

TO BE A LEADER, FIRST MASTER YOURSELF

"Unless one knows how to lead oneself, it would be presumptuous to lead others"

- Jagdish Parikh

When asked to name leaders you admire, do you quickly come up with a lengthy list or does it take a while to decide? Most people struggle and look for agreement when describing traits and characteristics of a leader. What comes to the surface is how much or how little they have experienced being their own leader. Aspiring leaders ultimately learn from their own experience, which begins with self-knowledge and self-mastery (a continuous process). So, at a very basic level, how can one lead others when he/she doesn't know how to lead themselves? If you don't know how to lead yourself, someone else will.

Here are a few tips for leading yourself:

- Learn the skills to shift away from negative thinking
- Visualize regularly what you want to achieve
- Use conscientious breathing to quiet down and to see clearly
- Know your inner dynamics. Know what stresses you and what sustains you
- Find the discrepancy between what you want and what you are able to do
- Find the discrepancy between all your lives - personal, professional, social
- View leadership as a way of being, rather than a trait or quality
- The logical answer is not always best. Balance everything with intuition and yes, your emotions
- Be the owner and manager of your mind, emotions, and body
- Maintain an awareness -- where you are looking down on a situation (like an eagle gliding on an air thermal) and notice all your reactions as an outsider and then observe the situation from a new perspective
- Choose to feel good

Knowledge is always useful, but not what gives us our power or wisdom. Self-mastery is at the root and force of change.