LEADING TRANSFORMATION #8:  
CHARACTER FORMATION

Character Formation is the foundation for leadership formation, and personal life transformation is the foundation for societal transformation. There is a direct link between who the leader is and what the leader does.

Good leadership comes from good people. True or false?

It is argued that leaders who have issues in their private lives and relationships can yet be effective because they have the competencies for achieving organizational goals. In the same vein, it is argued that leaders who have good character but lack the competencies for achieving organizational goals can end up being ineffective. In essence both good character and competencies are essential for effective leadership.

At the same time, it needs pointing out that there cannot be a divide between the private life and relationships of the leader and leadership effectiveness in transforming leadership. The reason is that transforming leadership seeks to impact not only the organization as an institution, but also the lives and relationships of its members and the constituencies being served by the leader. Transforming leadership is about holistic impact that results in enriched individual lives, authentic relationships, and effective leadership of all members and constituencies. Leaders are expected to be models for life, leadership and service, and not only achievers of organizational results. In this sense, we have to conclude that good transforming leadership comes from good people.

This conclusion makes additional sense when we look at the elements of “leadership goodness.” Leadership goodness includes integrity, transparency, approachability, accountability, vulnerability and inclination to forgive and reconcile. When we look at these elements of “leadership goodness,” it is hard to imagine the possibility of leadership effectiveness without good character.

The statements of Yeshua the Messiah support the view that good leadership comes from good people.

"By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit (Matthew 7: 16-18)."

"Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit (Matthew 12: 33)."