

Once the inspiration of The Urantia Book touches our souls, the ambition to serve is kindled anew. We go forward into projects, desiring to make a contribution. Why is it that conflict, unhappiness, and failure sometimes result? We have not learned the ways of leadership and teamwork, the practices of working together with others who think and feel differently. We can create a culture of teamwork, partly by cooperative study of The Urantia Book and other sources and by conscious practice of the principles of leadership and teamwork.

1. A study group approach

Before the publication of the book, the early leaders were given three priorities: to form thousands of study groups, to train leaders and teachers, and to prepare translations. The training of leaders and teachers can begin within the study group. In our study group, we began, in a small way (so as not to upstage the main purposes of each Paper), working toward the following goals. 1) Grow spiritually; learn how better to express Jesus' gospel in thought, word, and deed; and improve as a spiritual teacher. 2) Prepare to lead a study group. 3) Choose a project in which you are functioning or may function as a teacher and/or leader. Read the book with an eye to that project.

“As a child [Jesus] accumulated a vast body of knowledge; as a youth he sorted, classified, and correlated this information; and now as a man of the realm he begins to organize these mental possessions preparatory to utilization in his subsequent teaching, ministry, and service” (1405)

This document focuses on the leadership side of our study group adventure.

Is this a pretentious undertaking? Leaders are born, one might object; therefore, we cannot hope to train them. This is true for the great leaders, but leadership functions in constantly in small ways in daily life, and it is not presumptuous to study The Urantia Book so that we can better play our roles in teams—as leaders and team members. We certainly don't aspire to produce another Moses through study, but we can get better in the conduct of our own sphere of responsibility.

Don't leaders just arise naturally? Why do we need to train them? Of course we have a choice to ignore what The Urantia Book teaches about leadership and teamwork, but that seems a little foolish, if not downright ungrateful, especially given a direct mandate from our unseen friends.

Isn't there a danger about certifying someone as a leader, sending them forth full of pride to impose offensively on other groups? We do not certify anyone, and studying The Urantia Book helps guard against such aberrations. It also fortifies team members so they are alert to the problem and strategies of response. I was initially moved to publish the initial article on leadership by a communication with a friend, who pointed out the following problem. The drive to serve is often mixed, more or less unconsciously, with an egoistic ambition for position and power. Here are two questions to refine the ambition to serve. First, consider: "God-knowing creatures have only one supreme ambition, just one consuming desire, and that is to become, as they are in their spheres, like him as he is in his Paradise perfection of personality and in his universal sphere of righteous supremacy" (21.3).

What does it take for us to make that ambition supreme over every other ambition? Second, recall the proverb, "Ambition is dangerous until it is fully socialized" (557.3). What would it mean fully to socialize an ambition? Andrew Story, one of our study group members, commented on the heightening of his experience as he prepared to lead the group. Just by the simple experience of sharing leadership in the study group gives people the opportunity to practice on a very simple level. As other individuals and groups take up a similar study, there will be a time for internet discussion groups and conferences or conference-segments dedicated to this theme. 2. The initial harvest. After just a few weeks of putting some attention on leadership-related passages in The Urantia

Book in our study group, I experienced a major step forward in my understanding. Years ago, distressed at the neglect of this important topic, I had published a list of principles on leadership that I had culled from my study. As we worked together in the study group, I realized two things. First, The Urantia Book has a lot more to offer than resources for distilling a set of principles. It has examples and stories to help the lessons come to life. Second, the Papers on the Paradise Deities began to speak to me as never before on this topic, leading me very far beyond my initial list of principles. It will be some time before I have completed a fresh approach to this vital topic.

Nevertheless, before concluding with my list of principles, I want to share this basket of findings:

The Universal Father is the pattern of leadership. “The Universal Father is the God of all creation, the First Source and Center of all things and beings. First think of God as a creator, then as a controller, and lastly as an infinite upholder” (Paper 1, section 0, p. 21.1). This is the first principle, the key to everything else about leadership. Love, equally bestowed upon all, motivates his relation with each individual personality.

The Father “refuses to coerce or compel the submission of the spiritual free wills of his material creatures” (Paper 1, section 1, p. 22.5). His exercise of power is restrained by “his infinite love, by truth, beauty, and goodness; by the will of God, by his mercy ministry and fatherly relationship with the personalities of the universe; and by the law of God, by the righteousness and justice of the eternal Paradise Trinity” (3:2, 48.4-6). The Father is sensitive to others’ limitations and suffering. He “has an eternal purpose pertaining to the material, intellectual, and spiritual phenomena of the universe of universes, which he is executing throughout all time” (4.0, 54.1). He began by creating a model (Havona) that would be a pattern for further developments. He is approachable by each individual, and his association with us transcends any creature interests we may have (5:3, 65.5).

Leadership is an application of fatherly love to the requirements of pair relationships and of social systems embracing three or more personalities. This is the main principle—leadership is about service, second-miler service: a parent will do more for a child than a sibling will. Fatherly love transcends brotherly love. What is the significance of the distinction between a pair relationship and a social system? “Relationships exist between two objects, but three or more objects eventuate a system, and such a system is much more than just an enlarged or complex relationship. This distinction is vital, for in a cosmic system the individual members are not connected with each other except in relation to the whole and through the individuality of the whole. . . . In aggregations parts are added; in systems parts are arranged. Systems are significant because of organization--positional values. In a good system all factors are in cosmic position. In a bad system something is either missing or displaced—deranged.” (112:1, 1227.9). Social architects do everything within their province and power to bring together suitable individuals that they may constitute efficient and agreeable working groups on earth; and sometimes such groups have found themselves reassociated on the mansion worlds for continued fruitful service. But not always do these seraphim attain their ends; not always are they able to bring together those who would form the most ideal group to achieve a given purpose or to accomplish a certain task; under these conditions they must utilize the best of the material available. These angels continue their ministry on the mansion and higher morontia worlds. They are concerned with any undertaking having to do with progress on the morontia worlds and which concerns three or more persons. Two beings are regarded as operating on the mating, complementary, or partnership basis, but when three or more are grouped for service, they constitute a social problem and therefore fall within the jurisdiction of the social architects. (39:3, 432.6-7). Jesus made it clear how extensively leadership functions: “In my universe and in my Father's universe of universes, our brethren-sons are dealt with as individuals in all their spiritual relations, but in all group relationships we unflinchingly provide for definite leadership. Our kingdom is a realm of order, and where two or more will creatures act in co-operation, there is always provided the authority of leadership” (1959.0). The first patterns of teamwork are the responses of the Eternal Son to the proposals of the Universal Father and the responses of the Infinite Spirit to them both. “The Eternal Son . . . did sit in council with the Universal in the eternal past, approving the plan and pledging endless co-operation, when the Father, in projecting the bestowal of the Thought Adjusters, proposed to the Son, ‘Let us make mortal man in our own image’” (6:5, 78.3). The bestowal plan “is the great Father-revelation enterprise of the Eternal Son and his co-ordinate Sons” (7:4.85.6). Compare the astounding and spontaneous cooperation of the Infinite Spirit. “With transcendent willingness and inspiring spontaneity, the Third Personal of Deity, notwithstanding his equality with the First and Second Persons,

pledges eternal loyalty to God the Father and acknowledges everlasting dependence upon God the Son" (8:1, 90.6). "The God of Action functions and the dead vaults of space are astir. One billion perfect spheres flash into existence" (8:1, 91.1). "When the attainment plan and the bestowal plan had been formulated and proclaimed, alone and of himself, the Infinite Spirit projected and put in operation the tremendous and universal enterprise of mercy ministry" (7:4, 85.7). The pattern of teamwork is the pattern of brotherhood. "In all universe activities the Son and the Spirit are exquisitely fraternal, working as two equal brothers with admiration and love for an honored and divinely respected common Father" (10:3, 111.1). This inspiration for service is reflected in the advice Jesus gave to the mistress of the Greek inn: "Minister your hospitality as one who entertains the children of the Most High. Elevate the drudgery of your daily toil to the high levels of a fine art through the increasing realization that you minister to God in the persons whom he indwells by his spirit which has descended to live within the hearts of men, thereby seeking to transform their minds and lead their souls to the knowledge of the Paradise Father of all these bestowed gifts of the divine spirit" (133:4, 1475.1). The Eternal Son is the pattern administrator. "The Eternal Son is the spiritual center and the divine administrator of the spiritual government of the universe of universe" (6.1, 74.1). Through his spirit gravity circuit, he draws all spiritual values Paradiseward and holds them ever securely. He organizes the response to prayers. (Since the Father relates to individuals, not to groups or institutions as such, the Father is in some ways not the pattern for leadership in groups, social systems.) The pattern organization is the Paradise Trinity. Justice is administered by the Trinity; and Jesus insisted on this pattern: "Mercy ministry is always the work of the individual, but justice punishment is the function of the social, governmental, or universe administrative groups" (133:1, 1469.1; cf. 159:1, 1762-63). The family of the Infinite Spirit is a pattern of group functioning. They are activated by mercy ministry, and they are organized! After the second millennium of sojourn at seraphic headquarters the seraphim are organized under chiefs into groups of twelve (12 pairs, 24 seraphim), and twelve such groups constitute a company (144 pairs, 288 seraphim), which is commanded by a leader. Twelve companies under a commander constitute a battalion (1,728 pairs or 3,456 seraphim), and twelve battalions under a director equal a seraphic unit (20,736 pairs or 41,472 individuals), while twelve units, subject to the command of a supervisor, constitute a legion numbering 248,832 pairs or 497,664 individuals. The power of this organization may be imagined by stopping to consider that "Intellectually, socially, and spiritually two moral creatures do not merely double their personal potentials of universe achievement by partnership technique; they more nearly quadruple their attainment and accomplishment possibilities." (43:8, 494.10) In other words, three persons working together are potentially nine times as effective; four persons sixteen times, and so on. Consider the 10,992 midwayers: "Their determination is suggested by the motto of their order: "What the United Midwayers undertake, the United Midwayers do." (77:9, 866.2). "Long since, the battle cry of these pilgrims became: "In liaison with God, nothing--absolutely nothing--is impossible" (26:5, 291.3). A word about the military metaphors. Obviously there is no connotation of support for carnage; but rebellion may break out in a local system; moreover, Jesus had to deal with "open warfare." Perhaps the main idea is that united beings mobilize their total powers as they face the challenge: "In the evolutionary cosmos energy-matter is dominant except in personality, where spirit, through the mediation of mind, is striving for the mastery" (12:8, 140, 10). 3. Seventeen principles of leadership and teamwork 1. Leadership is an application of fatherly love to the requirements of pair relationships and of social systems embracing three or more personalities (432.6; 1227.9). This is the main principle--that leadership is about service, second-miler service: a parent will do more for a child than a sibling will. 2. It is on superhuman levels that provision for leadership is made (1959.0). "In my universe and in my Father's universe of universes, our brethren-sons are dealt with as individuals in all their spiritual relations, but in all group relationships we unfailingly provide for definite leadership. Our kingdom is a realm of order, and where two or more will creatures act in co-operation, there is always provided the authority of leadership" (1959.0). 3. Leadership enables teamwork to functioning with "an enthusiastic and effective load-pulling spirit" (911.2). Here is the great challenge for all of us as team-members! How often is one's load-pulling less than enthusiastic and well-coordinated! Leaders should not regard their associates as followers--we follow Jesus alone. Rather, we are called to engage in responsible teamwork, taking responsibility as appropriate. (For the ideal of teamwork in pair marriage, study how the Local Universe Mother Spirit supports the work of the Creator Son: 368#3). 4. Relating to others as equals keeps leadership from degenerating into tyranny. The Universal Father does not command the Eternal Son; rather, he proposes, "Let us make mortal man in our image." (Even the Father's command to the creature, "Be you perfect as I am perfect," is an invitation-command.) Jesus made it clear that

teamwork is voluntary. To the man assaulting his wife, Jesus said, "Man has no rightful authority over woman unless the woman has willingly and voluntarily given him such authority. . . . The Father in heaven treats the Spirit Mother of the children of the universe as one equal to himself" (1471.1). The truth of spiritual equality does not, however, imply that democracy is the pattern for every organization. The apostles were not invited to vote on whether or not to take up arms against Rome; nor were the multitudes invited into the counsels of the kingdom. Jesus' leadership was definite: he defined the gospel mission; gathered, trained, and ordained his messengers; and organized their teamwork into a sequence of preaching tours and other missions. But he did not manage excessively; for example, he let the apostles organize themselves and they counseled together in planning their missions.

5. Pair relationships operate with particular effectiveness when one or more factors of complementarity operate. Regarding pair relationships, we are told, for example, that "a man and a woman, co-operating, even aside from family and offspring, are vastly superior in most ways to either two men or two women" (932.6). It shocks modern sensibilities to see male and female portrayed as positive and negative, aggressive and retiring (938.9). How is such a comment to be taken? Surely it does not mean that women cannot exercise primary social leadership--witness the example of Ellanora (607.2). In other words, there are a variety of factors in addition to sex that affect the expression of such tendencies.

6. Leadership is often best shared. There is a two-fold complexity of leadership. First, in a group, leadership may be shared in the sense that a group may have both a leader and a co-leader. Many organizations would do well to have teams of a man and a woman sharing the leadership. Second, even within a pair relationship, leadership functions may be divided; in marriage, even in the father-family, where man is typically denominated the leader, woman "has always been the moral standard-bearer and the spiritual leader of mankind" (938.8).

7. "Leadership is dependent on natural ability, discretion, will power, and determination" (1739.2). Highly capable leaders are rare, and, considering the enormous importance of leadership, it is foolish not to value and help them cultivate their abilities when they appear. Discretion includes a sense of timing and avoidance of excess in word and deed. Will power overcomes inner obstacles to wholepersonality mobilization in decision-action; determination perseveres in the face of environmental obstacles. Jesus' natural ability was early evident (1368.2; 1369.4). His discretion was shown in his restraint in what he said and did (1624.4; 1689.2; 1772.1; 1821.4; 1999.1); in addition, "he never manifested a desire to direct, manage, or follow [people] up" (1875.1). His will power was a function of his devotion to the Father's will, and his determination to persist in the face of every obstacle was superb.

8. Leaders can look to Jesus for inspiration (1874#7). Jesus gave his followers teaching, encouragement, assurance, exhortation, warnings, rebukes, guidance, healing, and divine love. He prayed for them repeatedly and at length. He was tolerant and considerate. He was a friend. Jesus provided attitudinal leadership as a calm and happy laborer, in his contentment, his majestic calm, his cheerful humor. Jesus' trust in God enabled him to cooperate in spontaneous self-forgetfulness. Jesus, who knew the friendly universe, also took the leadership in confronting the enmity of the world (1819.4). He dealt with his enemies directly and warned his apostles that the enemy of the kingdom would also seek to draw them away (1544.3). Jesus led his apostles through the sifting of the kingdom--the great drop in followers after the epochal sermon declaring open warfare. Jesus gave supreme devotion to primary values without fanatical neglect of secondary values. Jesus meditated deeply and at length in preparation for certain key events in his life; nevertheless there was "little of the professional, the well-planned, or the premeditated" in his ministry (1875.4). Jesus did certain necessary things in a formal manner (1418.5; 1569#2; 1941#5), but on the whole he related informally to his associates. He balanced respectful participation in tradition with critique and periodic rebellion (1404.5; 1767#4; 1888#1), for example, in his relation to women (e.g., 1678#1). He balanced justice and mercy (1462.1; 1468#1). Jesus balanced direct confrontation with wise strategy and tactics (1605#3; 1617.2; 1880#3; 1899#2) and timing (1495.5; 1627.6; 1818; 1850.2). He taught unmistakable truth and yet skillfully varied the meanings attached to key terms (1863.5). Jesus' balanced life of righteousness was so attractive that he did not have to seek out others to respond to his leadership (1726.) Jesus did not make the mistake of exhausting himself in excessive devotion to the cause; he took time for refreshment, vacation, and recreation and had his apostles do the same (1610#3).

9. Leaders must correctly understand the definition of their mission and its implications. One of the hardest issues for students of The Urantia Book has been understanding the practical implications of the separation and integration of different types of projects including, most especially, spiritual projects, on the one hand, and social, economic, and political projects on the other hand--a distinction whose importance is repeatedly underscored (Paper 99; 1579#8; 2069.3; 2082.9). In particular, there has been a tendency to confuse the

religious project of proclaiming the gospel to all the world with the combined religious and cultural project of bringing The Urantia Book to those who are receptive. Even though many particular groups have an immediate and urgent need for selected teachings from the papers, there remains a limited receptivity to the book itself. The consequence is clear. An organization whose primary work is to bring the gospel to the public cannot also--as its primary work--be in the business of promoting The Urantia Book; it necessary to prioritize one function or the other. There are other relevant distinctions that may clarify the mission of an individual or a group, for example, between different ministry projects and administrative functions (224.2) and between the exclusive religious focus required of apostles and leaders in the spiritual renaissance (1583.4; 1931.2; 2082.9). The various tasks assigned, for example, to groups of the master seraphim of planetary supervision may focus mortal cooperation (1254-58).

10. Leaders need preparation and experience. The painstaking training given to those who will occupy positions of universe responsibility is emphasized on every level, from the Paradise training of a Creator Son to the school for evangelists. Jesus prepared himself at length (1388.5) by working through in advance the defining issues of his mission (1390-91), by careful and wide-ranging study, by waiting until he was sufficiently mature for his mission (1436.4; 1484.4), and by formulating the great decisions about how to use power once the time to begin his public career had come.

11. Even though human leaders are, at best, middle managers, leadership must have relative independence. Jesus was independent of human opinion (1594.6) and would not let himself be directed by the councils of men (1412.8). Nor should the gospel be directly attached to older traditions (1670.4). Leaders--including teachers (806.4)--cannot be entangled in what they hope to uplift (1087.4).

12. Leaders should work for unity within their own group and with members of other religious groups. Jesus harmonized the differences in the apostle's various presentations of the gospel (1658.1); and he repeatedly taught them about spiritual unity (1591#5; 1972.6; 1963#1). He promoted unity with John's apostles (1624#6) and was as positive as possible regarding the religion of his day. He modeled what is needed today: "It is to be hoped that the ardent and sincere efforts of these future prophets will be directed less toward the strengthening of interreligious barriers and more toward the augmentation of the religious brotherhood of spiritual worship among the many followers of the differing intellectual theologies" on our planet (1010.4).

13. Leaders make wise compromises. Jesus made compromises (1532.1; 1748.2; 1749.5), like Moses (1055-59) and unlike Ikhnaton, who tried to go too far too fast (1047#5).

14. Good leaders sometime use force. Jesus' discipline was patient and wise (1401.3-4; 1417.3). Yet the cleansing of the temple by a mercy-dominated Son "demonstrates that Jesus did not look with approval upon the refusal to employ force to protect the majority of any given human group against the unfair and enslaving practices of unjust minorities who may be able to entrench themselves behind political, financial, or ecclesiastical power" (1891.1) What distinguishes force from violence is its ethical character (1520#8). Note that in the cleansing of the temple, no money was stolen, no property destroyed, no person assaulted. Modern images of spiritual sweetness repress the recognition of the Master's tough side. "Tell my children that I am not only tender of their feelings and patient with their frailties, but that I am also ruthless with sin and intolerant of iniquity. I am indeed meek and humble in the presence of my Father, but I am equally and relentlessly inexorable where there is deliberate evildoing and sinful rebellion against the will of my Father in heaven" (1766.5). From the instructive section on "The Part and the Whole," we learn that to creatures of limited vision, even the acts of God "must often appear to be dictatorial and arbitrary" (137.5; cf. 48.1-2). In many ways, students of Part III are reminded of the evolutionary importance of the decisive exercise of concentrated authority. As "arrogant individualists," we had to learn to submit (786.12). Nor should we entertain the idealistic fantasy that the members of our own civilization are so advanced that gentle persuasion can be relied upon for every purpose today (804#4).

15. If erring leaders cannot be corrected they must be replaced. Leadership inevitably functions, consciously or unconsciously, wisely or not (911; 1937.4; 2051.5). Part of our problem is that we mortals are designed to respond to the leadership of superhuman planetary leaders and rulers (1008.7), and, in the absence of effectively present superhuman leaders, we tend to follow human leaders irresponsibly. In addition, religious leadership is problematic in the current age, when people look for mediators between humans and the spirit world (986.2). When leadership goes bad, teamwork responsibilities shift from (primarily) cooperating with leaders to correcting and, if need be, replacing them, as Van did (756#3; cf. 858#3).

16. In a leadership vacuum, the qualified individual (or team) must assume leadership. Many of Urantia's great early leaders, like Onagar, assumed leadership, brought peace, and led his people in worship (715#6), a combination of functions found also among other early Sangik leaders (722#6; cf. 1018.7).

17. Leaders need to study the principles of organization. Very much of what The Urantia Book has to offer on the

subject of leadership and teamwork is implied in the descriptions of various universe organizations, a topic sadly neglected today. We cannot derive every lesson from Part IV. Is there a study group willing to undertake an entire reading of the book with, among other things, a special eye to producing a thorough report on this topic? When clouds of religious passion threaten to eclipse the wisdom of organization, the rule of law, and the responsibility of authority, when fanatical notions of sonship usurp the mature duties of citizenship (1929#1)--or when the evils of bureaucracy obscure the familial character of universe relationships--students do well to recall and consider anew the techniques and values of careful administration on all levels. Good organization provides a framework within which alone freedom can flourish (783.2; 1487.6). One of the main functions of organization is to facilitate an effective division of labor. The Father's rule is not self-centered; he delegates as much as possible. Organization is complex (567.9); but in the end, although levels of subordination are clearly defined, universe organization is not like the hierarchical and static organizational chart so popular in textbooks on management. Universe organization is flexible, organismic and familial (137#7; 647.5; 1276#7; 1401.4; 2080.7). The lesson on the family is the master lesson in the functions of leadership, in which the parent provides for the fact of existence, security and pleasure, education and training, discipline and restraint, companionship and loyalty, love and mercy, and provision for the future (1603#7).