black church. In this study, I discuss the traits of leadership of two impactful leaders who influenced my career deeply, which I also introduced in Chapter 1.

Participants

Dr. Mahalia A. Hines

The influence of Dr. Mahalia A. Hines was essential to my growth as a school and administrative leader. Dr. Hines served as the school principal for 13 years at John Hope

College Prep High School where I taught music. Her leadership was both transformational and resonant, as it gave rise to new and competent leaders from the school who would later in their careers become principals, assistant superintendents, and serve in other senior leadership positions in education. She was also great at mentoring and coaching leaders who were in charge of specific content areas or departments throughout the school. Her approach to building successful schools was to engage educators and build their capacity to become effective leaders in their area of expertise. Dr. Hines modeled qualities of leadership that helped to transform and build a culture of success. Her confidence in her leadership enabled her to look at people, really see them, and determine what they needed. The skills and qualities she saw were implemented holistically in the school, its academic programs, and its culture. She had the ability to determine where people were a good fit based on their skills and her intuition about what they were capable of doing.

Dr. Hines modeled some of these elements in her daily role as educational leader of the school as well as by being a voice for the community when it came to serving the needs of children. Her voice and the demonstration of her actions helped to produce the foundation of leadership in many of the staff and students she served. The psychologist, Dr. Harry A. Overstreet, stated, “The very essence of all power to influence lies in getting the other person to participate” (Maxwell, 2007, pp. 16-18).

Bishop Brazier

Bishop Brazier is an example of a service leader with a tremendous track record in servant leadership, not only as a pastor but also as a civic leader. Bishop Brazier’s leadership style exemplified humility, relationship building, trust, respect, and confidence

as he worked to ensure the members of his church and community could access the resources and support they needed to live a healthy and respectful life. In my many interactions with Bishop Brazier, the examples of his leadership would also become a foundation for the type of leader I would later become. These experiences afforded me the opportunity to learn some valuable lessons in leadership, which I discuss in later chapters. Over the years, Bishop Brazier, who served as pastor of the Apostolic Church of God for over 48 years, would become one of the most respected African American leaders in religion and community engagement.

Personal Narrative

In my journey to becoming a successful leader, the road was filled with ups and downs, some of which took a toll on my progress. However, the echo of “We Shall Overcome” remained a constant mantra in my life that enabled me to “grasp the bull by the horns” and pull myself out of some very debilitating experiences with the help of God. Through these low moments in my life, I studied the lives of other leaders who had similar experiences that deterred their progress but also provided a springboard of opportunity to rebuild so they could continue their path to becoming effective and valuable leaders of their time.

It was these models that catapulted my interest to write this dissertation and demonstrate the powerful influence of others to show that dark challenges can become windows of opportunity. I spent many years trying to find my true identity and searching for my purpose in life. Mark Twain stated it this way, “There are two remarkable events that happen in every one’s life, the first is the day they were born; the second is the day they find out the reason why” (Kerpen, 2013, para. 4).

In my search for the destiny of my purpose in life, I was scourged with pitfalls and failures that led to an inevitable journey to a “rock bottom” experience. This is a narrative inquiry about my life, the situations that led to my “rock bottom” experience, and the journey back to myself. I explore my own personal life alongside the figures who helped to show me how to rebuild my life and experience my own personal “overcoming” through self-love, self-reliance, responsibility, and accountability.

Narrative Study

Bishop Arthur M. Brazier, the late pastor of the Apostolic Church of God (Chicago), and Dr. Mahalia A Hines, retired educator in Chicago Public Schools, have helped me to reflect upon my leadership and its role in developing others in their leadership and mentoring roles.

Adjacent Interview: Bishop Arthur M. Brazier

I conducted one of the interviews with the wife of Arthur M. Brazier, as Bishop Brazier had passed away in July of 2010. It was important to capture the life and leadership of Bishop Brazier, who was not only a pastor of a church but also a well-known civic leader. His wife, through the interview, was able to provide insight into the growth and development of Bishop Brazier’s leadership skills that were able to affect many civic issues surrounding housing, community development, and equality for low-income persons or color, as well as addressing the need for spiritual development and growth through the church as a pastor. The stories Bishop Brazier’s wife told during the interview demonstrated the strength of Bishop Brazier as a leader who worked alongside some well-known leaders, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Dr. Leon Finney, Saul Alinsky, and Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, to name a few. I wanted to capture these stories

about Bishop Brazier because it was his influence and advice that afforded me opportunities to grow in the areas of education and music. The stories that were presented in this interview captured the “reliving” of special moments when Bishop Brazier modeled “teaching moments” that could be used for future mentoring and coaching in areas of leadership. I conducted the interview in Mrs. Brazier’s home over the course of 4 hours as we sat at the dining room table and she reminisced about the life of her husband and his efforts to bring equality to community, education, and housing. I prepared questions in advance of the interview but Mrs. Brazier chose to talk openly about the successes and challenges her husband experienced as a pastor and a community leader. She chose to personally discuss the perils of raising a family while traversing through the challenges of racism, inequity, and gang problems. She spoke of how tumultuous it was to raise four children in the heart of Woodlawn while being afraid of the threats of violence against her husband because of his alignment with the civil rights movement and his support of his friend, Dr. Martin Luther King.

I recorded and transcribed the interview for reference to the questions I prepared. Mrs. Brazier actually seemed as if she was reliving the period of time she described during the interview. Her vivid memory and candid explanations of some of the rumors that circulated her husband’s reputation, such as that he helped store guns in a neighboring church for the Black Stone Rangers, brought back painful emotions and I could feel the disappointment in her voice as she emphatically described those moments. In asking Mrs. Brazier to discuss the life of her prominent husband and pastor, I purposefully organized the conversation by categorizing the questions into three different parts that described Arthur M. Brazier as a man/father, a community leader, and a Pastor.

The engaging conversation allowed Mrs. Brazier to reminisce and recall some very memorable points to his life and how it aligned with hers. The sample questions I posed to Mrs. Brazier in the category of Bishop Brazier “as a man” were as follows:

1. What leaders or instances of leadership influenced Bishop Brazier before he even acknowledged his call to ministry? Did he have an assumption that leadership was being developed innately without a call to the ministry?

2. Bishop lived during times of the Great Depression, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Civil Rights era. How did any of these events directly affect his perception of himself as a Negro at the time?

3. How did Bishop’s perception of himself as a man affect his leadership roles? Who did he envision as a leader, and what characteristics added to that perception?

4. How did his father and mother influence his life as a developing young man?

5. What did Bishop expect out of people he deemed as leaders?

The sample questions I posed to Mrs. Brazier in the category of Bishop Brazier “as a community leader” were as follows:

1. Saul Alinsky was a major influence in Bishop Brazier’s life (Dortch, 1996, p. 50). What type of impact did Alinsky have on Bishop to motivate him to take a more prominent role as a community activist?

2. Did he have any hesitations about starting The Woodlawn Organization (TWO) before it actually began, and how did he deal with the naysayers of that time?

3. The impact of Bishop Brazier’s role as a community leader became much larger than what he could ever expect, according to the book. As he developed into a

sought after leader and organizer, how did he develop and empower those around his efforts, and what were his expectations of those who worked with or represented him? Finally, the sample questions I posed to Mrs. Brazier in the category of Bishop Brazier “as a Pastor” were as follows:

1. How intentional was Bishop, as a Pastor, to keep civic business out of the way of the purpose and the mission of the church?

2. Bishop did not allow the use of the pulpit as a platform for politics. How did he manage the two entities as a leader of both church and civic issues?

As I asked Mrs. Brazier to talk about the different aspects of her husband’s life, she vividly recalled how much of an influence he was to so many people. As she talked, I reflected on Bishop Brazier’s strong influence on me and many of the decisions I had to make as a leader. This led back to the guiding questions related to the impactful nature of the lessons of leadership I learned from Bishop Brazier.

Interview: Dr. Hines

I conducted the second interview with Dr. Hines, my former principal who encouraged me to become an educational administrator. During the interview, it was important to discuss how Dr. Hines developed her leadership style and the persons who influenced her during her time as a teacher and a principal. The stories of her life and leadership connected to me in a way that showed various levels of personal and professional engagement in other professions before she landed on an educational path.

I conducted the interview with Dr. Mahalia Hines in her winter home in Pembroke Pines, Florida, and though I had constructed questions from which I knew she could speak, she chose to converse candidly about her leadership and at times took the

conversation in a different direction. She was passionate about her influence with her son, Rashid Lonnie Lynn, known popularly as “Common,” and how he had developed into a consummate professional actor, rapper, and author because of her diligence and consistency in raising him to understand business and people. I created questions and comments that would engage Dr. Hines in a provocative conversation about her professional life in the corporate world before she chose to become an educator. I transcribed the interview for reference to sections where I did not ask a question, but through the course of conversation, she alluded to some of the questions I had prepared.

Dr. Hines has always demonstrated her passion for mentoring and coaching and has supported many educators in leadership positions. The questions I presented to Dr. Hines encompassed her style of mentoring and leadership. Some of the questions included the following:

1. Describe the trajectory of your leadership from the beginning to the present.
2. What has been the most notable experience in your leadership and what was its impact on your life?
3. Who were some of the influences in your career(s) that impacted your leadership path, and what were the specific elements of the leadership of those persons that you felt would provide substantial tools of influence?
4. How important is mentoring?
5. Is mentoring important to include in one’s own leadership platform?
6. As a successful leader, are you able to assess the qualities of a potential leader and what are those qualities?

7. Is there a process you use when you are faced with having to follow or work with a person who you know does not possess the qualities of an impactful leader?

Personal Justifications

Narrative inquirers work to validate their own experiences and put them in context through personal justifications that provide the framework of their own experiences in life to enable us to see ourselves as being and becoming within the inquiry. Clandinin (2016) provided three levels of context to understand this method: “First, we must inquire into who we see ourselves as being and becoming, within the inquiry” (p. 36). When I first started as a music teacher, I did not aspire to become an administrator until later when Dr. Hines gave me responsibilities that required me to think and act as a leader. I started to recognize how to manage and execute professional tasks attached to the school staff once I was given the privilege to do so.

The second of Clandinin’s (2016) levels of context is as follows: “Second, without an understanding of what brings each of us to our research puzzles, we run the risk of entering into our relationships without a sense of what stories are living and telling in the research relationships” (p. 36). By the time I had entered the leadership phase of my career, I knew I had developed into something more than when I started. The experiences of my life framed the way I thought about people and how to develop relationships with them. The models of both Dr. Hines and Bishop Brazier were a launching pad from which I began to develop my leadership traits. I understood that in order to create change within an organization, those within it must feel trust in you that shows your integrity, trust, and interpersonal relationship skills. When you bring your

authentic self to the table, you create synergy that bonds the two together—leader and followers.

The third of Clandinin's (2016) levels of context is as follows: "Third, without an understanding of who we are in the inquiry, we are not awake to the ways we attend to the experiences of research participants" (p. 36). I remember sitting in the Apostolic Church of God listening to a sermon delivered by Bishop Brazier during which he talked about his former life as a party-goer, smoking cigarettes, drinking liquor, and carousing with women before his deliverance and entrance into the Christian ministry. He talked about how he knew he needed to experience a change in his life and how he had to depend on Christ to do it through him. That made me reflect on my own insecurities and how they led me to a drug addiction. I instantly connected with Bishop Brazier and felt the commonality we had through living a wild life, but discovered that I, too, experienced a change similar to Bishop Brazier's. This created a long-lasting trust in my relationship with Bishop Brazier as a mentor that would last for many years. But it also connected me to him in ways that I would use to develop my own leadership characteristics and behaviors that would be able to influence, build trust, and create positive results from those I would later serve as their leader.

Analysis

Self-Narrative

I used the data that emerged through the personal narrative process as a lens for the coding process of participant data. I was the beneficiary and ultimate end product of both the leadership cultivation processes enacted by the mentors, as well as the characteristics that led to the processes. The narrative inquiry was the lens through which

I coded the participant data with respect to the ecology and interconnection of the personal narrative as the ultimate result of the successful implementation of the leadership cultivation model.

Participants' Narratives

I analyzed and coded the participants' narrative data through the lens of personal data. It is important that the evolution of the narrative is clearly communicated in order to understand the development of the story and how it was applied to my reality. Wolcott (1994) theorized,

Another way for the analyst to maintain control is to draw connections with external authority. Most often this is accomplished through informed references to some recognized body of theory in one's special field, or to its recognized classics, in the tradition of the literature review. (p. 34)

Through this lens, participant data went through three coding phases: an open coding phase for broad themes, an axial coding phase in which sub-themes and relationships between themes began to emerge, and ultimately a thematic coding phase in which theme combinations were solidified based on the grouping processes of the first two coding phases. The authenticity of the narratives serves to illuminate the related experience of the researcher:

More recently, the researcher has been allowed, even encouraged, to make the connections personal or part of everyday experience – such as to one's own expectations. There is no way for the reader to controvert a researcher's declaration, for example, that something is-or is not-what the researcher as person had anticipated all along. (Wolcott, 1994, p. 34)

The power of thinking narratively about the study creates insight into the researcher and the participants to allow for understanding the experience between the two and authentic relationships obtained through their interactions either in the past or currently.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

In this chapter, I reflect upon the participants' narratives to make connections and provide examples of how their character and integrity influenced their leadership styles, including how they were perceived by others in both their personal lives and in their careers. I also use my own personal narrative to discuss how I overcame obstacles, which in the long run helped me to become a person with a strong resolve and understanding of myself and others so I could lead with a balanced perspective. These experiences and the lessons learned from my mentors would later shape how I treated people in the workplace and how I ultimately learned to value bringing my true self to forefront. In discussing the interviews, I illustrate how their leadership developed over time and how it influenced their careers, including the guidance they provided me as I traversed through careers in education and music. The styles of both participants contributed to my development in leadership through observations, modeling, and working for them. I noticed that while I was being mentored, there were some qualities in each of them that were unique identifiers with which I connected. Neither of them was the "soft" type, as both were resolute in their expectations and demands. They were "no-nonsense" and this is something I noticed helped me to grow in my space where I gained confidence and assurance in myself and my ability to lead. Through this observation, I found that "mentor pairing" is a sensitive element when partnering two people together when working to build the capacity of the mentee. The narratives provide further insight into their integrity and character and provide a scope of my life and why I did not need to be coached or mentored with a "soft touch."

Personal Narrative

I was born in 1960 on the South Side of Chicago at the height of the civil rights movement. The name, speeches, and social prominence of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. were discussed with regularity in my Chatham area home. I recall hearing my parents talking about him around the kitchen table. I remember how his image on our black-and-white television galvanized the whole family. Though I was too young to fully understand his mission and its eventual impact on the nation, the tune “We Shall Overcome,” irrefutably the theme song of the movement, had a profound effect on me.

In 1964 on Christmas Day, my parents gave me a toy organ. I would spend hours pecking out sounds and melodies, completely captivated by the small instrument. At first it was just “joyful noise” to my parents until one morning I called upstairs to my mother as she was getting ready for work. She told me she would be down in a few minutes after she finished dressing. When my mother entered the den where I was sitting in front of the toy organ, I began to play “We Shall Overcome” without a mistake. My mother actually made me play the song over and over again while making calls to some of her friends who listened from the other end of the phone. She was late to work that day. Without saying it, we both knew, instinctively, a major shift had happened—my life’s work had been set in motion.

Soon after, I began formal study of the organ with weekly music lessons and daily practice. Over the next few years, I would advance to a full-scale console Wurlitzer organ. As an active member of the youth department of my local United Church of Christ, I was asked to accompany the youth choir one Sunday. This led to my joining the music ministry and sparked the beginning of my career as a professional musician. At the

request of the new church pastor, I began to play for the morning worship services. The church, which was once on the brink of shutting its doors completely, was now thriving with the addition of a charismatic new minister and the formation of a dynamic gospel choir, bringing in over 200 members every month. Trinity United Church of Christ with the Reverend Jeremiah A. Wright, Jr. at its helm would soon become one of the city's leading houses of worship.

As a teenager, I was totally committed to my faith. I desired to live a lifestyle that I believed was the correct Christian way. I was a stalwart member of the church and community and a conscientious high school student. I dated a nice young lady who came from a wholesome background with positive standards and values. However, as I became more involved in the church choir and began performing out of town at other churches and venues, I was exposed to the many negative aspects of teenage life. Some of the young people in the choir would drink alcohol and smoke marijuana recreationally. Although I was not interested in any of those activities at the time, eventually my curiosity got the better of me.

I soon became intimately involved with another young lady who introduced me not only to marijuana, but to angel dust and other opiates. It was not long before these indulgences became a regular activity. Unlike my first girlfriend, this new young lady was from a broken home and her adoptive mother was an alcoholic. She had been exposed to things that, heretofore, I had not. Our backgrounds contrasted starkly. Being from a two-parent household surrounded by the love of family and a conservative, middle-class community, I had a sense of security, a firm foundation upon which to propel into manhood. However, it was through this veil of protectiveness, through the

shelter of my upright upbringing that I ventured into worlds unknown, intrigued by life on the “other side of the tracks.” My experimentation with drugs became more prevalent during this time. In private, I smoked “reefer” daily and drank alcohol every night when I did not have to work. I recall quite vividly my father saying to me, “Smokin’ that stuff is going to lead you to something harder and it’s going to mess up your life.” It was not long before his warning would come to pass. As time progressed, I would fall into a full-fledged drug addiction.

I had always been an inquisitive child. Instead of learning from other people’s mistakes, I had to learn on my own, in my own way. This headstrong stubbornness would later have devastating effects on my life. It was only through the influence and assistance of some very special people that I was able to make a complete turnaround.

Trying to create an identity for yourself can be very dangerous if done without caution other than following the course of life that had been destined for you. I chose to ignore “caution” and follow the path Frank Sinatra sang about in “I Did It My Way.” Though this choice was definitely my own decision, it was one that took me down a road where trying to find my identity caused me to lose my total being. Self-indulgence, partying, a careless sex life, and a variety of drug addictions took a firm grasp of my life and dragged me down the road I had chosen for myself. Throughout this journey, I was in constant pursuit of looking for me! Where was I? Who was I? and what I was to become were questions that plagued my mind and life. My actions dictated which direction I would take, and those actions would become devastating.

Drugs became my identity, my medicine, and my map. They were part of a pursuit, of trying to become someone I did not even know. I managed to escape the

feelings of insecurity, lack of self-esteem, and other inherent mindsets by participating in behaviors that made me feel a part of something and somebody. I sought out peers and others I called “friend” who welcomed me into their world of promiscuity, drug addiction, and loose living while seeking a bond of belonging and connectedness rather than protecting my mind, body, and soul from the negative influences and debauchery associated with this choice of lifestyle. Deep in the recesses of my mind, I knew that eventually I would have to get out of there. I had to get back to believing I had every right to live a life better than the one I had chosen simply because I wanted to fit in.

During this dark period, I was serving as organist of the Christ Universal Temple, a church with metaphysical teaching emanating out of the Unity Church denomination. Pastor Johnnie M. Colemon taught messages of building self-worth and esteem, messages of becoming one with yourself and one with God, and messages of prosperity and being all that you can if you change your thinking and the way you think about yourself. One of my favorite quotes from Rev. Colemon that stuck with me throughout my 3 years of service at the church before getting fired because of my uncontrollable and incessant use of crack cocaine was, “I am the thinker who thinks the thoughts, that makes the things.” She expressed that thoughts become things and you become what you think. Though I was hearing the messages and trying to believe in the context of what she was saying during her weekly church services, I could not get past the vaulted door of my soul to practice the message, rather than just hearing it. My journey would take a deep dive into an abyss of immorality and licentiousness before being able to right itself through drug treatment and counseling, coaching and mentoring, and building a belief in myself that I could become a new “thinker” who made a difference in my life by changing my

thoughts. I was fired from my position at the church after being allowed a stint of outpatient treatment for my drug addiction that proved unsuccessful. It took some determination and tenacity to rebound from the scourge of lowliness I had created for myself through my drug use, but I remembered how I had been mentally equipped prior to that period when I reflected on the phrase, "I am the thinker who thinks the thoughts, that makes the things." I learned this from Rev. Johnnie Colemon while taking classes in metaphysics at her church. It reminded me that I could tap in to the power in my mind and pull on my inner strength to make some valuable decisions as they pertained to the rest of my life. Using my limited ability, I surrendered to the help being offered to me through drug treatment through Catholic Charities that provided 33 days of intensive drug counseling and then a year and a half living in the adjacent halfway house. My time spent with other recovery partners afforded me an opportunity to reassess my perception and reestablish my inner confidence that I could become clean and successful. I remember the support I received from my recovery friends at the facility when I asked Father McDermott, the Chaplain and Director of the Haymarket House where I resided, to see if I could play the piano again after weeks of healing from an unfortunate beating with a bat prior to entering treatment. I sat down at the piano to play a familiar hymn entitled, "In the Garden." As I limped over to the piano after Mass had ended, my recovery friends walked with me, and I sat down with my frail hands that both had been affected by the beating and began to play the hymn. As I played the piano, I began to cry in thanksgiving that I could still maneuver over the keyboard and play the hymn. When I finished, I looked up and there were tears on everyone's faces, sharing with me the grace and thankfulness I experienced on that day.

While living in the facility, I was able to get a job in the company parking lot where the executives parked their cars, which provided some small gains in my cash flow and gave me a sense of pride of being able to make money again. This would inevitably lead me to a job within the organization as a procurement coordinator in charge of acquiring donations for two recovery homes for women and children who were recovering from drug addictions. This was a gracious opportunity that helped to further establish my purpose for living. I stayed there for over 3 years, moved into my own apartment, and resumed the practices of a normal life until I discovered I still felt incomplete. I had no idea this feeling was a revelation because it drove me to consider other options.

Life has a way of presenting options at just the right time, and a door was opened for me to consider a career in education with Chicago Public Schools. I was asked to become a high school substitute teacher at Crane Tech on the West Side of Chicago. I accepted the position and spent 2 years at the school before joining the staff of John Hope Community Academy where Dr. Hines was the principal. This was the beginning of a great career that I never saw coming, but it all worked out in my favor for years to come.

I have always been interested in leaders and those who have the ability to influence people, organizations, systems, and churches. As a child, I watched the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. deliver speeches to throngs of people that moved them to assert themselves and their civil rights that Black people would become heirs to all of the rights and privileges afforded to White people. There were also many other leaders who were influenced by Dr. King, such as the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, Bayard Rustin, Andrew

Young, Jesse Jackson, Congressman John Lewis, and Rev. Billy Kyles. These people also had a significant influence on the civil rights movement.

Rev. Abernathy co-founded the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC); Rev. Jesse Jackson founded Operation Breadbasket, which later became Operation PUSH; Bayard Rustin worked with Dr. King to become a major component of Civil Disobedience; Mahatma Gandhi was a peace maker; and A. Philip Randolph organized the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. The beliefs of Dr. King influenced these individuals and others to evolve through the mission of civil rights and non-violence.

As an educator and a man of faith, I have been fortunate to be able to observe and study the leadership styles and practices of Bishop Arthur Brazier and Dr. Mahalia Hines. These individuals had an indelible impact on the leadership practices I currently implement in my role as a mentor and educational leader within the Chicago Public Schools and as former director of music at the Apostolic Church of God (Chicago). The role of mentors in my educational practice as well as in my professional music career has helped to develop the character, integrity, and the respect I have garnered over the years in my various leadership roles. The connections between the styles of these two leaders are evident through writings, speeches, and relationships, as you will see in this work.

Participant Narratives

In listening to the interviews with Dr. Hines and the wife of Bishop Brazier, it became apparent that I chose them because of the similarities and connections I had with each of them. I found this to be a way to study and understand their experience through the narratives. This style of study can shape the understanding of the experiences through the narrative and create the design for the inquiry. The narrative study revealed seven

primary elements of servant leadership cultivation, transformational leadership, resonant leadership, paternal and maternal leanings, self-starting, activism, opportunity creation, and self-reflection.

Dr. Hines reinforced commitment to change and built solid systems within a school that would otherwise be looked at as a failing school in a low-income community. Her method of change was to use the staff to build a culture of support that strengthened the core of our academic program, our social relationships, and our involvement with parents and families. She met with each teacher to establish procedures. She asked us to implement protocols of honor, respect, and trust in our classrooms, hallways, lunchrooms, and the surrounding community to build a collective voice in the school. She listened to the staff, accepted recommendations and suggestions about changing the climate of the school, and implemented systems based on those conversations.

Our students came to us with many social-emotional challenges and weaknesses, so it was important to build relationships with both students and their parents to help them with any resources or other assistance they needed. We questioned our actions and our processes at times when it seemed as though the more we tried, the harder the tasks would become. However, we stuck to the program and continued to stay the course—treating students and staff with respect and implementing solid structures in the classrooms and in every programmatic area of the school. As long as we were consistent with our structure, change was inevitable.

Dr. Hines was consistent in meeting her goals and involving staff in decisions around student learning and instructional programming. Building relationships with parents, family and community members, and community-based organizations made a

big difference in the school and the surrounding community. Teachers became invested in the work at the school that changed lives and created a vision of hope and success for the students. We received assistance from external partners to support the instructional paths of some of the students through tutoring, exchange programs, and financial support. Students noticed the changes occurring in the school and began their transformation into success. Our staff invested in the leadership and supported every effort to build even stronger student support in our academic programs.

Transformational leadership was an effective form of management that helped to change a low-performing school into a high-performing 4-year institution. The leadership of Dr. Hines is an example of a “change agent:”

Change agents are individuals who have a strong moral purpose and have the ability to skillfully engage in the process of change. Change agents, regardless of their formal position, create new realities within their organization and inspire others to follow. (Allison-Napolitano, 2013, p. 8)

As we focused on our students and their success, we began to see the fruits of our labor as students began receiving full scholarships to 4-year colleges and universities. They were awarded scholarships from the POSSE Foundation and were able to select from a cohort of participating institutions. We were even more proud when two of our students were awarded Gates Millennium Scholarships that enabled them to attend college tuition-free and have an extended opportunity to continue their postgraduate work to complete master’s degrees and beyond.

In retrospect, the use of transformational leadership where the principal became the central change agent speaks to how this worked with the staff. A transformational leader has the ability to create change and lead with intention, as

Transformational change leaders not only influence their colleagues to join them in creating needed change, but also skillfully shepherd the process of change around initiatives, thus increasing the learning capacity of the organization. In turn, learning organizations possess the unique ability to sustain and nurture change initiatives and the leaders at the helm. (Allison-Napolitano, 2013, p. 9)

Howard (2005), in describing the four leadership styles, stated, “Leadership is the process of communication (verbal & non-verbal) that involves coaching, motivating/inspiring, directing/guiding, and supporting/counseling others. This results in the timely production of predetermined organization goals” (p. 385). Howard also pointed out that Warren Bennis, noted author and researcher, believed all leaders of effective groups have four characteristics in common:

First, they provide direction and meaning to the people they are leading. The leaders are responsible for keeping the team members aware of important stated goals and objectives. Second, they generate trust. Third, they prefer action and risk taking. They are willing to operate outside of the safety circle of tradition. Fourth, that they are communicators of hope. Using effective communication skills, leaders encourage others to believe that the expected behavior will result in successful realization of stated goals. (p. 385)

The four characteristics of leadership are qualities that represent both leaders captured in this dissertation and helped influence the trajectory of my leadership. Trust, honesty,

taking risks, and effective communication are elements that have been embedded in the practice of day-to-day work.

The components of transformational leadership have continued to evolve over time. Many leaders do more than set up discussions or meetings without any intention to follow up. They are intentional to accomplish goals, maintain a positive directional path, and to complete tasks related to any event or project where their leadership is necessary. The vast interpretation of this style of leadership has led others to recognize components of the style that help to define its character. For instance, some of our past and current leaders have been persuasive and impactful that the characteristics are equal to that of being transformational. Some of the leaders mentioned at the beginning of this work are considered transformational leaders, as they have influenced movements, traditions, theologies, and more.

A Resonant Leader

A resonant leader knows the strengths and weaknesses and even the internal variances of their team. The resonant leader understands the qualities, shortcomings, and even fears of those in their charge. This type of leader knows and understands how to lead in a context that strengthens those around them while accomplishing the tasks at hand. Resonance is defined by Merriam-Webster (n.d.-b) as “a vibration of large amplitude in a mechanical or electrical system caused by a relatively small periodic stimulus of the same or nearly the same period as the natural vibration period of the system” (para. 1). This definition aids in understanding the resonant leader in that the individual leader acts, themselves, as the vibration. This vibration creates the harmony,

balance, and collaboration that are characteristic of resonant leadership. Resonant leadership is leadership that is attuned to the self and those around the leader.

Dr. Hines modeled resonant leadership through being closely attuned to herself and her own capacity as well as to the capacity of those around her. She was very influential in the leadership space where professional growth could take place through balance of time and work and intentional collaboration between her and those she mentored.

What I basically look for when I'm mentoring someone is people who are willing to go beyond what you asked them to do. And people who come up with ideas themselves. See, many people can implement projects and things that they're given, they're very good at that. But some of them cannot put systems in place to be successful. So I look at how they even set up their classrooms, to put systems in place so that they're successful with the kids. I look at how they interact with other adults. You know, how do they work on a team? Are they just as good at following as they are at leading a project?

I look at the respect that they have for education and what they're doing, you know, and that they don't just see it as a job. but as a career.

Dr. Hines not only studied the mentee, she studied the environment, systems, and the ways in which they interacted with each other. She studied the entire persons and the space they co-created.

This kind of personal competence and the elements demonstrated by Dr. Hines are evidence of how leaders manage themselves. The social competence she displayed reflects how leaders manage relationships. Resonant leadership encompasses both the

personal and the social that illustrates the combination of strengths that provides a balance in managing operations as well as managing people.

Paternal and Maternal Leanings

Paternal and maternal instincts are sometimes found in leaders who display tendencies to “watch over the flock” or “have shepherd-like behavior” that increases their concern and care for those who are being mentored or coached. Taking care of the family, being the big brother or sister, or even serving as a surrogate mother or father are examples of those who exemplify these instincts. Both narratives included examples of paternal and maternal leanings inherent in the mentor. There were elements throughout each of the stories that implied natural leanings toward care. One such example was Dr. Hines, who was the eldest sibling in her family, which does not always lean toward a maternal instinct, but in her case it did and helped to define her leadership style:

I think I became a leader simply because I was the oldest child in my family. And after my mother and father divorced, I was the one who had to take care of my younger brothers and siblings where she would go to work. So I took on, I don't know if you call it a leadership role or a mother role, but it was tricky. So I think that's when it first became apparent. And I think some would call it bossy. And now, you know, you can call the leader. I know that during that time, definitely that became one of the real, I think, very beginning of my leadership because I had to organize them. I had to help. [Even at school in clubs . . .] We had rules and regulations [her sisters] on how they would function, how they were going to dress, and how they were going to act as young ladies. So that was, I think, my very first leadership experience.

It is not clear whether or not Dr. Hines developed maternal instincts within her leadership as a result of being the oldest child or if she mothered her siblings as a result of existing natural and innate maternal instincts, but it is clear that the cultivation of her leadership style formed alongside her nurturing nature.

Dr. Hines's inclination to offer support is demonstrative of the experiences she tailored for her friends, colleagues, and students. It became apparent that Dr. Hines had an innate skillset to fill spaces that were lacking in another's ability to provide for themselves independently. This was evident when she was in college where she not only developed a strong sense of independence for herself, but showed her friends how to advocate for themselves as well:

Like I say . . . in college, I don't think it was much more to leadership where I was definitely supported students who needed help with their grades. I would go and talk to the professors. I would encourage them to go and, you know, show them how to talk to them in order to find out what they needed to do to improve their grades.

This method of coaching/modeling was consistent throughout the leadership style of Dr. Hines. Though it appears she did not attempt to demonstrate an influence through acting like a "mother," her influence always pointed back to the actions of a strong mother who wanted the best for her children. When Dr. Hines spoke of her leadership, she resurfaced her actions of mothering, which we could consider mentoring in a less intimate way. This became evident while teaching history at Morgan Park High School and giving a lesson on the contributions of Black people during the Civil War. A White student made an observation in the classroom, stating, "he didn't think Negroes had made any contribution

to the Civil War, and he didn't know where they got that display from." This prompted Dr. Hines, as was her usual style, to hold further discussions with the student:

And I'll never forget this one boy said that he didn't think Negroes had made any contributions to the Civil War, and he didn't know where they got that display from. And when I went to discuss it with him, he discussed it as if I wasn't Black. So he didn't see me as Black, he saw me as his teacher. So that was a revelation, and it definitely changed how I approached . . . you know, working with those kids out there. And I became very close to them because some of them would come to my house, and definitely . . . I worked with, I always was interested in sports with the athletes and made sure their grades were on par, so that they would be successful, you know, going on to college, and educated not just playing basketball.

Dr. Hines's nurturing style was attributed to how her interactions with people built positive relationships, which was a benefit to her students and colleagues. The element of trust is necessary for those who seek to be mentored or coached by someone they feel truly cares. The benefit of Dr. Hines's efforts to use diversity and inclusion in professional life sustained her validity and effectiveness as a well-rounded leadership mentor and coach.

The paternal aspects of Bishop Brazier were also demonstrated in his path of leadership through his family. His wife of 62 years explained, "He was born to older parents. He was a leader as a child. He was (over) like his nieces and nephews and all of them. He told him what to do." Bishop Brazier grew up during a time when it was very difficult for families to make ends meet:

When we first got married there were no apartments available. Everybody was living in kitchenettes. After we were married 1 year, Lola came, and 1 year after that Byron came—1 year apart, same day, 1 year apart. So, I had two babies. And see . . . Arthur told me he says “now Isabelle, this is just temporary.” And he would come home and he would go places you know, and they said, “they don’t take children!” “They don’t take children? I said, Arthur, you’re not looking.” Oh, I was something to deal with, you know. So we stayed with Elder Medders for 4 years with two babies, and after 4 years, we moved into 5937 Wabash, that big courtway on Wabash, and Elder McGee was responsible for that because he lived in that apartment and there was a one bedroom that opened up, and we were happy to get there. And we stayed there until . . . We were there for about 6 years in a one bedroom. And Lola and Byron were about 3 and 4, and we had a bedroom, a kitchen and a big living room. So we had bought a pullout for the kids to sleep on. And then 5 years later, I had Janice. And then we really had to move.

Bishop Brazier was intentional about the care for his family of four children. Although his civic and religious life kept him extremely busy, he always made time to ensure his family was taken care of when presented with any challenges. His care and concern for his family were duplicated in his role as pastor of the Apostolic Church of God, as he shepherded over a flock of over 20,000+ members in his later years. I remember Bishop Brazier speaking about his wife during a Mother’s Day celebration at the church and describing how faithful and dedicated his wife was to raising their family while he conducted his ministry and civic duties throughout his career. He explained that the sacrifices he had to make in his career would have not been possible had it not been for a

dedicated wife who understood his life and learned to make the necessary adjustments for the family so a balance between the two could be maintained.

Self-Starting

Self-starters are those with a propensity to begin a journey without fear of the consequences. They are risk takers who employ great confidence, resilience, and the freedom to take risks toward an amenable resolution of a problem or project. The values of independence and confidence often result in setting goals and following through to achieve them.

A value of leadership that appeared to be magnified throughout the two case studies is that they were both self-starters in their professions. Both Dr. Hines and Bishop Brazier were independent thinkers who were motivated by their own desires to advance their civic, theological, educational, and professional agendas. A young Dr. Hines knew early she had the ability to lead initiatives, projects, and even people. While in high school, the support she offered led to the building of her ability to cultivate her professional skills as a leader:

And they used to have helpers in the office, and I would do that. I don't know if that was more leadership or support, but I know I would organize things for him and help the coach get the basketball team together. So, I always worked in offices in the school, you know, helping different teachers organize and things that I think that was probably the beginning of my organizational skills, which would lead to tools that I would use in leadership.

Individuals with a propensity to become a self-starter often possess intrinsic values that allow them to build on their own strengths. Confidence is a major element for strong

leaders, an element both Dr. Hines and Bishop Brazier possessed. In order to move forward with ideas and projects, the confidence of the leader is not only demonstrated through their own capability, but also to those who support or follow the leader because of their actions. Bishop Brazier knew he had to demonstrate the confidence needed when he decided to initiate efforts around housing developments in the Woodlawn community on the South Side of Chicago where he grew up. There was an elevated train track that ran through the middle of 63rd street, a main thoroughfare in the area, and in order to begin the process of revitalization for the community, he proposed that the structure had to be demolished in order to pave the way for more modern housing:

He had to fight real hard to get that land in Woodlawn. And there was a gas station there on the corner of Kenwood and 63rd, and of course we had to get rid of that.

And then Arthur looked up and he saw the “L” [El Train track]. He said, “this has got to come down,” because it wasn’t being used because the train stopped at Cottage Grove. And so they told him, “Well, you have to go to Washington.” They were trying to make it hard for him, that you have to go to Washington to the Department of Transportation. And he did, and got the permission to tear that “L” down.

Leaders demonstrate resilience when they face obstacles that impede on their path. Bishop Brazier dealt with many obstacles but never let them deter him from the goal of having that enormous structure demolished. As a result of his perseverance as a self-starter, the Woodlawn Organization and other community organizations have been actively engaged in the modern development of the Woodlawn area with homes,

shopping centers, and educational programs. Self-starters usually see opportunities and embrace problems, obstacles, and challenges and work toward making the end goal a reality.

Dr. Hines also embraced a challenge in her professional career when she became the principal of John Hope Community Academy. Her aspiration was to create an educational environment where she could expand the educational path of middle school students from seventh to 12th grade. Her idea was driven by the success of students who were able to stay in certain cultures and environments that built academic trends and social interaction within a school building. She was able to develop a high school the first year she arrived as principal, and this is how she summed it up:

I felt that, you know, one of them was creating that high school and being able to keep the middle school kids because, so let's just say creating a seven to 12. That was one of the greatest achievements because with that became continuity for the kids that we had. They were able to stay with the adults, many of the adults that they had all the way through graduation, whether they were the teachers or not, not only that, we . . . to be able to know the parents of children for that many years, you know, it just made a difference in the success that you could have with kids. And I think, so it was a combination of three things, being able to create that school and also being able to pretty much rid the schools of gangs. I felt very good about being able to do that and to create a culture where people were happy. And to me, it was a culture of learning, a climate of learning, community, you know, being able to create a culture community, which enhanced learning.

The efforts of developing a high school with a thread from middle school to high school produced an academically positive program and a great experience for the students who wanted to continue their education at John Hope after graduating from the eighth grade. The academic program of the school produced results where students not only received many scholarships from the Gates Millennium Foundation (Bill and Melinda Gates), but also scholarships from the POSSE Foundation and many other entities that advanced students to other educational opportunities. John Hope was known to be a stellar high school in Englewood for many years, not only because of the academic programs, but also because of the high-quality sports programs, the Debate teams, the music program, and others. In 2000, the ladies basketball team went on to become state champions in a playoff game against longtime winners Marshall High School. Leadership characteristics such as resilience helped to drive the success of targeted goals that produced positive results and successful outcomes.

Opportunity Creation

Leaders often have the ability to seek out opportunities that help to build their capacity to get things done, and they also encounter times when opportunities present themselves to the leader. This has a positive effect on leadership, and at times, can present adverse effects as well. Whichever case it may be, strong leaders do not give up or give in, but seize the moment to embrace challenges and risks. Both Dr. Hines and Bishop Brazier led instances where opportunities presented themselves to create change and implement courses of action for the benefit of those they led or served.

Bishop Brazier's leadership served two purposes: preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ and serving Woodlawn as a community organizer. During a period in his life, he

expanded his role in community development and became involved in a major organization in the Washington, DC, area:

Bishop Brazier's involvement in community development also has a national dimension. In 1970 he worked with the non-profit Washington, D.C - based Center for Community Change (CCC). The organization focused on providing technical assistance to community organizations in the areas of community redevelopment and the empowerment of the poor. It conducted research under government contracts and published the results. Bishop Brazier is a former vice-president in charge of a major projects unit for CCC. His work with CCC allowed him to broaden his community-development work. He was "responsible for providing technical assistance to community development corporations in various parts of the country," he says. "The focus was on urban projects. My involvement was a continuation of the struggle for balanced communities. Although I am no longer employed, I continue to serve as a Board member." (Dortch, 1996, p. 94)

Bishop Brazier's involvement in the community led to other initiatives that he saw as potential problems. In the early 1960s, Brazier, the Woodlawn Organization, and other community groups led a demonstration against the Chicago Public Schools Board of Education and Superintendent Benjamin Willis who put mobile classrooms on the campuses of Black schools to keep Black children from crossing lines and attending White schools. This was in part to keep the schools segregated. Many other people and community organizers joined the boycott, forcing the "Willis Wagons" to eventually be removed.

Efforts to enact change regardless of the consequences are a trademark of successful leaders. The process of leaders includes setting small goals to attain the larger ones that affect the outcomes of the expected purpose of their mission. Dr. Hines demonstrated her efforts when she created a Grade 6–12 high school in the mid-1990s. Though she encountered many obstacles in setting the stage for the opening of this new program at an existing middle school, she knew she would get it done. Dr. Hines demonstrated her resolve to complete projects and accomplish goals. She had known this about her leadership for quite a while, which had been a benefit to her trajectory as an educational leader. When asked about why she was often sought out to join Boards, lead initiatives, and guide projects, she responded accordingly:

That I'm going to get it done. I'm going to be very honest with you about it, sometimes to a fault. But more than anything, I'm going to get it done. If you come to me with something and I say it's going to be done, it's going to be done, and that's a blessing from God. I know very few things that I've not been able to do when it comes to things like that. They also know that I'm a very organized person, and not only am I going to get it done, I'm going to get it done well.

Being focused on the results and making sure milestones are being monitored while working toward goal attainment provides a marker of successful outcomes that helps to evaluate the vision and the purpose of its success.

Self-Reflection

Self-reflection is an essential trait successful leaders use to evaluate, reflect, make informed decisions, evaluate problems, and remediate plans. Self-reflection can unveil situations that can be avoided, built upon, or totally eliminated based on the reflections of

previous actions. It is not always a positive experience and can lead to some adverse reactions. There are times when leaders are actually put in positions where they have to take actions that were unexpected. Dr. Hines elaborated on some of the actions she took that were not favorable:

Being able to let people go or to tell them that they were ineffective was a struggle, because I think whether most of us admit it or not, most of us in education, and probably people in general, you want to be liked, and you're not liked when you start telling people, they'll lose their jobs or whatever was going on. So that was very difficult for me. It's almost like I remember when Rashid [her son] was little, and I wouldn't give him something, he said, "I'm not gonna be your friend anymore." So, it was difficult when people didn't like you, you know, and you thought you were likable. That's hard as a leader, you think you're doing everything great, you get the thing back, and they don't really tell you what they think, and what people perceive is. So I think those were the two most difficult things, learning patience when working with people, and then the other thing like I said, was being able to have the tough conversations about you're not effective; I don't think I'm going to be able to keep you. All of those tough conversations—they're tough.

These are instances when time is not in the leader's favor and decisions or calculations must be made instantly. Leaders have to be prepared to think strategically when having to deal with unexpected circumstances. Some decisions that the leader knows are in the best interest of the school or organization may not be considered favorable by colleagues or close associates. This is when the leader has to depend on

instincts to make the best decision for the leader or the organization. Those values as a result of the servant leadership modeled by my mentor have informed my practices and decision-making processes throughout my career. Bishop Brazier and Dr. Hines had to make decisions like this in their careers, and I was privileged to learn from their experiences. I was able to learn nuanced techniques from them that consistently resurface when I am faced with difficult leadership decisions. In 2010, when the Superintendent I worked for decided she wanted to open a charter high school within the district where she led seven elementary schools, that decision created an uproar in the community. In that particular area, there were only three high schools to choose from and they were not providing the academic support to the graduating eighth graders, according to the district data. I was chosen to be founding director of the high school, and thence the journey began to engage the community around the need to have another option from which parents could choose. The academic model provided a school where the students would attend 9 hours a day and have a varied program that would support the needs of the students to give them high-quality options for careers and education. However, this proposal did not fare well with some members in the south suburban community. They said creating a charter school in the district would put the public high schools in the district at a financial disadvantage because it would pull federal funds from the public schools and transfer them to the charter school based on the size of the enrollment at the charter school. At this juncture, the lessons of servant leadership that had been cultivated through my mentors came into full focus. I thought back to the work I had done with Bishop Brazier to deconstruct the “L” tracks on 63rd street. This was an unpopular decision with the community, and I wondered how he would handle it. He ultimately

pushed the project forward, because the end result was to be housing for a community in desperate need. The unpopular decision that had to come to fruition through struggle and conflict resulted in what was ultimately best for the community and was met with thanks and praise. I wondered how he was able to see the end goal past so much discontent. He shared, “Sometimes the decisions that you have to make are unpopular but if they are good for the greater population and your larger beliefs, then you have to fight for them.” This quote stuck with me, and it was this kind of self-reflection on the selfless servant leadership modeling that enabled me to push through and stand on what my instincts told me were correct. The public-school district sued the charter school and it went through court proceedings for almost a year before we got approval to open in August 2010. Though this was not a popular decision for the surrounding communities, the proposal did garner support from many families within the area and the school opened its doors without a hitch that year. The Village President of Richton Park stated in support of the action,

As Village President, I am committed toward a strong educational system for all students who choose to attend our public school system with Rich Township. In my review of District 162’s submittal to High School District 227 for the Southland College Prep Charter School and the Findings of Fact documented by District 227’s School Board, I am convinced that a viable charter school option can be positive to both the charter school and the parent district. The financial impact to District 227 should be no more deleterious to the parent district than the typical ebbs and flows caused from changes in the district’s population and growth. (Chico & Nunes, 2010, p. 15)

In the early 1960s when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. came to Chicago to lead a demonstration against de facto segregation, housing, and education, Bishop Arthur Brazier, head of the Woodlawn Organization (TWO) was part of the Civil Rights Movement and partnered with Dr. King on many initiatives because of the community strength of TWO. Dr. King moved into an apartment on the West Side of Chicago so he could continue his work with the organization. At the end of the 2-month demonstration, Dr. King asked Bishop Brazier if he would join him in Montgomery to lead a demonstration there. Bishop Brazier was inclined to attend, but sought counsel from his Bishops Board to determine whether participation would be a benefit for him. Mrs. Brazier recounted the following:

Dr. King came here to work somewhere on the west side, and that didn't work here. Well, naturally, Dr. King contacted Arthur, you know, since he had a Black organization (TWO) here. They had been corresponding earlier on. Actually, Dr. King called Arthur and asked him if he would come to Montgomery. You know where that march where he was jailed and all of that. And it was in the summertime. So Arthur went to the Bishop's Board and told them that Dr. King had . . . you know, because he was a young man and so he sought counsel with the older Bishops . . . And they said to him, "No, don't go." So, that was the end of that, and he [King] never asked him to do anything after that cause everything would have been negative, and he [Brazier] did not believe in negativity.

The positive values of a leader are often demonstrated in their willingness to listen to others and not only themselves. Being flexible and allowing others to offer guidance and recommendations are part of the making of great leaders. There are times when leaders

regret that they did not listen to others around them they could trust. These circumstances can create regret and disappointment, but leaders are resilient and often bounce back.

Dr. Hines experienced this type of disappointment, but not in the realm of her educational journey. Her family was very important and though her husband Ralph did not father her son Rashid, her husband longed for a relationship to father his stepson. Her regret was reflected in the following statement:

I didn't listen to Ralph with Rashid, it made them have a different relationship. I think they could have been closer, and they are closer now than before. But I was very protective of him. He would say he needs to get up earlier, and I would say ain't no need for him to get up earlier. So, I didn't listen. I think basically Rashid missed out on a better relationship he could have had much early on with Ralph. So that was a big lesson for me.

One valuable asset of leadership is self-reflection on what could be done better, what could be extracted, and what to do again. Listening and engaging with others enables a leader to become flexible and trustworthy with those being led. Leaders who do not employ inclusion, engagement, collaboration, and other elements can often find themselves in an isolated state. The ability to create shifts in leadership when allowing others the privilege to offer substantial guidance can be a value attributed to the success of one's leadership path.

Conclusion

Within this chapter, I presented the narratives of myself and two participants who have similar leadership qualities and connections to the three styles discussed in the chapter. These similarities tend to meld together, but distinctly show how resonant,

transformational, and servant leadership have connections to each other that build structures of sound and authentic leadership. The observation and discussion of the seven elements of leadership cultivation within the chapter, connecting to the narratives of the participants, demonstrated how effective mentoring and coaching can be when a leader is able to identify with themselves. The qualities of being transformational, resonant, or a servant leader serve as connectors to the individual and can be used to influence leadership styles and behaviors. They also contribute to the influence of the mentor combined with the trust and integrity gained through the relationship between the mentor and the mentee.

In Chapter 5, I interpret the findings, demonstrate their validity to effective mentoring and coaching. I also provide recommendations for future research and how these models can provide substantial leadership training and better mentor pairing to improve leadership practices in mentoring/coaching that can help to influence the building of positive relationships, teams, and staff in schools and districts.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In reviewing the narrative data from the interviews with the participants, I reflected on how impactful they have been and how much I have gained from their models. Reflecting on the three leadership styles discussed in this paper provided even more insight into the windows of successful leadership. In this chapter, I discuss how the narratives of the participants fit in to the three styles of leadership and the importance of having a lineage of mentorship that supports the trajectory of those seeking an effective leadership path with the help of those who have demonstrated effective leadership. I also share the implications of this research regarding how mentoring and coaching can be useful at various levels of educational administration from elementary through college or university, and even in corporate structures.

Finally, I share recommendations for future research to show how mentorship lineage can provide substantial support to leaders for future generations seeking to build their capacity in how they lead to create better systems, schools, and organizations. I describe how important it is to have relationships with mentors so the lessons learned by those who have come before us will continue to live on with our current leaders by holding fast to their examples and pulling from the past to initiate effective decisions that will affect their trajectory.

Mentoring Through Three Styles of Leadership

Leadership and personal growth require discipline, organization, relational trust, collaborative practices, creativity, and self-awareness along with other elements that provide the groundwork for developing effective leaders and building successful character and esteem. Mentoring and coaching are two vehicles of support that can

provide the necessary tools for leaders to enable growth, style development, and the effectiveness of leadership. It is also important to note that many effective leaders have been coached or mentored by someone with leadership skills and have implemented practices that evolve over time.

In my research, I looked closely at two of my mentors through the lens of their narratives and how they both profoundly influenced me. I saw three leadership styles—resonant, transformational, and servant leadership—that were interconnected. The characteristics of Bishop Brazier and Dr. Hines were very similar, and both possessed qualities of service leadership. I chose the name of “service leadership” instead of “servant leadership” to incorporate the three styles that define both service and servant and to demonstrate how principles of leadership were implemented at varying stages of their careers. The stories told from these highly respected leaders show that when pairing mentors or coaches to individuals, it is imperative that attention is paid to character, styles, and actions that correlate to the mentee. I have found that the more the mentor and the mentee have in common with each other, the more successful the mentoring will be.

Both Bishop Brazier and Dr. Hines showed characteristics connected to all three styles of leadership—transformational, resonant, and servant. It was interesting to discover in my review of the narratives that these two participants had so much in common with each other through the lens of successful leaders and how their styles had such a major impact on my own leadership style. The connectedness of the styles incorporated major themes that included three major intrinsic values in transformational leadership: love, talent, and value. This style also represented how transformation took place in my career as I was able to incorporate some of the standards and values from the

examples I saw while working with them. It also provided an advantage for me to follow the leadership model for those I would lead, and to model transformative leadership that would benefit them in their leadership roles. This is an important value to me because I aim to create teams that are reflective of the way I expect my team to operate while managing others. Through the models of both Bishop Brazier and Dr. Hines, I am very deliberate in how I model how I want others to lead, thus creating the framework through transformational leadership and the focus on love, talent, and value that creates opportunities to build leadership by example, demonstration, and self-reflection. It enables one to think independently so confidence is manufactured in the process. The transformational process is keen toward truth and honesty and not “covering up” or creating a culture of inauthenticity. The nature of truth in the process is key so the one being mentored can hear feedback that is not so comfortable at times. Transformational leadership enables an individual to carve the trajectory of their career in a way commensurate to those who have helped them along the way.

Earlier in the dissertation I discussed how I entered into teaching as well as my introduction to Bishop Brazier and his church. In both instances, my time during what I will refer to as “post drug addiction” was still relatively young. I was like a sponge and wanted to soak up everything I knew could be a positive advantage for me. Thus, the lessons I learned from both participants hugely influenced my development of confidence in my leadership style.

Resonant leaders have the capability to see the values, strengths, and weaknesses of individuals and can determine how they can use this skill to help build and strengthen an individual’s skillset and incorporate their strengths to help them mold and shape the

framework of leadership for the benefit of a school, church, or organization. The four competencies of emotional intelligence (i.e., self awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management) in resonant leadership discussed in Chapter 2 describe how these two participants affected my life and saw what I needed to become a successful leader.

Bishop Brazier knew prior to our introduction what unfortunate circumstances I had experienced through drugs, but he never made a judgement that resulted in turning me away from him or the church or declining me an opportunity to work with the church. He saw strengths in me that I did not even recognize, and he was able to pull them out of me. As we worked together, I watched him and how he worked with people. I listened intently to his conversations with his congregation and during the shared personal time we spent in conversation about my life and the life of the church I was able to learn more about him and how he could influence me both personally and professionally. He embodied servant leadership and modeled its values throughout his life and career. His impact instilled a standard that I would incorporate in my leadership and use to develop those in management around me. Bishop Brazier was very intentional in his life as a servant leader as he would equip others with resources for success and gave them the autonomy to be creative, develop well thought out plans, and manage freely with little or no oversight.

For mentors, being able to make these kinds of connections shows how important leadership is and what kind of changes can be made for oneself or for someone else. The narratives shared by Dr. Hines illustrated how she took potential leaders under her wing and built their capacity to become principals, superintendents, and other school leaders.

This is part of resonant and transformational leadership at work that helps to create a bench for strong leadership in the workplace and incorporate the value of our mentors to implement the lineage and strength of lessons learned from them.

The convergence of the three styles of leadership shows the humility, the passion, and the authenticity found in positive and successful leaders. It is clear that the dominant structures present in all three styles of leadership are community, trust, integrity, and respect. Great teams incorporate the elements of these values and work together to accomplish goals teams collectively rather than individually. The guiding questions for this study were:

1. What can we learn about the principles of leadership from in-depth stories of two highly respected leaders?
2. What powerful lessons of leadership formation and mentorship processes can be learned from existing leadership cultivation relationships and outcomes?

Question 1

What can we learn about the principles of leadership from in-depth stories of two highly respected leaders?

Both participants within the study spoke of their beginnings and how the people they looked up to were an influence in their lives, causing them to model what they were able to see from those they emulated. The value of being able to learn from mentors and leaders who have come before us and to build upon their success is something that is useful and purposeful to current leaders who work through a lens of humility and service.

The narratives demonstrated the participants' tenacity to be successful, but not at the expense of creating a great name for themselves or undermining others to get to the top. They led with a heart of compassion that exemplified their trust and concern for those around them. They were concerned with building great teams and sharing the responsibility to reach the goals they aspired to reach. The demonstration of the qualities of a resonant leader in both participants was obvious when they chose specific people for certain tasks. Being able to ascertain specific qualities in people is a quality of leadership that benefits the team. Dr. Hines was very specific about mentoring as she stated in her narrative, "What I basically look for when I'm mentoring someone is people who willing to go beyond what you ask them to do."

Another principle demonstrated in this study was the building of a legacy through their leadership. Both Bishop Brazier and Dr. Hines offered their time to those who worked toward goals and vision. They were able to offer guidance and mentorship that helped me develop into an effective leader using qualities from both the resonant and transformative leadership styles they both exhibited in their leadership.

From the life of Bishop Brazier, the principles of leadership were inherent as he walked in his calling as a servant leader. He attracted people to him through his transparency, honesty, and integrity. He was forthcoming about the life he led prior to entering the ministry, which enabled others to identify with him and trust his character to believe they could also change and become a better person. With all of the hats Bishop Brazier wore as a Pastor, civic leader, and community activist, he made sure to surround himself with people he could train and develop for the greater good. Bishop Brazier was one of those leaders Maxwell (2007) referenced when stating, "If you develop yourself,

you can experience personal success. If you develop a team, your organization can experience growth. If you develop leaders there's no other way to experience explosive growth" (p. 249). Bishop Brazier developed leaders as demonstrated in his work in the Woodlawn community and beyond.

Dr. Hines's example is similar and embodies some of the same characteristics in her leadership principles. As an educator, her goals were very clear—to focus on students and strive for academic success. The models of leadership displayed during her tenure as a principal were inclusive of transformative and resonant leadership by the way she developed others to lead teams and initiatives. Her impact on my life is the reason I considered educational administration. She found a program that would certify me and provide opportunities to advance my skills in other areas of the district and outside, enabling me to take my first position as an assistant principal and later becoming a high school principal.

I modeled the lessons from her leadership as I built teams and a staff at the new school. As I reflect on this, I developed keen instincts on how to listen through candidate interviews for what the candidate is not saying and find a place during the session where a question could prompt a response I desired. I developed skills for team building and was able to create a platform for success by modeling for the teams and not micro-managing them. Dr. Hines is a change leader, and it is probably one of the reasons she was pegged by the CEO of Chicago Public Schools at that time to come into the Englewood community and develop a high-achieving middle school into a high school.

Change agents and transformational leaders

need to see more deeply into why it is so hard for individuals to change, even when individuals genuinely intend to do so. Beyond this merely diagnostic self-understanding, we as leaders need to learn how to take action effectively to help ourselves become the persons we need and want to be in order to better serve the children and families of our communities. (Wagner, 2006, p. xvi)

Dr. Hines has modeled this statement through her efforts to build solid teams and develop individuals to create the strategies, plans, and initiatives needed to develop a high-quality school from a middle school to a high school with an effective and supportive team.

These principles are like nuggets of wisdom for current leaders who are seeking to build effective teams as well as grow their own capacity and skillset by learning from leaders who model success and effective leadership in their own work.

Question 2

What powerful lessons of leadership formation and mentorship processes can be learned from existing leadership cultivation relationships and outcomes?

Leaders of school districts and other organizations are always looking for leaders who lead with an ethical and moral compass and can build convergence and collegiality around a shared vision. Personal mentoring can provide a plethora of opportunities for learning for an individual seeking to capitalize and build on their strengths and skills. The lessons learned from mentors provide a pathway of visionary leadership that catapults mediocrity into success. Mentors owe it to themselves to develop leaders in ways that continue the transformation of a school, district, or organization. This type of mentoring has been referred to as a path of purpose and, as described by Pearce (2021), “It’s about setting an example, being a mentor/coach, and about willing to invest in the growth of

those around you” (p. 180). This kind of investment is essential in the making of leaders who can mobilize others around a shared vision and provide a path of success for an organization. Pearce continued to iterate, “Recognize that you can’t do the heavy lifting of pointing someone else in the direction of the vocation by yourself, but you can do something to help them along the path” (p. 180).

As a product of two highly qualified and respected mentors, I have seen first-hand that learning from these individuals provided me a platform of tools and skills that empowered me to build successful teams, create solid missions and visions for the goals I sought to accomplish, and build the capacity of my team members. It gave me the ability to determine when a team member has grown out of a skill area and needs to be pushed so they will not become bored to the point of complacency. This provides an opportunity where I can give them other tasks and opportunities for managing new projects or strategies, or even creating a different workstream to accomplish new goals.

Leadership formation is a tool that can be used intentionally to create a positive lineage for effective leadership. In school systems, district leaders are constantly looking for highly qualified school leaders to serve our students. Those who served alongside a highly qualified principal or administrator were able to witness the skills of their leader in myriad situations and circumstances that required immediate or intentional attention. As a result, many current school leaders are equipped with tools to serve their schools and communities with excellence based on the experience they received under the tutelage of their mentor or superior. A valuable lesson I experienced was when I came back to Chicago Public Schools in school management. I had an opportunity to become a Network Chief to manage a portfolio of 24 high schools, but instead I opted to take the

Deputy Chief role so I could sit with an experienced Network Chief to learn about the district, understand the vision and mission of the district, and familiarize myself with the essential personnel who helped to manage schools and community. When I was appointed Network Chief a year and half after that position, I was totally ready and equipped to make a difference in the 36 schools I was assigned to manage.

These types of lessons and experiences readily equip leaders to mentor upcoming leaders for the advancement of an organization or district. The importance of mentoring and coaching goes far beyond just being able to provide one with a job, but it fortifies the organization with an assuredness that good people are within reach and solid leadership can continue without interruption. These lessons in leadership had a profound impact on my work because the observations of powerful, charismatic, and compassionate leaders were pervasive throughout my career. These particular reflections prompt me to consider the actions I would take as a leader in a large educational system and to ask myself the question, “What would Dr. Hines do or what would Bishop Brazier do?” The influence of my two mentors is what led me to understand the value of relationships and how important they are to maintaining trust, a crucial element of leadership that enables one to drive initiatives forward with a valued sense of respect.

In summary, I can attest that the powerful lessons of leadership formation are necessary in the development of solid paths in well-developed organizations and schools. Good leaders build great teams, and the cultivation of this leadership formation lies in the guidance and influence of strong and capable mentors.

Implications for Practice

Looking forward, being able to match mentors and mentees is something we should look at with a more intention. At the elementary and high school levels, teachers would benefit from being paired or matched with a mentor or coach who has similar characteristics perhaps with behaviors, personality, and leadership abilities. Some teachers are placed right into a classroom after graduating from college. They come to the profession with little to no experience with classroom management, preparation of lesson plans, understanding of grading policy, or other essential foundations of the school. They have to fend for themselves or seek help from someone who is willing to befriend them and show them the way. The benefits of having a mentor before they get to the school could be vital to the introduction and progression to the school, its staff, and the daily operations. In order to adequately pair a new teacher with a mentor, the principal would need to have the new teacher go through a personality exercise such as StrengthsFinder or something similar so the new teacher could be matched with a returning teacher who can identify with the new teacher.

Using this tool could have strong implications for administrators and for school principals and assistant principals to provide a sense of the character of the leader through a lens that aids in looking for high quality leadership and matching these leaders with specific schools. Schools and organizations are made up in many ways, and being able to potentially pair a leader with the school can be a governing factor to the success of the leader. I have experienced some potential candidates who were qualified to become school principals, but I knew from my experience as a Network Chief that particular schools were not the right choices for specific candidates. Some of the major distinctions

of particular schools were the demographics, culture and climate, parent engagement or lack thereof, or difficult staff or a reticent assistant principal, to name a few. These distinctions would not be easy to handle if the leader did not have any experience dealing with certain school attributes, thereby making this an arduous and difficult time for the principal. Looking at the personality and characteristics of a leader can provide much insight to the possibility of success or the possibility of failure if not adequately matched.

At the district level, there should be mentors prepared to take candidates with little to no experience in these situations and help develop them for the specific schools they may not have otherwise experienced. These kinds of mentors are valuable because of their partnership, trust, institutional knowledge, and relationships they have garnered within the district. The pairing of school leaders to coaches or mentors can be a great value for schools. The tools can be used to conduct personality studies aligned with certain mentors and mentees, and the evidence from the study can be used to determine what is necessary to provide effective mentoring with thoughtful pairing of the leaders to mentors. Principals have been known to use these tools during summer professional development, but the post-discussions and evidence bearing content of the tool can get lost if the attention to the exercises are not consistently implemented during the school year with the teachers, leaders, and staff. To accomplish a more effective use of the tools, I would incorporate them to help people discover their professional characteristics, including their strengths and weaknesses, how well they are able to work with team members, and some of the similarities and differences of team members to help identify who is the right person to work with on specific tasks and who should be asked to hold other responsibilities.

At the university level, building a program for mentoring and coaching that would help incoming educational professionals with first year experiences as leaders would be of great value to a leadership educational program. As veteran educators retire or move on to other opportunities, having them serve as mentors and coaches to new educators and school leaders would enhance school and district performance because of the wisdom gained from their prior experience. These mentors could serve in proxy to higher educational institutions to provide insight to students as to how to navigate in the school or district space. For instance, new teachers could use coaching on conducting parent conferences, understanding students with special needs, how to implement social-emotional learning strategies in the classroom, how to write effective lesson plans, and more. At the district level, conversations on how to effectively manage school leadership positions such as a principal, an assistant principal, an area officer, or district level employee would increase value. These conversations would involve how to handle different one-on-one scenarios that could be difficult for the first time, or some that would require more in-depth analysis, and provide the leader with a mentor who may have had similar experiences. Many higher learning institutions teach the essential methods of teaching, learning, and leadership, but it is what is not taught that can serve to better equip leaders with the wisdom and guidance needed for success in schools and organizations.

As I observed leadership in action from both Dr. Hines and Bishop Brazier, it became clear that becoming an effective leader involved the need to embrace building quality relationships. Trust is the connecting factor that enables relationships to become fruitful. Bishop Brazier exemplified this quality through his commanding approaches to

what he wanted, yet he remained flexible in seeking to understand the other person. His command of honesty and forthrightness was demonstrated as he worked with those either at the church or while managing his civic duties. He was not one to placate or mislead anyone with his intentions or expectations, but he modeled excellence and consistency that compelled others to execute their best efforts when working with or for him. I learned the value of intentional execution and alignment of responsibilities when engaged in a project because of the example Bishop Brazier modeled. A definite product of his example was his level of high expectations, whether he was civic based or faith based. The observation of mentorship lineage and how to best understand its value can be found in how new leaders look up to their role models for their wisdom, and how they can help to propel their careers forward. The ability to understand the impact of those who preceded you adds value to leadership. It ignites respect from your peers and increases your leverage to continue to work toward success laid by the foundation established by your predecessor.

Recommendations for Further Research

There is a need to conduct research to understand the lasting impact of the service leadership and familial mentorship models through a mentorship lineage model. It will be important to learn how the influence of mentoring is reflected in the ways in which the lessons learned in the first generation of mentorship persist through the third and fourth generations. In this way, lasting, loving, and authentic methods of mentorship may influence many generations to come. The essence of mentorship lineage could be studied to see how the influence of our predecessors affected the trajectory of our career paths. The analysis of our past ancestry has become popular through the programs like

Ancestry.com and others that track an individual's history through the annals of time and family lineage. If we could find or develop similar programs to track the impact of those who influenced us the most, it would definitely create a system for tracking mentorship lineages. In conversations with friends, we hold discussions about people who have influenced us the most, or the ways we take after some of our ancestors, and even from whom we got specific gifts and talents. For instance, a talented pianist may say they got their talent from their grandmother who was an accomplished musician, though the pianist never had an opportunity to have a relationship with her because she may have died before a relationship with the child could be formed. But it could be perceived that the grandmother imparted this gift to her grandchild for the grandchild to become a talented musician and, in turn, produced pride from past family members that made a direct impact on the grandchild.

Studies can be conducted on the use of personality measurement tools to determine the strengths and weakness of team members so mentors can be purposefully matched. Self-identification tools like the Keirsey Assessment “are designed to help you transform your understanding of who you are, why you do what you do, and how to build effective relationships” (Keirsey, n.d., para. 2). I have also used StrengthsFinder, which helps center in on strengths and build up other qualities that need support. The most creative and fun exercise I have used with teams is Real Colors, where characteristics are evaluated and described through colors that identify with certain strengths and skills. This tool has been very useful with my teams because it identifies four primary personality types and “provides users with an effective tool for understanding human behavior, for uncovering motivators specific to each temperament and for improving communication

skills” (Real Colors, n.d., para. 1). After the workshop on discovering their personality type, I would place the dominant and secondary colors on every team member’s name plate during our meetings so that if we were discussing tasks or who should be on specific teams, the colors were useful in showing who was more creative, who was an “out of the box” thinker, and who was more structured and organized. This proved to be successful in matching people to develop a pathway toward obtaining goals and creating effective partnerships within the teams. To accomplish this, being able to incorporate tools that help teams discover their professional characteristics, including the strengths and weaknesses of the team, will enhance the direction of the team as well as how well you are able to work with team members based on those characteristics. It will also highlight some of the similarities and differences of team members to help identify who has the right skillset to work with on specific tasks based on their strengths, and who should be given other responsibilities based on their skillset.

In district management, as leaders think about high quality instruction and effective school management, principals are always considered the top priority for superintendents, area officers, and teachers so they can ensure top quality leadership for the schools they serve. We take time to evaluate the pedagogical, academic, and social-emotional skillsets of school leaders, and though these are important, including qualitative data on the personality characteristics of a school leader could enhance the ability to match them with a mentor who understands their character traits and personalities. It is similar to time spent in the classroom with a teacher who, over time, begins to understand the behavior and personalities of their students, which enables the

teacher to adjust lessons, implement behavioral modifications, and adjust social interaction with the students based on their interactions.

In future assessments of school leaders, to pair them with coaches or mentors, it would be an asset to conduct a study using these personality tools with both mentors and mentees. Data from the study could be used to determine whether using these personality assessment tools could produce more effective mentorship and thoughtful pairings. Some principals use these tools during summer professional development, but the discourse and evidence of initiating the pairing of teachers and staff can get lost in translation if attention to the exercises is not consistent and intentional during the school year.

Making time to examine methods to better understand how mentorship lineage can be used to assist leaders with best practices that will support and build their capacity in effective leadership in schools, districts, and organizations. As we move through our careers and even the paths of our own lives, it is important to reflect on the lessons learned from current and past leaders. Looking down lines of career lineage, even at the beginning of our interest in certain careers, I can remember saying to my parents, “I want to be like him/her.” This was the beginning of observing positive leadership and having a desire to emulate those persons and the start of piquing an interest in a career path. It is almost generational that somebody in the family wanted to be a doctor, a lawyer, or a police officer. This was the start of seeking and attaining wisdom and knowledge from those leaders who stood before us. To be able to use the fundamentals from past mentors and apply them to current leadership helps to build the foundation for leaders seeking wisdom and knowledge to support their management skills. We need to be able to show new leaders who is in their leadership path so they can draw and learn from their lessons

of wisdom and knowledge, and how to use it for implementation of their leadership strategies. These lineage mentors can be those who may have influenced you on your first job, your first teacher or principal, or your first supervisor. In retrospect, lessons that were taught that may have been of great influence proved to be an asset today in how they are used. I remember my first-grade teacher played the piano very well when I was in elementary school. I remember saying to myself that I wanted to play like her. Later in life, music would become one of my primary careers because of her influence.

Further research in being able to incorporate, reflect, and use lessons from past mentors or coaches helps to create a path of how we can begin to understand the impact of mentorship lineage and how it is used as a powerful application to support and influence current and future leaders.

Personal Reflection (Conclusion)

During the many years I served in areas of senior leadership and managed principals and a staff of over 60 people, I have learned how critical it is to implement solid mentorship and coaching. As a senior leader, I felt it was my obligation to serve people rather than manage from the top down. I worked with a Network Chief who always made the claim that she was a servant leader and was there to serve the principals in the best ways she could. I noticed the principals were very transparent with her, and when she came to the schools for observations, they welcomed her instead of feeling a flurry of emotions as if they had done something wrong. They opened up to her about their weaknesses, worries, concerns, and even their celebrations. She listened intently to them and always offered supportive advice.

On the other hand, I also observed that when she had to make a critical decision about a principal for lack of performance, a disciplinary action, or some other form of grievance, her methods of handling the situation offered much respect and integrity to the principal, but she accomplished the goal of administering the discipline the action called for. Through it all, she maintained her integrity and respect from the principal. I found this to be a valuable lesson that added great value to my leadership when I became a Network Chief. One of my first tasks was to remove a principal for lack of academic performance. Knowing I had to get the task done, I took time to provide coaching and support to her until she realized the role of a principal was just not for her and she went back to teaching in the classroom. She thanked me for getting her to the point of reality, and when she walked out of the door, she walked out a woman with pride, not with a cloud of failure hanging over her head. These are the moments that matter to me as a mentor because they demonstrate humility and the importance of how you treat people, regardless of a title.

As I reflected on the research and the differences in the service leadership styles, I found there is not much difference between them, but in how they are framed. The transformational leader, the resonant leader, and the servant leader are inclusively a part of many of the leaders I have experienced in my career, but specifically in the participants I chose to research in this study. The three elements I discussed in Chapter 2 around transformational leadership (i.e., love, talent, and value)—though not mentioned in the framework of the other styles—remain inherently present in those styles as well. The resonant leader is able to discern the skills of an individual and build them up by

creating opportunities in their experience to become aware of oneself and understand how to manage themselves and others.

Servant leadership appears to be the thread that connects each of these styles together. Making yourself available and present to help those around you allows you to understand your role as a mentor/coach and brings a deeper meaning to your value in your role. I have witnessed that the people you manage do not really care about your titles and degrees, but how you present yourself as a helper or someone who can be trusted and depended upon. It means a lot to people to know you care and will do your best to coach them up or coach them out with integrity and respect.

In reflecting on a personal mentoring experience, I have the privilege of mentoring a young man currently enrolled in the College of Music at Northeastern Illinois University. This opportunity came unexpectedly when he reached out to me because he had nowhere to go after the university he was previously attending issued an order that all students living in the dormitories had to move out due to COVID-19. He came to me at the recommendation of one of my colleagues and discussed with me his need for family support. I almost rejected the opportunity to serve him because I did not think I had the time to work with him in this way, but I have found often there is not much choice in these relationships. The mentee arrives and the mentor answers the call. This young man lived with me for the entire summer until he transferred to Northeastern Illinois University. I seized the opportunity to mentor him by teaching him valuable lessons about life, love, and himself. He has a sordid relationship with his parents who abandoned him years ago, but through my determination to instill in him that sometimes your family becomes those who are around you and love you, he is now an A student and

moving into his third year of college, and he knows where his support and love come from. He is studying to become a teacher and will have some of the same mentoring experiences I have been able to enjoy during my teaching career. Further, it will be important to learn the ways he is mentoring his young students, and gather, in the coming years, the ways in which the lessons learned in the first generation of mentorship persist through the third and fourth generations. In this way, lasting, loving, and authentic methods of mentorship may influence many generations to come.

It is a special gift to touch someone's life through mentoring. During the writing of this dissertation, I did not realize how much I treasure and appreciate both Dr. Mahalia A. Hines and Bishop Arthur M. Brazier, who took the time out of their own lives to see something in me that gave me an opportunity to learn and grow in life and in leadership. The lessons I have learned through experience are what I have leaned on throughout my career. They have made me a better person for myself and for those around me. The lessons of the past are what provide strength for the future, and I believe those who take advantage of the lessons from the sages, the ancestors, and those who came before us have a great responsibility to pick up the mantle, walk the path of the wise, and impart wisdom and knowledge to those under our care or supervision so we continue to create better schools, businesses, and organizations because of those who planted the seeds for us to water and grow. James Weldon Johnson gave us much to remember about our heritage, our past, and our humanity when he wrote the words to the song, "Lift Evr'y Voice and Sing," that reflect how we should never forget our legacy or our history and instead use it to empower others to use the same strength of our ancestors to make a difference in the future:

Lest our feet stray from the places our God where we met Thee.

Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world we forget Thee.

Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand, true to our God, true to our native land.

These words will stay with me and I will forever remember to use the power I have inherited from my mentors, my ancestors, and others who empowered me to be somebody.

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