On Becoming a Servant-Leader

A Theoretical and Philosophical Basis for the Emergence of
Natural Servanthood

—Jeffrey L. McClellan

It is easier to make a "leader" than a "servant," to indulge hierarchies and
control than to embrace service and collaboration

H. Beazley and J. Beggs, "Teaching Servant-Leadership"

When I first read Greenleaf's *Teacher as Servant,* I was troubled by a con-
versation that occurred within the text between Mr. Billings and his fictional
student. Regarding Billings's choice to focus on turning natural servants into
leaders, he explained: "We are not interested in reforming people or convert-
ing nonservants to servants. Perhaps the university should offer a resource
for this, but we do not see it as our mission" (Greenleaf 2003d, 228).

This statement did not haunt me because of its exclusive nature; indeed,
I could see the need for Mr. Billings's fictional organization to function
exactly as it did. However, this conversation and its implications have lin-
gered in my consciousness, triggering questions about what it means to be
a natural servant and how a person may become one. Two questions in par-
ticular emerged as significant and represent the essence of what this article
is written to address: Can those who are not "natural" servants (individuals
who are motivated to serve first) become servant-leaders (natural servants
who choose to lead by empowering others) by first becoming natural ser-
vants, and if they can, how might this be achieved? To that end, this article
explores Greenleaf's use of the term *natural servant* and his philosophical
approach to the idea of natural servants. It also examines the relationship
between caring and empathy and the nature of the servant, and begins the
discussion of how the empathic, caring nature of servant-leaders and would-
be servant-leaders might be nurtured, developed, and expanded.

The word *natural* possesses at least two possible and relevant meanings. The first implies an inborn or naturally occurring trait or characteristic that is "simple and unrehearsed." In short, it is an inherent quality of being. The second meaning refers to someone who is "well suited" to something (*The New International Webster's Pocket Dictionary of the English Language*, 2001). This definition allows for the possibility that over time one may develop in such a way that he or she becomes "well suited" or "a natural" at something. The former implies an innate state or quality, the latter allows for that state or quality to be attained over time or through experience. With this in mind, it is valuable to begin with an understanding of how Greenleaf used the term *natural servant* in his writings.

After conducting a significant review of Greenleaf's work (1978, 1996a, 1996b, 1998, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2003d), it appears that "natural" was likely used in both of the manners implied previously. That is to say that it was not meant to signify solely those who display an innate quality of servanthood, though that may be the case for some, but also individuals for whom servanthood becomes natural over time. This is implied in his comparative statement about those who become servant-leaders as a result of having first been servants in contrast to those who begin as leaders (Greenleaf 2002, 27). It is even more explicitly deduced from his suggestion that a "nonservant might become a natural servant through a long and arduous discipline of learning to listen." (ibid., 31).

Larry Spears, a friend of Greenleaf's, a prolific writer and editor of books and articles on servant-leadership, and the former director of the Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership, confirmed this duality in Greenleaf's use of the term. He stated,

> Greenleaf clearly believed that some people were more predisposed toward being natural servant-leaders than were others. And yet, he also believed that one could learn to be a servant-leader, and that's a very important point from my perspective. We're not all natural-born servants; some of us learn to be servant-leaders only through the school of hard knocks, or sometimes through a slow internal evolution. I think Greenleaf really wanted to encourage natural servants to perhaps overcome some aspects of their personality that might keep them from seeking leadership positions within organizations. His belief was that if natural servants began to get more involved in leadership then organizations and society would benefit tremendously. (Dittmar 2006, 109)

Another phrase used by Greenleaf to denote this dual source idea of the natural servant is "servant-first." Greenleaf applied this term to those who choose to lead out of the will to serve, as opposed to those who choose to lead and then later choose to serve. Though this phrase could also be used to denote some inborn quality or trait that results in a tendency toward serving, it also appears to be something people can develop. With regards to this, Greenleaf refers to Hesse's character Leo as being a servant first because "that was what he was, deep down inside." He then stated, "His servant nature was the real man, not bestowed, not assumed, and not to be taken away. He was servant first" (Greenleaf 2002, 22). Thus, it appears, an individual must either innately possess a servant heart, as did Leo, or must work hard to develop one through a deep and comprehensive learning process that makes servanthood a part of his or her nature.

This "heart of the servant" is characterized by love, compassion, and caring (Greenleaf 1996a, 2002, 2003d). Consequently, it is consistent with the philosophical concept of caring (Ayers 2008), which like the "natural" servant-nature is both innate and learned. Noddings, in relation to her discussion of natural caring, wrote:

> The preferred way of relating to one another morally can be called natural caring. By "natural" I mean a form of caring that arises more or less spontaneously out of affection or inclination. In natural caring, the phenomenological features described earlier do not require a special ethical effort; they arise directly in response to the needs of the cared-for....I do not mean to suggest that the capacity for natural caring does not need cultivation...it needs continuous and sensitive cultivation. (Noddings 2002, 29)

This statement serves two significant purposes; first, it clarifies the potential for people to, as a result of effort and time, drive the will to serve or care deeply into their being so that it becomes a "natural" way of responding to others, which validates Greenleaf's use of the term. Second, it establishes a strong connection between the concept of the servant nature and the topic of caring, with its philosophical and theoretical kin empathy. It is this later connection that is particularly relevant to the discussion of "natural" servanthood.

EMPATHY AND CARING

In his work on an ethic of care, Slote suggested that there exists a base level of caring for all human beings that is ethically obligatory of all as a result of the innate existence of empathy within human beings. Beyond this basic

level, caring is considered ethically imperative only to the extent that one is obliged by the natural empathic feelings that he or she possesses to care for others. Such increased affective empathic demands would likely arise as a result of "perceptual and/or temporal immediacy, through family connect, and through the kinds of sharing that occur between friends and life partners" (Slote 2007, 28). Thus, Slote argued, caring when grounded in empathy is a driver for ethical obligation beyond the basic ethical demand to care for all human beings. It is worth noting, however, that Slote did not suggest people are obliged to be motivated by care, but rather that ethical caring "only requires us not to act from uncaring motives, not to act in ways that reflect a lack of empathic concern for others" (ibid., 33).

Regardless of the validity of his ethical framework, which is only tangentially relevant to this discussion, the connection Slote (2007) created between empathy and caring and, by extension, the heart of the servant is significant. Because, as Slote suggested, empathy appears to be a human capacity that facilitates caring and is, just as the philosophical concept of servanthood, both innate and developed (Goleman 2011). That said, in order to better understand how to develop "natural" servanthood, it is important to understand the nature of empathy and how it can be developed.

EMPATHY DEFINED

Empathy is a complex, multifaceted concept. Batson identified eight different ways in which the term is used within the literature. The first involves "[k]nowing another person's internal state, including his or her thoughts and feelings" (Batson 2009, 2). The second incorporates "[a]dopting the posture or matching the neural responses of another" (ibid., 4) which requires both mimicking behavior and motor activity and mimicking neural representation via mirror neurons. The third suggest that empathy refers to "[c]oming to feel as another person feels" (ibid., 5), whereas the fourth focuses on "[i]ntuiting or projecting oneself into another's situation" (ibid., 6). The fifth and sixth focus on the use of imagination as either a means of understanding how another person is thinking and feeling or what an individual would think and feel if he or she were in the other person's situation. The last two identify empathy as the process of either feeling distress upon

witnessing another person's suffering or feeling sympathy for another person who is suffering.

While these eight definitions are clearly distinct, they nonetheless share the common thread of recognizing and responding to the emotions of others. Furthermore, they imply a process of empathy. This process begins with attentiveness and the subconscious functions associated with tuning into the emotions of others. It then proceeds as one consciously and intentionally strives to accurately understand and experience the emotions of others. From there, an individual follows with regulation of the stress associated with experiencing others' emotions, and, finally, concludes by selecting and engaging in an emotionally appropriate response (Bozarth 2009; Hatfield, Rapson, and Le 2009). To the extent that this response demonstrates caring, empathy may be seen as a direct precursor to caring and, therefore, servant-leadership.

SUBCONSCIOUS COMPONENTS OF EMPATHIC AWARENESS

The subconscious components that drive the process of empathy are embedded in functional neurological processes that connect us to those around us. There appear to be at least three subconscious processes that contribute to this stage of the empathy process. The first involves facial and vocal recognition via sensory reception. Goleman, Boyatzis, and Mckee explained this process as follows:

> The ability to empathize...stems from neurons in extended circuitry connected to, and in, the amygdala that read another person's face and voice for emotion and continually attune us to how someone else feels as we speak with them. This circuitry sends out a steady stream of bulletins...which the prefrontal zone and related areas use to fine tune what we say or do next....This circuitry also attunes our own biology to the dominant range of feelings of the person we are with, so that our emotional states tend to converge. (Goleman, Boyatzis, and Mckee 2002, 48)

This functional capacity appears to be innate in all human beings, barring some structural, neurological deficiency. Ekman (2007), in his research on human emotion, identified six core emotions corresponding with six key facial expressions that are ubiquitous across global cultures: anger, surprise, fear, joy, disgust, sadness. Among these expressions are a number that have

been demonstrated to create emotion within both the person expressing emotion and the individual observing the expression. Consequently, "even the briefest of glances at a face is seemingly sufficient to furnish an abundance of information about its owner" (Macrae, Quinn, Mason, and Quadflieg 2005, 691). As our bodies attune to these responses in others, we engage in mimicry. Hatfield, Rapson, and Le explained:

> People tend to (a) automatically mimic the facial expressions, vocal expressions, posture, and instrumental behaviors of those around them, and thereby (b) feel a pale reflection of others' emotions as a consequence of such feedback. The result is that such people tend (c) to catch one another's emotions. (Hatfield, Rapson, and Le 2009, 26)

Without even recognizing that we are doing so, we subconsciously and naturally recognize the emotions of others and tune into, and even replicate, these emotions within ourselves (van Baaren, Decety, Dijksterhuis, van der Leij, and van Leeuwen 2009). This process is complemented by a second neuronal process associated with mirror neurons.

Mirror neurons were discovered in animal studies when researchers noticed that an animal that observes the behavior of another animal experiences similar neuronal firing within the brain as the actor. This suggests that not all emotional transference is dependent upon witnessing the emotion of others through tonal or facial recognition, but rather that the brain replicates the experience of another through observation of the behavior alone, thereby triggering the brain's own emotional response (Hatfield et al. 2009; van Baaren et al. 2009; Watson and Greenberg 2009). This subconscious process of emotional transference gives rise to emotions within the observer that he or she may then become aware of, even without recognizing the source of the emotional experienced.

A third means of subconscious emotional contagion results from chemicals released in the body that alter the emotional states of people in close proximity. Human pheromones are perhaps the best example of these interpersonal mood-altering chemicals (Buck and Ginsburg 1997).

It is, of course, worth noting that these processes do not ensure accuracy of emotional transference; nonetheless, they do suggest the "natural" existence of subconscious processes by which emotional contagion takes place. Furthermore, all of these processes occur subconsciously and simultaneously via the insula, through which we become aware of our own emotional state. Herein is evidenced, at least in part, the natural, albeit biological, component of servanthood.

DEVELOPED COMPONENTS OF EMPATHIC AWARENESS

In conjunction with these subconscious processes, there exist a number of semiconscious to conscious processes that complement and support the work of emotional contagion. These largely involve the use of imagination. As a person becomes aware of the emotions of others, he or she may automatically or electively choose to project him or herself into the situation of the other via the use of imagination by reflecting on and recreating the perceived emotions of the other within himself or herself and/or by imagining him or herself as the other within the situation. This allows him or her to identify the emotions the perceiver may feel in the situation (Watson and Greenberg 2009). This process can, of course, be complemented by actual inquiry regarding the emotional state of the other, followed by feedback to ensure accurate understanding of and resonance between the emotional state of both parties (Feshbach and Feshbach 2009; Goleman 2011). Both acts increase the strength of empathic responses. The extent to which an individual increases his or her capacity to engage in these cognitive and social behaviors can, of course, be learned. Thus, empathic awareness is, potentially, both natural in the "innate" as well as the "learned" sense of the word, just as is the servant nature.

STRESS REGULATION

It is worth noting that merely coming to experience and understand the emotions of others does not automatically foster within people a tendency to respond to others in a caring fashion. Indeed, it may result in emotional and behavioral responses quite distinct from those associated with caring, especially when attachment security is lacking (Laurenceau 1998). Batson explained, "Feeling as the other feels may actually inhibit other-oriented feelings if it leads us to become focused on our own emotional state" (Batson 2009, 10). For example, while witnessing the intense fear and distress of another person can lead people to seek to minimize another's fear, it may also trigger fear in the observer leading to behaviors that distance the observer from the observed. As Noddings wrote, "There exists in all caring situations the risk that the one caring will be overwhelmed by the responsibilities and duties of the task and that, as a result of being burdened, he or she will cease to care for the other and become instead the object of 'Caring'" (Noddings 2003, 12).

Likewise, empathy may lead to caring behaviors that are not motivated by caring, but rather by the desire to minimize personal distress (Eisenberg 2005; Laurenceau 1998). Responses such as these are most likely to occur in contexts where the observer is unable to manage and regulate his or her emotions in response to the emotions of the other. For example, advertising researchers have found that when using fear as a foundation for encouraging behavioral responses, the advertisement must also provide a clear path for people to follow to escape fear (Goldstein, Martin, and Cialdini 2008). Otherwise, they simply ignore the message.

The factor that seems to distinguish whether or not emotional contagion and empathy leads to sympathetic responsiveness as opposed to personal distress appears to be whether or not empathy promotes a self- versus other-orientation. An other-orientation, which is essential to distress regulation and servant-leadership, is dependent upon the individual's capacity to distinguish his or her emotions from those of the other, to regulate the intensity of the emotional experience, and to remain focused on the other (Eisenberg and Eggum 2009; Laurenceau 1998).

One critical mediating factor that predicts whether or not such distress will occur is an individual's state of attachment (Eisenberg and Eggum 2009; Love et al. 2009; Mikulincer, Shaver, Gillath, and Nitzberg 2005; Saarni 2007). The concept of attachment refers to the sense of security that people possess regarding the relationships in which they finds themselves (Weber 2003). Because of the powerful relationship needs that humans possess, attachment levels dramatically impact perception (Palladino Schultheiss 2003; Weber 2003) and partially determine the extent to which they perceive the emotions of others as threatening and, thereby, limiting to empathic responsiveness and caring in leadership (Weber 2003). Overarousal has a similar effect (Eisenberg 2005).

EMPATHIC, CARING RESPONSIVENESS AND SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

When an individual successfully regulates personal distress, research suggests the natural response to another's distress is to engage in behaviors that represent caring attempts to minimize the other's distress (Eisenberg 2005; Gano-Overway et al. 2009). This "natural" response appears to be both an innate, in the sense that it represents an inborn tendency within all human beings (barring deficiencies), and a learned response, in that regulating one's

own distress and the skill to respond to the other's distress is developed via time and experience.

While the research regarding empathy suggest that empathy and caring responsiveness are directly associated with witnessing distress in others, this does not imply that distress is a necessary precursor to the kind of empathy that produces caring behaviors. There is nothing to suggest that the neurological capacity to tune into the emotions of others is dependent on sorrowful emotions. In fact evidence suggests that positive emotions are similarly, and perhaps in some situations even more, contagious (Goleman et al. 2002). Ekman (2007), in his research, discovered that two facial expressions invite in the observer the equivalent emotion and expression as in the person observed. These are sadness and joy.

With regards to mirror neurons, they do not appear to be negative emotion dependent. Indeed, in one of the original research studies that led to the recognition of mirror neurons, it was observed that as a lab assistant raised and lowered a gelato (an inherently positive experience), a monkey observing this behavior demonstrated neural activity consistent with the raising and lowering of its own arm, even though it had not moved (Goleman 2011). Dotton and Heaphy (2003) found that high-quality connections, brief interactions characterized by comfort with both positive and negative emotionality, contribute to an increased capacity to endure conflict, foster openness/generativity, and result in higher positive regard regardless of whether or not they are enduring.

Furthermore, the research in positive psychology and positive organizational scholarship suggests positive emotions lead to positive health and behavioral outcomes that invite similar behaviors in others, improve relationships, increase leadership influence, and promote generative activity (Cameron 2008; Cameron, Dutton, and Quinn 2003; Cooperrider 2003; Cooperrider and Whitney 2001; Gano-Overway et al. 2009; Johnson and Leavitt 2001; Seligman 2002, 2011). Much of this is likely due to the sharing of positive emotion via empathic neural processes. As Cooperrider and Whitney declared,

> Organizations, says AI [appreciative inquiry] theory, are centers of human relatedness, first and foremost. And relationships thrive where there is an appreciative eye—when people see the best in one another, when they share their dreams and ultimate concerns in affirming ways, and when they are connected in full voice to create not just new worlds, but better worlds. (Cooperrider and Whitney 2001, 26)

Empathy, caring behavior, and, by extension, the heart of the servant are likely not dependent solely upon viewing others in a suffering state but rather on the experiencing of emotion with others through "physical presence" and "emotional and intellectual attention" (Hallowell 1998, 60). Indeed, it may be that positive emotional empathy is a better driver of caring behavior because it does not have the same potential to overwhelm the observer with contagiously derived emotions that exhaust his or her responsive capacity.

DIRECT EMPATHY TO PROJECTED EMPATHY

While it seems evident that empathy inspires caring behavior in situations where direct contact or even indirect contact via appropriate media occurs, it does leave one to wonder to what extent empathy can be considered relevant as a means of inspiring caring and the servant-heart in a more general/abstract sense or in situations where individuals have not yet experienced significant emotional contagion. Indeed, there is significant evidence that lack of in-person emotional signals limits the power of empathy as a facilitator of positive social relations (Goleman 2011; Hallowell 1998).

Slote (2007) offers some insight here. He suggested that while empathy and the resulting ethical demands to care are stronger as proximity increases, empathy can still be promoted at a significant distance. The means whereby this is accomplished neurologically is likely via the cognitive/imaginative approach.

Through imagination, people can potentially connect emotionally with anyone regardless of distance. Research studies regarding priming, mentally preparing individuals for an activity, and caregiving/altruism support this notion (Mikulincer et al. 2005) as does work with visualization and mindfulness in relation to emotional intelligence (Boyatzis and McKee 2005; Goleman 2011).

In concluding this section, it appears empathy represents a significant precursor to the caring associated with natural servanthood. Consistent with the philosophical concept of servanthood, empathy is grounded in both "natural" subconscious processes and "developed" conscious neural processes. This opens the door to the possibility that servanthood, like the practices of servant-leadership, might be learned.

If empathy represents the "natural" precursor to caring and servanthood, then the next question is: How is it possible to develop empathy in those who would desire to or could become servant-leaders? In addressing this question, it is important to note that developing empathy and learning to care are not easy things to do. They require deep learning as patterns of neurological behavior that have been developed over time must be recreated or overwritten by new patterns (Goleman 2011; Rock 2006). Furthermore, some aspects of emotional capacity are demonstrably genetic and not easily altered (Seligman 1993, 2011). This challenge is communicated well in the dialogue between the old priest and his pupils in the novel *The Brothers Karamazov*, wherein the priest proclaims, "Love is a teacher, but you must know how to go about acquiring love, for it does not come easily, one achieves it through relentless and protracted effort, because one must not love casually, just for an instant, but to the very end" (Dostoevsky 1994, 401). Emotional learning is fundamentally different than the cognitive or skill-based learning that is typically carried out in educational endeavors. As a result, it (emotional learning) demands a different approach to the educational process.

Emotional learning is inherently more difficult and time-consuming than memorization or simple skill building for a number of reasons. First emotional learning is more subject to genetic tendencies (Seligman 1993, 2002, 2011). Second, emotional behavior is, at least initially, almost entirely dependent on subconscious neural processes and complex neurologic patterns that have been hardwired over time. Third, emotional learning is partially dependent on cognitive and complex skill-based learning within highly contextual settings. These differences merit consideration in relation to teaching empathy and caring as a means of fostering servant-leadership.

While the distinctions between emotional learning and other forms of learning represent a need for unique approaches to teaching empathy and other emotional skills, there is one quality of empathy that may make teaching it easier. Empathy is likely, as discussed above, an innate skill of most psychologically healthy human beings. Failure to demonstrate empathy appears to be more a result of oversight, inattention, fear, and lack of interest than it is a result of limited capacity, except in cases of psychopathology and other similar situations. In most cases, if a person attends to another, he or she will naturally begin to feel as the other feels. If the same individual commits his or her cognitive resources to seeking to understand the other's

feelings, emotional resonance tends to increase. If the strain of the other's emotions is well managed, and attention is maintained, sympathy and sympathetic responding become increasingly likely to occur. Consequently, those who would teach empathy must draw on the principles of emotional learning and an understanding of empathy to facilitate the development of would-be servant-leaders by increasing interest in and understanding of the importance of empathy in leadership, promoting appropriate attentiveness and listening skills, training others to regulate negative emotions, and encouraging personal accountability for sympathetic responding.

CHANGING MINDS AND HEARTS

The potential importance of empathy as a foundation for developing and engaging in servant-leadership is based on the likelihood that people may not be able to feel the desire to serve others without first recognizing others' needs to be served. Without empathy, servant-leadership may not exist. Since part of the focus of this article is on whether or not non-servants can become natural servants and how this might be possible, it is important to suggest some possibilities for promoting increased recognition of the need to engage in empathy as part of leadership. According to Gardner (2004), those wishing to promote this type of change have seven tools at their disposal for changing people's minds. These seven mechanisms include: rational argument (Reason), empirical evidence (Research), emotional resonance (Resonance), various means of conveying the idea (Representational redescriptions), provision of support and rewards (Resources and rewards), the occurrence of events that reinforce the change (Real world events), and overcoming a person's specific concerns and limitations relative to change (Resistances). As Gardner explained, "A mind change is most likely to come about when the first six factors operate in consort and the resistances are relatively weak" (Gardner 2004, 18). Fortunately, ample evidence exists to support the need for empathy in relation to each of these areas.

A rational, research-based argument for empathy in leadership is easily constructed upon the recognition of the nature of leadership as a relational process of social influence and the current research regarding successful leadership. Leaders cannot exist without followers. Indeed, the ability to lead is dependent upon the skill that leaders have in telling stories that resonate with followers (Gardner and Laskin 1995). Regardless of the capacity that leaders may have to use coercive power over followers, they cannot do

so if the followers choose not to follow. Employers who force employees into compliance often find very quickly that this does not work with their customers, whom they must also maintain as followers. Indeed, if they fail to respond to the needs and interests of their customers, employers will lose them. Nonetheless, organizational leaders are not the primary "leaders" of customers. Instead, it is only through the internal followers that leaders lead customers. Many highly successful companies have come to recognize that effective, empathic, leadership of internal stakeholders is what leads to effective leadership of external stakeholders (Fitz-Enz 1997; Freiberg and Freiberg 1996; Segarra 2010). Research on the importance of balancing task and relational approaches to leadership in organizations is also supportive of this argument (Northouse 2004). Zenger and Folkman (2002) even found that nearly all of the fatal flaws of leaders are related more to deficits in emotional intelligence, including empathy, as opposed to intellectual skills. Furthermore, fostering a positive emotional climate, grounded in empathic emotional intelligence, is a critical component of organizational performance (Cameron 2008; Cameron et al. 2003; Seligman 2011). Finally, there is a growing body of literature that suggests servant-leadership and servant-led organizations foster improved performance at individual and organizational levels (Dannhauser and Boshoff 2006; Ostrem 2006; Ruschman 2002; Sipe and Frick 2009; West and Bocarnea 2008). As Archbishop Desmond Tutu wrote, "The true leader must at some point or other convince her or his followers that she or he is in this whole business not for self-aggrandizement but for the sake of others" (Tutu 1999, 39).

With regard to resonance, redescriptions, and real world events, evidence is abundant and ubiquitous. It is not difficult for leaders to witness what happens around the globe in societies and organizations where leadership is not based on empathic understanding of, and at least adequate responsiveness to, followers' needs. Stories of leaders, business and political, who lost the connection with their followers, and consequently their leadership, abound (Heifetz 1994; Heifetz and Linsky 2002; Kellerman 2004).

This is not to say that leaders must always do what followers desire. In fact, as Heifetz explained, sometimes leadership requires that leaders disappoint followers. He wrote:

> Adaptive leadership is not about meeting or exceeding your authorizers' expectations; it is about *challenging* some of those expectations, finding a way to disappoint people without pushing them completely over the

edge. And it requires managing the resistance you will inevitably trigger. When you exercise adaptive leadership, your authorizers will push back. (Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky 2009, 26)

Nonetheless, when this pushback occurs, leaders must be able to manage and respond to the pain of their followers through the use of empathy or they will be seen as rigid, intemperate, callous, or simply evil (Kellerman 2004).

The final components of mind change suggests that while sometimes a person can change another's mind through direct attempts to do so, at other times mind change occurs by changing the context in which the individual is laboring (American Society for Training and Development 2006; Rothwell, Hohne, and King 2007). This is done by changing the resources and rewards and by overcoming resistances to change. Often it is the competitive, short-term, financially focused contexts that we create that makes it difficult for leaders to see the need for empathy in leadership. It seems more of what matters to the organization is achieved when people do not empathize than when they do. Therefore, changing the reward structures and the ways in which leaders are supported can make a huge difference. One of these support factors, which is central to overcoming resistances, involves listening to the concerns of leaders with regard to being more empathetic. By using empathy through listening and responding to leaders' concerns, empathic leadership is modeled, promoted, and encouraged.

Given the importance of the factor of mind change, and the need to encourage a willingness to change among participants, programs focused on developing natural servanthood will need to use as many of the contributors to mind change as possible. Only then will they build a successful foundation for change.

CONCLUSION

In concluding, the ghosts that haunted my mind when I first read Greenleaf's *Teacher as Servant* are beginning to dissipate. While it was certainly the case that servant-leadership was best taught, in Greenleaf's fictional context, to those who already possessed a servant nature, those who do not already possess this tendency may very likely be able to acquire it. In fact, to the extent that empathy is associated with servanthood, it is likely they already possess it. All that may be lacking is the willingness and skill to attend to the empathic

signals they already receive and a commitment to intentionally strive to con-
nect with others through imaginative, perspective-taking processes and inter-
active listening practices. Those who would assist such individuals in this
transformation process may only need to encourage a change of mind in rela-
tion to the importance of empathy in leadership and intentionally design and
structure educational environments that promote the use and development of
empathic skills. To the extent that this occurs, servanthood might be taught,
empathy developed, and the heart of the servant ignited.

REFERENCES

American Society for Training and Development. 2006. *Improving Human Perfor-
mance.* 1st ed. Alexandria, VA: ASTD Press.

Ayers, M. R. 2008. *Agapao in Servant-Leadership.* Paper presented at the Servant-
Leadership Research Roundtable, Regent University.

Batson, C. D. 2009. "These Things We Called Empathy: Eight Related but Distinct
Phenomena." In *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy,*edited by J. Decety and
W. J. Ickes, 3–15. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Beazley, H., and J. Beggs. 2002. "Teaching Servant-Leadership." In *Focus on Lead-
ership: Servant-Leadership for the Twenty-First Century,*edited by L. Spears
and M. Lawrence, 53–63. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Boyatzis, R. E., and A. McKee. 2005. *Resonant Leadership: Renewing Yourself and
Connecting with Others through Mindfulness, Hope, and Compassion.* Boston:
Harvard Business School Press.

Bozarth, J. D. 2009. "Rogerian Empathy in an Organismic Theory: A Way of
Being." In *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy,*edited by J. Decety W. J.
Ickes, 102–12. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Buck, R., and B. Ginsburg. 1997. "Communicative Genes and the Evolution of
Empathy. In *Empathic Accuracy,*edited by W. Ickes, 17–43. New York: Guil-
ford Publications.

Cameron, K. S. 2008. *Positive Leadership: Strategies for Extraordinary Perfor-
mance.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

———, J. E. Dutton, and R. E. Quinn. 2003. *Positive Organizational Scholarship:
Foundations of a New Discipline.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Cooperrider, D. L. 2003. "Positive Image, Positive Action: The Affirmative Basis of
Organizing." In *Appreciative Inquiry: An Emerging Direction for Organiza-
tion Development,*edited by D. L. Cooperrider, P. F. Sorenson, T. F. Yaeger, D.
Whitney, 31–55. Champaign, IL: Stipes.

———, and D. Whitney. 2001. "A Positive Revolution in Change: Appreciative
Inquiry." In *Appreciative Inquiry: An Emerging Direction for Organization
Development,*edited by D. L. Cooperrider, J. P. F. Sorenson, T. F. Yaeger, and
D. Whitney, 9–30. Champaign, IL: Stipes.

Dannhauser, Z., and A. B. Boshoff. 2006. *The Relationship between Servant-Leadership, Trust, Team Commitment, and Demographic Variables.* Paper presented at the Servant-Leadership Research Roundtable, Regent University.

Dittmar, J. K. 2006. "An Interview with Larry Spears: President and CEO for the Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership." *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* 13 (1): 108–18.

Dostoevsky, F. 1994. *The Karamazov Brothers* Translated by I. Avsey. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dutton, J. E., and E. D. Heaphy. 2003. "The Power of High Quality Connections." In *Positive Organizational Scholarship: Foundations of a New Discipline,*edited by K. S. Cameron, J. E. Dutton, and R. E. Quinn, 263–78. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Eisenberg, N. 2005. "The Development of Empathy-Related Responding." In *Moral Motivation through the Life Span*, edited by G. Carlo, 73–117. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

———, and N. D. Eggum. 2009. "Empathic Responding: Sympathy and Personal Distress." In *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy,*edited by J. Decety and W. J. Ickes, 71–83. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Ekman, P. 2007. *Emotions Revealed: Recognizing Faces and Feelings to Improve Communication and Emotional Life.* 2nd ed. New York: Owl Books.

Feshbach, N. D., and S. Feshbach. 2009. "Empathy and Education." In *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy,*edited by J. Decety and W. J. Ickes, 85–97. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Fitz-Enz, J. 1997. "The Truth about Best Practices: What They Are and How to Apply Them." In *Tomorrow's HR Management: 48 Thought Leaders Call for Change*, edited by D. Ulrich, M. Losey, and G. Lake, 97–103). New York,: John Wiley and Sons.

Freiberg, K., and J. Freiberg. 1996. *Nuts: Southwest Airlines Crazy Recipe for Business and Personal Success.* New York: Broadway Books.

Gano-Overway, L. A., T. M. Magyar, M. S. Kim, M. Newton, M. D. Fry, and M. R. Guivernau. 2009. "Influence of Caring Youth Sports Contexts on Efficacy Related Beliefs and Social Behaviors." *Developmental Psychology* 45 (2): 329–40.

Gardner, H. 2004. *Changing Minds: The Art and Challenge of Changing Our Own and Other Peoples Minds.* Boston Harvard Business School Press.

———, and E. Laskin. 1995. *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership.* New York: BasicBooks.

Goldstein, N. J., S. J. Martin, and R. B. Cialdini. 2008. *Yes!: 50 Scientifically Proven Ways to Be Persuasive.* New York: Free Press.

Goleman, D. 2011. *The Brain and Emotional Intelligence.* Digital Edition. More Than Sound: Northhampton, MA.

———, R. Boyatzis, and A. McKee. 2002. *Primal Leadership.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Greenleaf, R. K. 1978. *Servant, Leader, and Follower.* New York: Paulist Press.

————. 1996a. *On Becoming a Servant-Leader: The Private Writings of Robert K. Greenleaf.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

————. 1996b. *Seeker and Servant: Reflections on Religious Leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

————. 1998. *The Power of Servant-Leadership.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

————. 2002. *Servant-Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness.* 25th Anniversary ed. New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.

————. 2003a. "Life's Choices and Markers." In *The Servant-Leader Within : A Transformative Path,*edited by H. Beazley, J. Beggs, and L. C. Spears, 241–49. New York: Paulist Press.

————. 2003b. *"Old Age" The Ultimate Test of Spirit: An Essay on Preparation.* Indianapolis: The Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership.

————. 2003c. "The Servant as Leader (original 1970 edition)." In *The Servant-Leader Within: A Transformative Path,*edited by H. Beazley, J. Beggs, and L. C. Spears, 29–74. New York: Paulist Press.

————. 2003d. "Teacher as Servant." In *The Servant-Leader Within: A Transformative Path,*edited by H. Beazley, J. Beggs, and L. C. Spears, 75–239). New York: Paulist Press.

Hallowell, E. M. 1998. "The Human Moment at Work." *Harvard Business Review* 77: 58–66.

Hatfield, E., R. L. Rapson, and Y.-C. L. Le. 2009. "Emotional Contagion and Empathy." In *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy,*edited by J. Decety and W. J. Ickes, 19–30. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Heifetz, R. A. 1994. *Leadership without Easy Answers.* Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Heifetz, R. A., A. Grashow, and M. Linsky. 2009. *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Heifetz, R. A., and M. Linsky. 2002. *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Johnson, G., and W. Leavitt. 2001. "Building on Success: Transforming Organizations through Appreciative Inquiry." *Public Personnel Management* 30 (1): 129–36.

Kellerman, B. 2004. *Bad Leadership: What It Is, How It Happens, Why It Matters.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Laurenceau, J.-P. 1998. "Intimacy as an Interpersonal Process: The Importance of Self-Disclosure, Partner Disclosure, and Perceived Partner Responsiveness in Interpersonal Exchanges." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 74 (5): 1238–51.

Love, K., K. Tyler, P. Garriott, D. Thomas, C. Brown, and C. Roan Belle. 2009. "Influence of Multiple Attachments on Well-Being: A Model of African Americans Attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education* 2 (1): 35–45.

Macrae, C. N., K. A. Quinn, M. F. Mason, and S. Quadflieg. 2005. "Understanding Others: The Face and Person Construal." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 89 (5): 686–95.

Mikulincer, M., P. R. Shaver, O. Gillath, and R. A. Nitzberg. 2005. "Attachment, Caregiving, and Altruism: Boosting Attachment Security Increases Compassion and Helping." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 89 (5): 817–39.

The New International Webster's Pocket Dictionary of the English Language. 2001. New Revised ed. Australia: Trident Press International.

Noddings, N. 2002. *Starting at Home: Caring and Social Policy.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

———. 2003. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education.* 2nd ed. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Northouse, P. G. 2004. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* London: Sage.

Ostrem, L. M. 2006. *Servant-Leadership and Work-Related Outcomes: A Multilevel Model.* PhD Dissertation, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

Palladino Schultheiss, D. E. 2003. "A Relational Approach to Career Counseling: Theoretical Integration and Practical Application." *Journal of Counseling and Development* 81 (3): 301–11.

Pistole, M. C., and F. Aricole. 2003. "Understanding Attachment: Beliefs about Conflict." *Journal of Counseling & Development* 81 (3): 318–29.

Rock, D. 2006. *Quiet Leadership: Help People Think Better—Don't Tell Them What to Do: Six Steps to Transforming Performance at Work.* New York: Collins.

Rothwell, W. J., C. K. Hohne, and S. B. King. 2007. *Human Performance Improvement : Building Practitioner Competence.* 2nd ed. Amsterdam ; Boston: Elsevier/Butterworth-Heinemann.

Ruschman, N. L. 2002. "Servant-Leadership and the Best Companies to Work for in America." In *Focus on Leadership: Servant-Leadership for the Twenty-First Century,* edited by L. Spears and M. Lawrence, 123–39. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Saarni, C. 2007. "The Development of Emotional Competence: Pathways for Helping Children to Become Emotionally Intelligent." In *Educating People to be Emotionally Intelligent,* edited by R. Bar-On, J. G. Maree, and M. J. Elias, 15–36. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Segarra, O. 2010. *Liderazgo peregrino: Una guia practica para liderar el cambio.* Barcelona: Libros de Cabecera.

Seligman, M. E. P. 1993. *What You Can Change and What You Can't: The Complete Guide to Successful Self-Improvement.* New York: Fawcett Columbine.

———. 2002. *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment.* New York: Free Press.

———. 2011. *Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being.* New York: Free Press.

Sipe, J. W., and D. M. Frick. 2009. *Seven Pillars of Servant-Leadership: Practicing the Wisdom of Leading by Serving.* Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.

Slote, M. A. 2007. *The Ethics of Care and Empathy.* New York: Routledge.

Tutu, D. 1999. *No Future without Forgiveness.* New York: Doubleday.

van Baaren, R. B., J. Decety, A. Dijksterhuis, A. van der Leij, and M. L. van Leeu-
    wen. 2009. "Being Imitated: Consequences of Nonconsciously Showing
    Empathy." In *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy*,edited by J. Decety and
    W. J. Ickes, 31–42. Cambridge: MIT Press.
Watson, J. C., and L. S. Greenberg. 2009. "Empathic Resonance: A Neuroscience
    Perspective." In *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy*,edited by J. Decety and
    W. J. Ickes, 125–37. Cambridge: MIT Press.
Weber, D. A. 2003. "A Comparison of Individual Psychology and Attachment The-
    ory." *Journal of Individual Psychology* 59 (3): 246–62.
West, G. R. B., and M. Bocarnea. 2008. *Servant-Leadership and Organizational
    Outcomes: Relationships in United States and Fillipino Higher Eeducation
    Settings.* Paper presented at the Servant-leadership Research Roundtable,
    Regent University.
Zenger, J. H., and J. Folkman. 2002. *The Extraordinary Leader: Turning Good
    Managers into Great Leaders*. San Francisco: McGraw-Hill.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Jeffrey McClellan lives with his wife and six children in
Cumberland, Maryland. He is an assistant professor of management at
Frostburg State University. Prior to coming to Frostburg, Jeff served as a
training and development director, university administrator, and a career
and academic counselor at three different universities. He is an experienced
consultant, teacher, trainer, and speaker. He is passionate about studying and
promoting servant-leadership development, particularly among undergradu-
ate students. Jeffrey is continually striving to further develop and strengthen
within himself both the heart of the servant and the capacities of a leader.
To these ends his quest continues with both successes and failures along the
path. To those along the journey he wishes you God's speed and the capacity
to love the adventures of the trail.