

CREATIVITY AND LEADERSHIP

Creativity, Design, and Purpose

If you ever lived with chronic pain and looked for help, you may have come across a little book by Pete Egoscue (1998) with the bold title *Pain Free: A Revolutionary Method for Stopping Chronic Pain*. During a chance encounter at a New Year's gathering of friends, I overheard one of my friends describing how he had been "cured" from a chronic pain issue. Since I had a hurting knee, I decided to give the book a try. On the day the Amazon package arrived I immediately read the chapter on "Knees: Good News About Bad Knee Pain." I soon found out that my problem was related to "external knee rotation," and a few anatomical explanations later I was given four exercises that took all of 25 minutes. When I got up from the floor the pain was gone. I felt lucky. Now I

What if we were to apply a neurophysiological viewpoint to the human body? In other words, does the human brain tell us something about the purpose of humans? Given its ability to make decisions, perform mundane as well as complex tasks any given day, compose a worship song, express the speed of light in an elegant mathematical formu-

ative forces in the world.

In this issue, Shirley Freed reflects on the connection between creativity and forgiveness. Not even Jesus himself was able to avoid criticism as He tried to open His contemporaries' minds to the new thing God was doing among them. Criticized by the established powers, He turned to those who had been declared beyond hope by the leaders of Israel and started ministering in ways that brought them near to the heart of God. To those who had nothing more to lose because often they had no more hope left, He brought the Good News that God's mercy included them too. By healing their sick, confronting the powers of evil that oppressed them, and teaching them the truth about God, He opened up new pathways of faith. Linking the familiar with the unfamiliar, He energized their lives in ways they had never experienced before.

In the last few years it has become clearer that creativity is not only limited to those who have chosen traditionally "creative" careers (e.g., writers, artists, musicians, and designers). Rather, creativity is also necessary in any job, be it science, management, or engineering, that requires you to solve problems (Florida, 2004; Henry, 2011). The ability to function in a creative mode has almost become a hot job requirement. This is also true in Christian institutions and churches. When Debbie Potter was hired as the Pastor for Children's Ministry at Trinity Baptist Church in San Antonio, Texas, it was partly for her reputation

Banff Centre in Banff, Alberta, Canada, and the Leadership Development Institute in St. Petersburg, Florida, have been around for a long time and are the focus of the research article of Karen Tilstra, Shirley Freed, and Erich Baumgartner. What are these creative leadership programs doing to develop creative leaders and what can Christian organizations learn from them? One of the most interesting findings of this research study is that the starting point for developing creative leaders is the search for authenticity and the overcoming of a leader's blind spots.

Don't try to find these kinds of leadership programs in the traditional research literature on leadership. When you read some of the books published on leadership over the years, you get the impression that anyone can be a leader if they just put their mind to it and follow a few good recipes to success. And while leadership can be learned in almost any setting, most experienced leaders recognize that describing good leadership is not a simple thing and is often full of ambiguity. What seems to be an obvious solution in one situation does not work at all in another (just ask the many pastors who have split their churches after coming home with the latest new leadership idea from an energizing "Leadership Summit").

Here at Andrews University, I teach a course on leadership theory. As we survey some of the most popular theories, certain types of leaders are identified in rather distinct ways: leaders are either people-oriented or task-oriented (Fiedler, 1995), transformational or transactional (Bass, 1985), or level 1 through 5 leaders (Collins, 2001). While most one-style theories no longer have the popular following they once enjoyed, even more complex situational theories seem to prescribe a rather predictable matrix of styles to match the needs of followers (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969, 2008). When I ask participants to reflect on how they actually experience their leadership roles, they often describe their leading as a dynamic mix of activities using multiple leadership behaviors as they cope with ever-changing and often unpredictable organizational realities. In the world of Christian organizations, an additional element is the fact that leaders often work with volunteers. In other words, leadership is much more ambiguous and complex than many leadership researchers would have us believe. And many leaders, even when taught some of these venerable theories of leadership, admit that they are unsure what kind of leaders they are. Daniel Goleman (1995, cf. Goleman & Boyatzis, 2002) reminds us that it takes emotional intelligence to be able to live in that tension. (Note: Daniel Goleman

will be the speaker of the Second Annual Leadership Conference at Andrews University.)

In fact, I often worry about those participants who seem married to fixed notions of what a good leader is. Some of these notions are predictably cultural. In the West, participative leadership is often peddled as the most effective leadership, even in the face of mounting evidence

Janine Lim's short piece "Rebuilding the Plane While Flying It" is a good example of this kind of use of metaphor. Bradley Sheppard describes his own academic journey in a doctoral leadership program as a pilgrimage based on the famous El Camino de Santiago de Compostela in Spain, popularized recently by the movie "The Way." And Liv Fønnebø draws our attention to Jesus' unparalleled use of parables and metaphors, which are one of the hallmarks of Jesus' leadership.

A unique piece in this issue is the poem "God's Cowboy Pastor" which we publish here in Portuguese and English. The author is Adean da Costa, a Brazilian pastor and administrator who recently graduated from Andrews University's Leadership Program in Brazil. Constructed in the poetic form of a *trova*, Adean takes us on a journey from great tragedy to confidence in God's provision and peace. Translated by Dr. José Alaby, editor of the *Brazilian Bible in Poetry*, it reminds us that Christian leadership character is often forged on the anvil of heartbreak and hardship (Gonzalez, 2010).

If you are a member of an academic community, you will appreciate that we have added in this issue a short abstract to each of the dissertation notices. The development of this issue of the journal has been

