



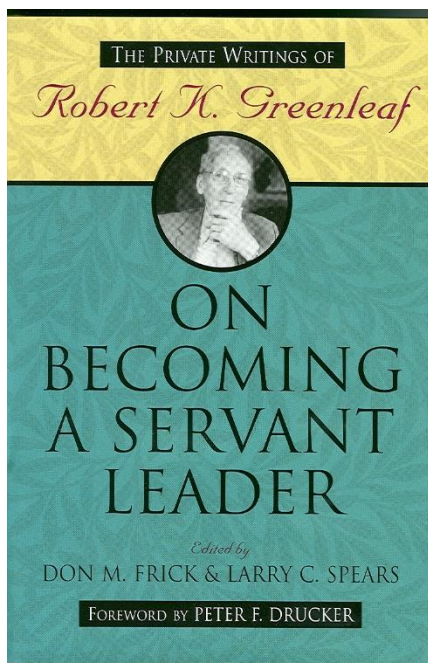
REFLECTIONS ON THE ORIGINS OF ROBERT K. GREENLEAF'S FIVE BOOKS

—LARRY C. SPEARS

Since 1990, I have had a direct role as an author and/or editor in the co-creation of a series of 36 books, 15 journals, 70 newsletters, and several hundred articles and essays on servant-leadership, including all five books of writings by Robert K. Greenleaf that are in print today. In this article, I would like to share with you some thoughts and reflections on these five books of writings by Robert K. Greenleaf, and to provide some background on how each book came to be published. These five books include the following, in chronological order—

- On Becoming a Servant-Leader (Jossey-Bass, 1996), by Robert K. Greenleaf; Don M. Frick and Larry C. Spears, Editors
- Seeker and Servant (Jossey-Bass, 1996), by Robert K. Greenleaf; Anne Fraker and Larry C. Spears, Editors
- The Power of Servant-Leadership (Berrett-Koehler, 1998), by Robert K. Greenleaf; Larry C. Spears, Editor
- Servant-Leadership: 25th Anniversary Edition (Paulist Press, 2002), by Robert K. Greenleaf; Larry C. Spears, Editor
- The Servant-Leader Within (Paulist Press, 2003), by Robert K. Greenleaf; Larry C. Spears, Hamilton Beazley, Julie Beggs, Editors





1996

On Becoming a Servant-Leader

Robert K. Greenleaf

(Jossey-Bass, 394 pages)

Don M. Frick and Larry C. Spears, Editors

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ON BECOMING A SERVANT-LEADER (1996)

The year of 1990 was a big one for me.

In late-1989, The Greenleaf Center board was looking to relocate the office from Boston to Indianapolis, and to hire an executive director. I learned of this, applied for the position, was hired, and along with my young-and-growing family, we moved back home to Indiana in early 1990, following a dozen years spent in Philadelphia.



In July, my wife Beth gave birth to our second son, Matthew, who joined his big brother, James. Born on July 14, I soon learned that Matthew actually shared a birthday with Bob Greenleaf, who had been born in Terre Haute, Indiana on July 14, 1904.

In September, I had my one-and-only face-to-face meeting with Robert Greenleaf—the subject of another story that I have shared in several places, most notably in *Fortuitous Encounters: Wisdom Stories for Learning and Growth* (Paul Davis and Larry C. Spears, Editors: Paulist Press, 2013). Ten days later, Robert Greenleaf passed away at the age of 86.

In October, the remains of Robert Greenleaf, and of his wife Esther, who had died the previous year, were brought to Terre Haute, Indiana where a small group of friends, family, and admirers gathered together in a Quaker-style remembrance of Bob. Greenleaf had a wry wit, and he penned his own epitaph, which can be found on his grave marker in Terre Haute. It reads, “Robert Kiefner Greenleaf, 1904-1990. Servant-Leader, Philosopher, Writer.” And, underneath that appears this sentence, “Potentially a good plumber, ruined by a sophisticated education.” Here is a photo of it.





[FYI: For anyone interested in visiting Robert Greenleaf's grave, it is located in Highland Lawn Cemetery, 4420 Wabash Avenue, Terre Haute, Indiana 47803 (Section 17, Lot #588). —L.S.]

In November of 1990, I received boxes of Bob Greenleaf's personal files, sent to me by his children as they closed out his apartment at Crosslands, in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. A note that came with the boxes stated that these contained Bob's remaining file folders of servant-leadership related materials. I sat down and immediately opened the boxes, quickly taking out folder after folder. Many of these folders had their contents written in pencil by Bob on the tabs. By then, I had read and re-read the two books and dozen essays published by Robert Greenleaf in the 1970s and '80s, and I was pretty familiar with what he had written. I pulled out a file folder that had a title written on it that I didn't recognize, within which was a piece of writing by Greenleaf that I hadn't seen before, and which I sat to one side on the table. I pulled out another folder, and I found another, longer document that he had written. This was getting interesting!

Some eight hours later, I had made a cursory pass through all of the folders in all of the boxes, and I was astonished to realize that it appeared that these boxes contained among their contents nearly 100 separate file folders, each one containing a different piece of writing by Robert Greenleaf. What I eventually came to realize was that for fifty years, when Greenleaf became interested in a question or a problem, or when he simply wanted to explore his own thinking on something, he would sit down with a yellow pad and pencil and begin to write, and to keep at it until he was satisfied that he understood something. Then, he would take out a file folder, write the subject head on it, stick the pages into the folder, and put it into his files. He appears to have done that not with the intention of



eventually publishing them, but simply as his preferred means of self-learning.

In 1991, I wrote a grant proposal that was funded by Lilly Endowment, and which enabled us to put together a blue-ribbon panel of folks who read all of these writings and compared them to what we knew of Greenleaf's published writings, weeding out duplicative material. Then, in 1993, I wrote another grant request that was funded by Lilly Endowment, which enabled a second stage of this project. Working together with Anne Fraker and Don Frick, we subsequently began a process of selecting, editing, and sequencing many of those writings and ultimately publishing in 1996 two new books of writings by Robert Greenleaf. We titled one of them, *On Becoming a Servant-Leader*, and the other, *Seeker and Servant: Reflections on Religious Leadership*, both books published by Jossey-Bass in 1996 and drawn from this unexpected treasure trove of previously unknown writings.

These newly-discovered private writings of Robert Greenleaf seemed to naturally fall into two distinct categories of organizational development, and of spiritual development; and so, we decided to work on creating two manuscripts of Greenleaf's writings along those lines.

I invited Peter Drucker to write the Foreword for *On Becoming a Servant-Leader*. In it, Drucker reminisced on their friendship, and how they had worked fairly closely together in the 1950s and 60s. Drucker had been a frequent speaker at the Bell System Advanced Management School that Greenleaf had run out of Asbury Park, New Jersey. In turn, Bob Greenleaf had been a key speaker at the President's Course of the American Management Association which Drucker helped organize and co-chaired for many years.

Don Frick and I wrote the Preface and Introduction for the book.

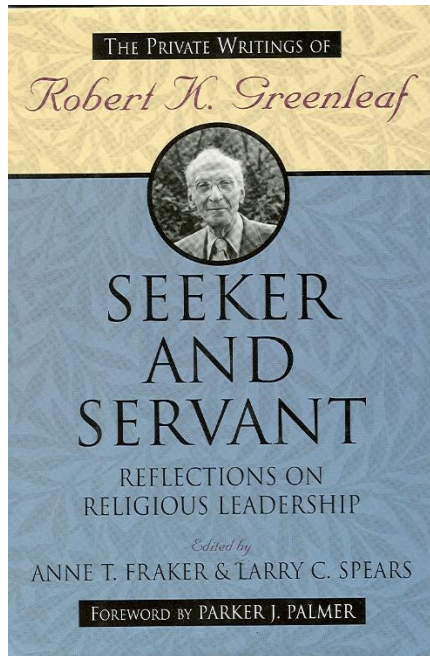


We divided the content of the book into four main sections. Section One was, “The Ethic of Strength,” which Greenleaf had written between 1959 and 1965 as a short book that was never published. Section Two we titled, “Essays on Power, Management, and Organizations.” His essays on Power included dozens of examples of how power has been used and misused; and, he offers powerful arguments in favor of the use of persuasive power and developing listening skills. The essays on Management included some of his earliest writings, beginning in 1935. The essays on Organizations included fascinating insights into the impact of AT&T on his evolution in thinking about organizations. Section Three we titled, “Leadership and the Individual: The Dartmouth Lectures.” This was Greenleaf’s last major essay before writing “The Servant as Leader” essay in 1969-70. It has much more of a conversational tone and is quite a joy to read. Section Four, “In Person with Robert K. Greenleaf,” is a special gift for all who wish they could sit down and chat with Greenleaf. Dr. Joseph DiStefano had the privilege of doing that in December, 1986. DiStefano was a friend and protégé of Greenleaf’s for nearly thirty years. In this essay, Greenleaf offers fascinating insights into some of his major influences, how he began to write on the servant theme, people and activities that had a powerful impact on him, and much more.

Note: In 2013, Gonzaga University professor John Horsman and I created a new graduate course titled, “Listen Discern Decide.” In selecting the required readings for this course, we chose to include *On Becoming a Servant-Leader*. We did so, in part, because of the strong focus that many of the essays in this book have on listening, decision-making, and discernment—which Greenleaf more often refers to as awareness. It is also the case that so many of the readings in this book provide great insights into how one might develop as a



servant-leader-in-training through a strong commitment to personal development and caring for our mutual well-being.



1996

Seeker and Servant: Reflections on Religious Leadership

Robert K. Greenleaf

(Jossey-Bass, 360 pages)

Anne T. Fraker and Larry C. Spears, Editors

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19. *A New Role for Seminaries*
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22. *Toward a Gentle Revolution Ministry to the Strong*
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SEEKER AND SERVANT: REFLECTIONS ON RELIGIOUS
LEADERSHIP (1996)

As previously mentioned, the surprising discovery of dozens of essays by Greenleaf upon his death was an exciting and fascinating development that directly led to the publication of these two posthumously published books. Curiously, I would have somewhat similar experiences twice more in my life. One was the discovery fifteen years later (2006), of dozens of unknown writings by a dear friend and mentor, Bill Bottum, which resulted in the publication of a



book titled, *Within Your Reach: The Beatitudes in Business and Everyday Life (Selected Writings of C.E. “Bill” Bottum, Jr.)*. Dorothy L. Lenz, George SanFacon, and Larry C. Spears, Editors; Lulu Publishing (www.Lulu.com), 2010. And, almost simultaneously, my friend-and-colleague Paul W. Davis rescued the personal papers of John F. Donnelly, a former CEO of the Donnelly Corporation who had died decades earlier, and whose papers were about to be thrown into the trash. Knowing of my experience with the papers of Greenleaf and Bottum, Paul asked me to help him go through the writings by John Donnelly to see what was there. Ultimately, we published some of Donnelly’s private writings in a book titled, *The Human Treatment of Human Beings* (Paul Davis and Larry C. Spears, Editors; The Scanlon Foundation, 2009). [Note: Both of these books are available as free downloads from the Spears Center website (www.spearscenter.org).

Published in 1996, *Seeker and Servant* kicks off with a powerful Foreword written by Parker Palmer. Parker and Robert Greenleaf had been friends, and they lived near one another in the 1970s and 80s, outside of Philadelphia, during a time when Parker had worked at Pendle Hill, a Quaker retreat and study center, and Bob and his wife, Esther, had lived at Crosslands, a Quaker retirement center. By the time we began working on this book I had met Parker on several occasions and he was most kind to share his reflections in the Foreword on his friend, Bob Greenleaf. Parker noted that Robert Greenleaf had called upon leaders to, “take an inner journey that can illumine their own souls—and thus illumine the lives of the institutions they lead, of the folks who work in them, and of the people they serve.”

Anne Fraker and I wrote the Preface and the Introduction for *Seeker and Servant*. We also dipped into some of Greenleaf’s



writings from his Journal, as well as his Dream Journal, for quotes that we sprinkled throughout the book. We found a number of beautiful thoughts that he had written down, including this one, which has always been a personal favorite of mine—

The rewards of living a full life may be measured in joyous moments rather than in days or years. These are the treasures that return to the mind in the quiet hours of the declining years. The moments nobly lived, challenges met, the truth spoken, the slur turned aside, the tumult quelled, the helping hand extended, and the simple expression of gratitude, the burden borne; meeting life and feeling the response of living—taking responsibility, prudently, if possible, but taking it and leaving it joyfully once taken. Setting one's course on a star and steering toward it, minding not the reefs that waylay. —Robert K. Greenleaf, Journal, August 31, 1940

The writings in this volume seemed to fall into four thematic categories. Part One, “Nurturing the Spirit: The Challenges of Religious Leadership,” presented essays that he wrote on his concerns about leadership in religious institutions, along with challenges that he issued to those leaders. In these chapters he also stressed the importance of nurturing spiritual aspects of living for the long-term health of a more caring society. Part Two, “Leaders as Inspired Persons,” focused largely on those whom Greenleaf called inspired leaders. He emphasized the development of spirit in leaders as they try to be servant-leaders in organizations. Part Three, “Seminaries, Churches, and Foundations: Partners in Spirit,” finds Greenleaf examining these three key institutions and their opportunities to foster change in society. He believed that churches should be the most useful of change agents, and that seminaries had a vital role in energizing churches to fulfill their callings. Greenleaf

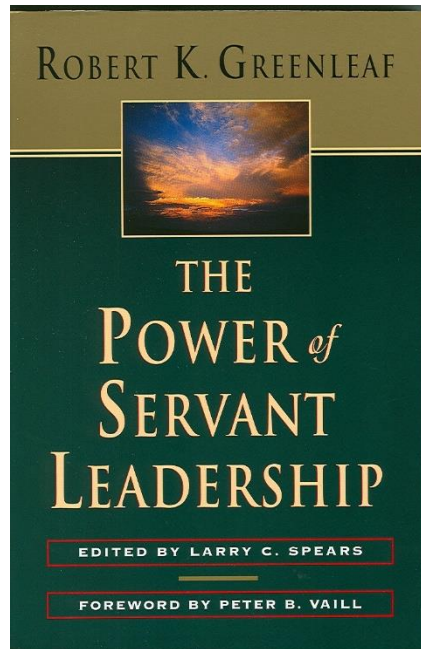


also thought that foundations could serve as important catalysts for this whole process. Part Four, “Toward the Caring Community: Reflections on Seeking, Giving, and Receiving,” focused on the process of an individual’s search for meaning in life and in community. He also looked at the deeper meaning of giving and receiving gifts of money. This section also contains several short articles that Greenleaf wrote and published in *Friends Journal*—a Quaker magazine in Philadelphia where I also worked in the 1980s, and where I was first introduced to the writings of Robert Greenleaf. The book closes with an Afterword by three people who worked with Greenleaf for several years, and who shared their recollections of him in a conversation originally published in 1991 in *In Trust*.

Throughout his writings, Greenleaf emphasized his belief in gradual change as a means to creating a more caring society through servant-leadership. This was important to him as he believed that true change comes about only when people are persuaded in their own hearts of the value of that change.

Seeker and Servant remains one of my favorite books, and it contains some of Robert Greenleaf’s most lyrical writings. Like all of Greenleaf’s writings, it remains a source of inspiration for me, and for many others who enjoy re-reading it.

Note: In fact, Greenleaf’s 1986 essay titled, “Pope John XXIII: Nurturer of Spirits,” recently inspired my Gonzaga University colleague Dung Q. Tran and I to write a chapter titled, “Servant-Leadership and Community: Humanistic Perspectives from Pope John XXIII and Robert K. Greenleaf,” (*Humanistic Management Journal*, Springer, 2020).



1998

The Power of Servant-Leadership

Robert K. Greenleaf

(Berrett-Koehler, 313 pages)

Larry C. Spears, Editor

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THE POWER OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP (1998)

While working on *On Becoming a Servant-Leader and Seeker and Servant*, I began to think about other books of writings by Robert K. Greenleaf that I might curate and edit. The next one that seemed important to create was a kind of companion volume to Greenleaf's 1977 book, *Servant Leadership*. Throughout the 1970s and 80s, Bob Greenleaf had written a series of a dozen essays on servant-leadership which he had published as separate booklets and sold them through the Greenleaf Center. Many of these writings were among his later essays, such as "Servant: Retrospect and Prospect," "Seminary as Servant," and, "Old Age: The Ultimate Test of Spirit," and others written after the publication of his 1977 book, *Servant Leadership*.

In 1996, I began to work on creating the book that I titled, *The Power of Servant-Leadership*. One of the great challenges of this



book was quite simply the process of turning separate, printed essays into the Word documents that would be used to make up the book manuscript. The printed essays had been created using the old glass plates that were standard in printing at the time, and then stored for reprinting. Nearly all of them had also been written by Greenleaf through the use of a typewriter—years before the use of computers. I remember that I tried using an early Optical Character Recognition (OCR) program to scan several of the printed essays, but the error rate was so frustratingly high that it was going to take longer to make corrections than it was to retype the entire printed essays into Word documents. Thankfully, as a high school freshman I had learned how to type, and in decades of working on school newspapers and professional publications after that, I had learned how to type fast, and with accuracy. And so, I bit the proverbial bullet and began a labor-intensive process in which I wound-up retyping many of the essays into a computer, in order to create a Word document of the manuscript content.

I determined that I would like to bookend Greenleaf's writings with both a Foreword and an Afterword. I asked Peter Vaill (author of *Managing as a Performing Art*, and other books) to write the Foreword. I had come to know Peter as a speaker at both our Leadership Institute for Higher Education (LIFE), and as a Greenleaf conference speaker. And, I asked my friend, James (Jim) P. Shannon, to write an Afterword for the book. I had first met Jim Shannon in 1990, when he reached out to welcome me to the Greenleaf Center. Jim was a laicized Roman Catholic bishop and educator. In his early years he had served as the president of the College of St. Thomas (St. Paul, Minnesota). In later years, he served as the head of the General Mills Foundation, then as a consultant for the Council on Foundations, and he had known Robert Greenleaf.



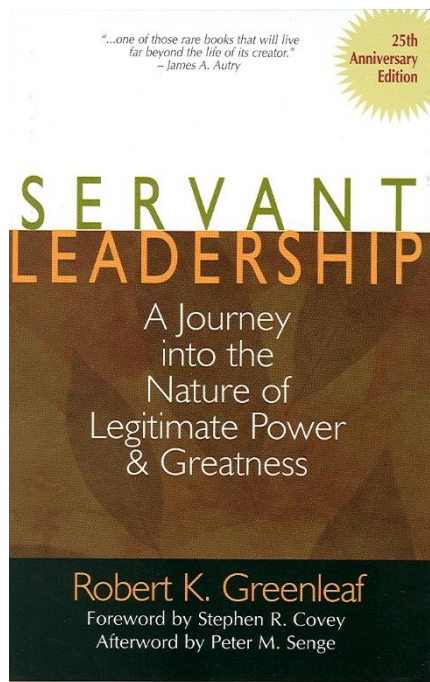
I also wrote an Introduction to *The Power of Servant-Leadership* in which I provided an overview of Greenleaf, servant-leadership, and charted some of the areas of growth and applications of his work.

The content of this book is very strong. A number of chapters find Greenleaf continuing to develop his ideas on servant-leadership in new and interesting directions. “Servant: Retrospect and Prospect” involves Greenleaf assessing the first ten years of influence of the servant-as-leader idea, and is one of the strongest pieces of his writings. “The Servant as Religious Leader” and “Seminary as Servant” find him focusing on both the problems and the possibilities that he saw in religious institutions as encouragers of servant-leaders. “My Debt to E.B. White” is a beautiful reflection on the impact that the author E.B. White had on Greenleaf for more than fifty years. I closed *The Power of Servant-Leadership* with my favorite essay, and one of the very last pieces written by Greenleaf shortly before he suffered a series of strokes that ended his writing career. That essay is titled, “Old Age: The Ultimate Test of Spirit—An Essay on Preparation,” first published in 1987. In this essay, Greenleaf looks back upon his life from the age of 83 years old and reflects upon his decision, at the age of 40, to prepare for his old age, as a result of hearing radio commentator Elmer Davis urging listeners to “prepare now for your old age.” Greenleaf says that he, “judged him to be a true servant and heeded his advice.” For me, this closing essay captures so much of Greenleaf’s wisdom. It is also a poignant reminder of the man who I met a few years later, and just ten days before he died at the age of 86.

In collecting these later essays into *The Power of Servant-Leadership*, I was able to gather together into this companion volume to *Servant Leadership* some of Greenleaf’s best writings on servant-leadership. And, my experience in putting together this collection of



these essays helped to lay the groundwork for what would become the best-selling book of Greenleaf's writings—the 25th anniversary edition of *Servant-Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*, in 2002.



2002

Servant-Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power & Greatness [25th Anniversary Edition]

Robert K. Greenleaf
(Paulist Press, 370 pages)
Larry C. Spears, Editor



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8. *Servant-Leaders*
9. *Servant Responsibility in a Bureaucratic Society*
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11. *An Inward Journey*
12. *Postscript*

Afterword, Peter M. Senge

SERVANT-LEADERSHIP: A JOURNEY INTO THE NATURE OF
LEGITIMATE POWER & GREATNESS (25TH ANNIVERSARY
EDITION) (2002)

I have always urged those who are interested in servant-leadership to first read Robert Greenleaf's book, *Servant-Leadership*. The original edition of *Servant Leadership* was published by Paulist Press in 1977. Then, in 2002, I produced a 25th Anniversary Edition of *Servant Leadership* and added a Foreword by Stephen R. Covey, plus an Afterword by Peter M. Senge.

Sometime around 1999, I began to think about the upcoming 25th anniversary of Greenleaf's book, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power & Greatness* to take place in 2002. I



approached Paulist Press and suggested that we work on an updated 25th anniversary edition, and they expressed great interest in the idea. I reached out to Stephen Covey and asked that he write a Foreword, and to Peter Senge with a request that he write an Afterword. Thankfully, both said yes and were eager to do so.

Robert Greenleaf had put together the original 1977 edition by sequencing his first three essays on servant-leadership (“The Servant as Leader,” “The Institution as Servant,” and, “Trustees as Servants”) as the first three chapters of the book. To that, he added separate chapters on servant-leadership in business, education, foundations, and churches, along with a half-dozen other chapters.

When the original edition of *Servant Leadership* was first published in 1977, it had sold modestly. However, by the mid-1990’s I was told by a Paulist Press editor that the book, *Servant-Leadership*, was virtually unique in that, unlike the sales history of most books, the number of copies sold had increased almost every year since it was first published. Then, when the low-cost hardcover edition of the 25th anniversary edition was published in 2002, the annual sales increased significantly. Today, it remains the best-selling book by Robert Greenleaf.

I believe it is helpful to understand that servant-leadership starts within each one of us, and that it is primarily a personal philosophy and commitment that we can choose to practice in any environment. Also, servant-leadership is not a “leadership style” that one puts on and takes off like a coat, depending upon the weather (or situation). Rather, if we understand Greenleaf’s best test as the fundamental understanding of servant-leadership, then it becomes clear that the choice to act as a servant-leader is ours to make. Our personally embracing servant-leadership does not require the approval of our supervisor, or our organization’s chief executive. We don’t need

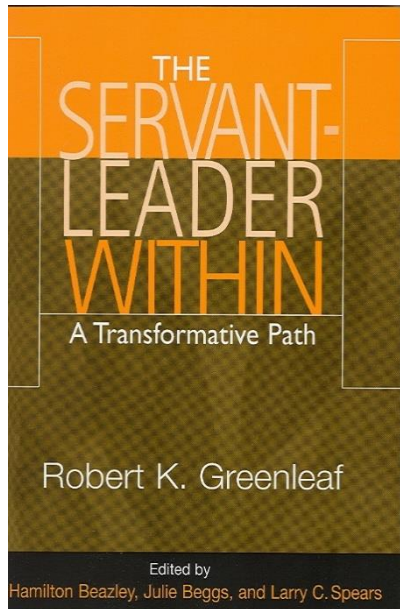


anyone's permission to personally do our best to act as a servant-leader. It is our choice.

Another helpful insight is to state the obvious: There are no perfect servant-leaders, and no perfect servant-led institutions. Institutions are led by people, and people are imperfect. Even the most well-intentioned servant-leaders in training (and we are forever servant-leaders in training) will at some point in time do or say something that we, ourselves, regret. At those times, the best thing to do is to sincerely apologize, and to seek to learn from it. In other instances, someone else may become angry at us for a decision that we are convinced was the right one and made with the greater good in mind. When that happens, and if we are aware of it, the opportunity is there to try and promote healing by reaching out to one another. Of course, the effective use of foresight, listening, and other servant-leader characteristics can often help us to avoid the need for this sort of thing in the first place.

Servant-leadership isn't pie-in-the-sky kind of work. It requires personal commitment and dedication. And yet, for those who feel called to it, it makes all the difference in the world.

As Greenleaf writes in *Servant Leadership*: "The servant-leader is servant first The best test of servant-leadership is, are those within the organization 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?"



2003

The Servant-Leader Within: A Transformative Path

Robert K. Greenleaf

(Paulist Press, 258 pages)

Hamilton Beazley, Julie Beggs, and Larry C. Spears, Editors

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Teacher as Servant

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THE SERVANT-LEADER WITHIN: A TRANSFORMATIVE
PATH (2003)

In 1979, Paulist Press published *Teacher as Servant*. That book was the one work of fiction that Greenleaf wrote in an effort to communicate what servant-leadership might look like when put into practice inside a college living unit. It sold poorly at that time and was allowed to go out of print a few years later. In the late-1980s, AT&T paid for a sizable print run of a paperback edition of *Teacher as Servant* with a plain red cover and donated them back to the Greenleaf Center for resale. For the next fifteen years, the Center sold copies of this edition of *Teacher as Servant*, until those copies were finally exhausted. Then in 2003, I collaborated with Hamilton Beazley and Julie Beggs in the creation of *The Servant-Leader Within: A Transformative Path*, which included *Teacher as Servant* in its entirety, plus the original 1970 edition of "The Servant as Leader," which Greenleaf had revised by about 50% and republished in the early 1970s as the orange essay that most people are familiar with. Additional content included Greenleaf's short essay titled, "Life's Choices and Markers." To the writings by Robert Greenleaf, we added a Foreword, written by Hamilton Beazley, and an Introduction that I contributed.



Note: Not long after I began at the Greenleaf Center in 1990, I received the first in a series of hand-written notes from Harriet Lowe. Harriet, who was Jack Lowe Sr.'s wife and Jack Lowe Jr.'s mother had a strong affinity for the original 1970 edition of "The Servant as Leader," which Greenleaf had substantially re-written. The original edition had been intended primarily for a university audience of students, faculty, administrators, and trustees. After its publication, he was encouraged to broaden the examples to go beyond the university environment, which resulted in the revised edition (which was printed with an orange cover and has remained so to this day). By 1973, there were few copies left of the original edition, and by the time I came to the Greenleaf Center in 1990, Harriet Lowe was eager to see the original edition brought back into print. For my part, I was concerned that bringing the original edition back into print as a separate essay could be confusing and, besides that, Greenleaf had re-written it and republished it as the orange essay, which indicated that his evolving thinking on the servant-as-leader had prompted him to replace the original edition with the revised edition. Throughout the 1990's, I received occasional notes from Harriet suggesting that we reprint the original essay. Finally, around 2001, and in conjunction with our running out of copies of *Teacher as Servant*, I concluded that the time had come to create a new book of Greenleaf's writings—one which could include both the original 1970 edition of "The Servant as Leader," as well as bringing *Teacher as Servant* back into print as the substantial core of the book that we titled, *The Servant-Leader Within: A Transformative Path*. Including the original "Servant as Leader" essay as both a chapter and an artifact within this new book was the right way to go, in that it allowed us to bring the first edition back into print as a chapter in the book, but without the potential confusion that would have



occurred if we had published it as a stand-alone essay. I am grateful to Harriet Lowe for her persistence and encouragement, which ultimately led me to bring the original 1970 edition of “The Servant as Leader” back into print as part of this book.

In his Introduction to *Teacher as Servant*, Greenleaf writes—

“*Teacher as Servant* is a how-to-do-it book that describes the work of a university professor who cares deeply about the students of his university, not just those in his classes to whom he devotes the usual care of a conscientious teacher, but any students entering the university who respond to the suggestions that they become servants, and who are willing to invest a substantial share of their extracurricular time to developing their servant natures while they are in the university.”

While the story is fictional, Greenleaf notes that it drew heavily on his observation of one university program that was similar to what he describes in the book. And, over the years, *Teacher as Servant* inspired several university houses to try and model the emphasis on nurturing servant-leaders.

The Servant-Leader Within concludes with “Life’s Choices and Markers,” which began as a commencement talk that Greenleaf recorded on video for delivery at Alverno College, in the spring of 1984. Greenleaf writes, “I had never made a commencement talk before, but I realized that it was an occasion that was too much used for gratuitous advice. I decided that I would make a brief summary of five major ideas that had shaped the course of my work. What I wanted to convey in twenty minutes, without lecturing them about it, is that ideas nurture the human spirit that determines how one comes out of life, and that one chooses, among all the ideas one has access to, which will guide what one does with one’s opportunities. And that choice is crucial.”



It is worth noting that all royalties on these five books of Greenleaf's writings have always gone directly to the Robert K. Greenleaf Center. In fact, the combined income of book royalties and copies of these books sold directly by the Greenleaf Center since 1990 has been substantial, and a great source of revenue for the Greenleaf Center—especially in the 1990's and 2000's. Of course, the changing nature of book-selling since that time, and especially the growth of Amazon.com, has reduced the financial benefit of these books for the Greenleaf Center. On the other hand, it can be said that the expanded availability of these five books through Amazon.com has helped to insure a healthy audience for them to this day. And I know from personal contact with readers that these five books continue to serve as an important introduction to servant-leadership all these years later.

My work on these five books plus dozens of other servant-leadership publications has been my calling in life for more than thirty years now. For me, each book has been a labor of love, and a deep calling of service to a world of readers of servant-leadership writings. It is my sincere hope and belief that these five books of writings by Robert K. Greenleaf have made a serious contribution to the expanding interest in and practice of servant-leadership over the past three decades. And, I hope that they will continue to do so for many more years to come.

Larry C. Spears is president and CEO of the Spears Center for Servant-Leadership (www.spearscenter.org), Indianapolis, and he serves as Servant-Leadership Scholar for the School of Leadership Studies at Gonzaga University, Spokane. He is a writer-editor-teacher and contributing author to 36 books on servant-leadership, including the critically acclaimed *Insights on Leadership* (1996),



Fortuitous Encounters (2013, with Paul Davis); and, with Shann Ferch, *The Spirit of Servant-Leadership* (2011) and *Conversations on Servant-Leadership* (2015). He also served as editor or co-editor on all five books of writings by Robert K. Greenleaf; and, since 1995 he has served as editor or co-editor of eight servant-leadership anthologies. Larry serves as senior advisory editor of *The International Journal of Servant-Leadership*. From 1990-2007, Larry served as president and CEO, and also as Senior Fellow and President Emeritus, of The Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership.

Among other honors, Larry has received the "Outstanding Leadership Award" from Chapman University in California (2002); the "Dare to Lead" Award from the International Leadership Network (2004); the Community Leadership Award from DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana (2008); a special recognition from the Greenleaf Centre-United Kingdom (2015); and, as the inaugural inductee into Gonzaga University's School of Leadership Studies' Hall of Honor (2018).

In 2004, Larry was interviewed by NBC reporter Stone Phillips for a segment on servant-leadership that appeared on NBC's DATELINE news program, which was seen by ten million viewers.