LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development

LaKeisha Bryant-Hall

Omega Graduate School

November 8, 2024

Professor

Dr. Curtis McClane

**Assignment**

***Developmental Readings***

Create Developmental Readings from seminal sources and scholarly peer-reviewed

journal articles. Review instructions for Assignment #3, the course essential elements,

and course readings to identify selections of books and journals to create entries.

a. Refer to the "Student Guide to Developmental Readings" in the General

Helps folder for updated information on sample comments, the grading rubric,

and key definitions related to developmental readings.

**Source One:**Lapierre, L. M., Naidoo, L. J., & Bonaccio, S. (2012). Leaders’ relational self-concept and followers task performance: Implications for mentoring provided to followers. *The Leadership Quarterly 23,* 766-774.

**Comment 1:**(from LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development):

**Quote/Paraphrase:**Lapierre, Naidoo, and Bonaccio (2012) suggest leaders with solid relational self-concept positively influence the performance and development of their followers.

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of Self-Concept

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**This comment is additive to my understanding of leadership by stressing the importance of a leader's relational self-concept in shaping their impact. Leaders with a strong sense of self can provide trust, empathy, and respect within their teams, leading to better communication and support. As a result, followers feel valued and motivated, improving their performance and personal development.

**Contextualization:**  Leaders with a solid relational self-concept positively influence the performance and development of their followers by providing trust and mutual respect. At 41, I am one of the youngest directors in the state, working with a diverse team ranging from 23 to 71 years old, and we make it a priority to work together despite our age differences. I believe in leading by example and staying hands-on with my staff and the juvenile offenders we serve. For instance, I often step into situations with my team to mentor detainees during group sessions, modeling conflict resolution and providing one-on-one guidance, which builds rapport and strengthens the team’s collaborative spirit. Beyond work, we also support each other personally—attending family events, offering emotional support during challenging times, or helping one another with professional development. Recently, one of my staff members faced a family crisis, and several of us came together to cover shifts and offer support, demonstrating the deep sense of unity and care we have for each other, both on and off the job. Likewise, I also support detainees once they are released from custody. From buying them school uniforms to attending their sporting events to show support, I hold firm to building and maintaining relationships.

**Source One:**Lapierre, L. M., Naidoo, L. J., & Bonaccio, S. (2012). Leaders’ relational self-concept and followers task performance: Implications for mentoring provided to followers. *The Leadership Quarterly 23,* 766-774.

**Comment 2:** (from LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development):

**Quote/Paraphrase:** *“Our results may imply that organizations can increase leader-provided mentoring by ensuring that leaders with strongly relational self-concepts are paired with more highly performing followers,”* (p.767).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of Self-Concept

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is variant to my understanding that while pairing leaders with strong relational self-concepts with high-performing followers may seem ideal, it overlooks the value of diverse leader-follower dynamics. High performers often have the autonomy and skills to succeed independently, and relationally-focused leaders may miss the opportunity to challenge them with different leadership styles. Additionally, impactful mentorship can come from leaders still developing their relational skills or those with a task-oriented focus who offer valuable insights on strategy, goal-setting, and resilience. Leadership effectiveness, therefore, should be assessed holistically, considering both the leader’s style and each follower's specific needs and growth opportunities.

**Contextualization:**Pairing leaders with intensely relational self-concepts with high-performing followers may seem practical, but it misses the opportunity to leverage the value of diverse leader-follower dynamics. In my role, I lead a young, dynamic team that includes two senior officers who, at times, are set in their ways. While their decades of experience bring valuable wisdom, they can sometimes resist new methods or technological advancements. In these situations, I bridge the gap between traditional practices and modern approaches, offering mentorship that challenges younger and older team members to step outside their comfort zones. For example, I encourage a senior officer to embrace new software for managing detainee records, helping them see its long-term efficiency while guiding younger staff to appreciate the depth of experience senior officers bring to critical decision-making.

Similarly, I lead by example when working with youthful offenders, balancing empathy with accountability to challenge their behaviors and expectations. This dynamic mirrors the relationship between Moses and Joshua in the Bible. Moses, an older leader, mentored Joshua, a younger leader, guiding him through challenges and preparing him to lead after Moses' time. Moses’ example illustrates that leadership is not just about nurturing high performers; it is about transferring wisdom and empowering others to step into leadership, regardless of age or experience.

The above example reinforces the idea that leadership is not only about nurturing high performers and adapting to each individual’s unique needs. Effective leadership requires a holistic approach, Whether offering hands-on guidance to a younger staff member or gently encouraging a seasoned officer to embrace change. It involves considering the diverse needs of all followers and providing mentorship that fosters growth across the board—regardless of age, experience, or performance level.

**Source Two:** Neroni, J., Meijs, C., Kirschner, P. A., Xu, K. M., & de Groot, R. H. (2022). Academic self-efficacy, self-esteem, and grit in higher online education: Consistency of interests

predicts academic success. *Social Psychology of Education, 25*(4), 951-975.

**Comment 3:**(from LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development):

**Quote/Paraphrase:** *“To keep up with the fast-changing society, it is important to continue learning during the life span.”* (p. 952).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of Self-Efficacy

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding by stressing that learning is a continuous journey, vital for staying relevant in an ever-evolving world. It emphasizes the need for continuous growth to stay aligned with technological advancements and societal changes.Viewing learning as a lifelong process reinforces its role in maintaining flexibility, resilience, and competitiveness and this perspective encourages me to actively seek opportunities to enhance my skills and knowledge throughout my life.

**Contextualization:** In the field of juvenile justice, particularly working with youthful offenders, I witness daily the impact of living in a fast-changing society—especially for those who grow up fatherless. Many of the boys I work with lack the presence of a father figure, and this absence can have profound effects on their behavior, decision-making, and overall development. The selected quote rings deeply in this context, because these young men, often growing up without active fathers, are navigating a world that is constantly evolving, with new challenges and influences they must adapt to. As they live daily without a father’s guidance, they are left to make sense of the world on their own and this can lead to misguided choices, like turning to drugs, violence, or crime as coping mechanisms. The lack of mentorship in their lives shines the light to the necessity for continuous learning, both for them and for those of us who work with them, to better understand the shifts in their world and help them find a path to change.

As a juvenile detention director, I am constantly learning from the boys I serve. I take out time each day to sit and talk with each of them. They teach me new street knowledge, from the latest drug trends to unique methods of car theft, and even new terminology and lingo that defines their world. For instance, many of the boys are familiar with terms like “molly” (a new form of ecstasy) and “stripping” cars, which is a term for dismantling stolen vehicles for parts. They introduce me to slang like "plug" (the person who provides drugs) and "slide" (to leave quickly, often after committing a crime). This ongoing education is essential in staying connected with their reality and finding ways to effectively intervene. In this regard, I see a parallel to the scripture in Proverbs 1:5, which says, *"Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance."* Even in a leadership position, I must remain humble and open to learning from these young offenders, as their experiences offer insight into the changing landscape of their generation. It is a reminder that no matter our role, as leaders, we are all continuously in need of growth and understanding, particularly in a world that is constantly evolving.

**Source Three:** Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological* *review, 84*(2), 191.

**Comment 4:** (from LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development):

**Quote/Paraphrase:** *“Emotional arousal. Stressful and taxing situations generally elicit emotional arousal that, depending on the circumstances, might have informative value concerning personal compentency.”* (pg. 198)*.*

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of Self-Efficacy

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding by displaying how emotional arousal in stressful situations can offer valuable insights into personal competency. It suggests that the emotions triggered by high-pressure scenarios can serve as a mirror, showing how effectively we cope with challenges and where growth is needed. Recognizing the significance of these emotional reactions helps me view them as opportunities for self-reflection and improvement. By understanding how I respond emotionally under stress, I can better evaluate my strengths and areas for development in both my personal and professional life.

**Contextualization:** In my role as a juvenile detention director, I once faced a deeply challenging situation that tested both my leadership and ethical judgment. I had to make the difficult decision to fire an officer, a respected "alpha" figure on our team, for stealing money from a young offender. The situation unfolded when a boy was booked into our facility with over $500 on him. Rather than following protocol—logging and securing the money in the boy’s property locker—the officer, who had recently fallen on hard times after his part-time job was shut down, was caught on camera pocketing the money. When confronted, he initially lied about his actions, but the evidence was undeniable. I was furious. I was hurt. I was disappointed, because he was my third in command. This officer's personal financial crisis clouded his ethical decision-making, leading him to make a choice that not only cost him his job but also put him at risk of legal prosecution.

Although the situation was stressful, I was fortunate to have a sheriff who showed grace. Instead of pursuing criminal charges and public embarrassment, my sheriff allowed me to handle the situation privately and let the officer leave without further consequences. This experience deeply resonated with me, as I witnessed firsthand how emotional arousal—stemming from financial pressure and a crisis—can impact one's judgment. The officer’s stress and desperation led him to make a poor decision that he would not have ordinarily made. This also connects to the concept of emotional arousal and its informative value in assessing personal competency. In Proverbs 4:23, it says *“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”* This scripture reminded me that our emotions, when unchecked, can lead us astray, but they also offer insights into areas where we need growth. This situation reinforced the need for self-awareness and ethical vigilance, especially in times of personal crisis, to ensure that our decisions align with our values and professional responsibilities.

**Source Four:** Fry, L.W., & Wigglesworth, C. G. (January, 2013). Toward a theory of spiritual intelligence and spiritual leader development. *International Journal on Spirituality and Organizational Leadership, 1*(1), 47-49.

**Comment 5:** (from LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development):

**Quote/Paraphrase:** *“Many question why this inrerest in spirituality is occurring. Although there are many arguments, one viable reason is that society is seeking spiritual solutions to better respond to tumultuous social and business changes (e.g. Cash, Gray, and Rood, 2000), and that global changes nave brought a growing social spiritual consciousness (Inglehart, 1997). indeed, Duchon and Plowman (2005) posit that ignoring spirit at work may mean "ignoring a fundamental feature of what it means to be human."* (p. 48).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of Leader Development

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is variant to my understanding by suggesting that while spirituality can offer valuable insights, it may not always be the most appropriate solution to societal and business challenges. Only some people share the same spiritual beliefs, and introducing spirituality into professional or social settings could alienate those who do not identify with it. Moreover, focusing too heavily on spiritual solutions risks overlooking practical, evidence-based strategies that directly address the root causes of problems. Rather than viewing spirituality as a catch-all remedy, a more balanced approach that integrates emotional, psychological, and practical solutions may be more effective in addressing the complexities of modern life.

**Contextualization:** Living in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, known as the *Bible Belt*, many of us are familiar with a culture that embraces Christianity. However, in my role working with juveniles in a detention center, I have found that people's beliefs are often much more diverse. Over the years, I have encountered countless boys and girls, many deeply troubled, angry, and confused. So many of these kids come in feeling hopeless and forgotten. One boy, for example, had been in and out of the system for years and had no faith, having grown up in a home where his parents dismissed spiritual discussions. Despite sharing scriptures like Jeremiah 29:11—*"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope"*—he was resistant. Not because he did not need hope but because he had never seen what it meant to trust in something greater than his circumstances. Over time, though, through consistent care and respect, I caught glimpses of hope stirring in him.

I also worked alongside an officer who openly rejected God despite living in the *Bible Belt*. He often scoffed when spiritual matters came up and was even offended when I shared God's love with the kids. We had many debates, and he would argue there was no proof of God's existence. As a strong Christian, this was the most challenging experience in my role. I will admit that I often found myself praying for him to violate a policy so that I could rid myself of the tension he created. Yet, through this, I had to remind myself that the same grace God extends to me is the grace I must extend to others, regardless of their beliefs. This experience was a significant turning point in my personal development, particularly in learning to lead by example when I felt frustrated or resentful. I had to challenge myself to grow in patience, compassion, and humility—qualities I had not fully developed. I learned that leadership is not about imposing my beliefs but creating an environment of respect and understanding, regardless of differing worldviews.

This process of growth has had a profound impact on my role in guiding others. I have seen how developing this mindset helps me better relate to my colleagues and shapes how I work with the juveniles in our care. For example, I once worked with a girl whose mother's boyfriend had sexually assaulted her. She was heartbroken, but the pain of not being believed by her mother compounded her suffering. In these moments, I am reminded of Psalm 34:18—*"The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit."* Many of these kids enter lockups that are already broken, with no place to turn for comfort. While I strive to offer respect and care to all, I also continue to long for the day when more hearts—hardened by rejection or life's circumstances—will open to the hope that only God can offer. It is a challenge that shapes me every day in my development as a leader in this work. Everyone with different beliefs will be treated fairly and respectfully in my facility. I will continue to be a light in the darkness, hoping that God's love will shine through in ways I may never see but always pray for.

**Source Five:** Johnson, O.E. (2020). Creating Space to Think: The What, Why, and How of Deliberate Reflection for Effective Leadership. *The Journal of Character and Leadership Development, 7*(1), 1-31.

**Comment 6:** (from LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development):

**Quote/Paraphrase:** *“As such, reflection is a purposeful and deliberate act.”* (p.23).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of Leader Development

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of reflection as a purposeful, intentional act. It is not just about looking back but engaging with past experiences to gain insight and growth. Reflecting helps me better understand how my actions and beliefs impact others, especially the youth in our facility. I have learned that genuine growth comes not from experience alone but from thoughtfully processing it to move forward with greater wisdom.

**Contextualization:** As a young boss working with juvenile offenders, I frequently ask myself, “*What are my intentions, and is there purpose behind my actions?* "This question is essential because how I engage with these young people can profoundly impact their lives. Reflecting on my decisions helps me understand how my leadership, choices, and behaviors affect those around me. It is not just about getting the job done; it is about aligning my actions with a higher purpose. I have learned that genuine growth comes not from merely experiencing situations but from processing them thoughtfully and using that insight to guide my leadership. For example, when working with a young boy trapped in cycles of criminal behavior, I had to consider whether my interactions were helping him grow or reinforcing feelings of shame. Reflecting on these moments reminds me that my role is to enforce rules and create opportunities for expressive change.

Similarly, as an adult learner at OGS, I am learning to reframe my thinking, particularly in recognizing the uniqueness and value of others, as OGS is the most diverse school I have ever attended. In my leadership role and education, I have come to understand that growth involves appreciating the inherent worth of those around me, and the cross gives us access to a greater community. Whether engaging with juvenile offenders or fellow students, I now focus on affirming others’ individuality and potential. I have also learned the importance of developing respect and connection rather than working against others. Regarding leader development, I have realized it is not about asserting power and feeling like I am on top of the world but creating an environment where others feel heard, valued, and empowered, which connects with 1 Corinthians 12:14-18, which teaches that each person has a unique role in the body of Christ. In both my work and studies, I have discovered that leadership and growth come from knowing the right path and walking it with intentionality, humility, and a focus on others' needs and strengths.

**Source Six:** Yamada, A.-M., Lukoff, D., Lim, C. S. F., & Mancuso, L. L. (2020). Integrating spirituality and mental health: Perspectives of adults receiving public mental health services in California. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, 12*(3), 276–287. https://doi.org/10.1037/rel0000260

**Comment 7:** (from LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development):

**Quote/Paraphrase:** *“Attitudes toward spirituality (i.e., ratings of the importance of spirituality) and perceived spiritual respect by providers were the strongest predictors of interest in integrating spirituality into mental health services.”* (p. 1).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of Developmental Stage Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of how attitudes toward spirituality directly influence the effectiveness of mental health services. It highlights that when both providers and clients value and respect spirituality, there is a greater likelihood of integrating it successfully into treatment plans. Recognizing this, I now see how crucial it is to create an environment where spiritual beliefs are respected and considered, as this can significantly enhance the overall impact and engagement in mental health care.

**Contextualization:** When providers value and respect the spiritual beliefs of their clients, it builds trust and creates a more collaborative relationship. For mental health services to be truly effective, providers must develop and maintain a healthy, non-judgmental environment where clients feel safe to explore their beliefs without fear of condemnation, which is especially important when working with juvenile offenders, whose brains are still developing until their mid-20s, according to research. During this development stage, young people often wrestle with complex issues of identity, values, and emotional struggles, and integrating spirituality can provide them with a more profound sense of purpose, healing, and guidance. Whether it involves addressing feelings of guilt, shame, or hopelessness, spiritual support can serve as a strong foundation for mental and emotional recovery.

I remember a girl we booked into juvenile detention who was openly gay and unsure of how her peers and staff would receive her. She was anxious about being judged or ostracized for her sexual identity, and her fear added to the emotional turmoil she was already facing. However, she began to open up more when the staff respected her for who she was, without judgment, and created a space for her to express her beliefs and feelings. This sense of acceptance made her feel more at ease in exploring both her sexual identity and her spiritual path. She discovered how her faith could provide strength and understanding during a difficult time. For her, reconciling her identity with her spiritual beliefs became an essential part of her healing process, showing that when spirituality and mental health integrate, young people can find the support and purpose they need to rebuild their lives.

**Source Seven:** Chan, E. T., Hekman, D. R., & Foo, M. D. (2024). An examination of whether and how leader humility enhances leader personal career success. *Human Resource Management*, *63*(3), 427–442. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.22208

**Comment 8:** (from LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development):

**Quote/Paraphrase:** *"* *Humble leaders, defined by their willingness to view themselves accurately, admit mistakes, appreciate others' strengths and contributions,and demonstrate teachability (Owens & Hekman, 2012), provide anarray of benefits that increase the human and social capital of individual followers, teams, and entire organizations (Chiu et al., 2022; Regoet al., 2019, 2022).* (p.427).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of Leader Development

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This statement is additive and enhances my knowledge of leadership by focusing on the importance of humility in offering trust and collaboration within a team. Though leaders never really desire to be wrong, a leader willing to admit mistakes and appreciate others' strengths creates a more positive and productive environment where everyone feels valued and motivated. This approach strengthens relationships and enhances the overall growth and success of the team and organization, as it encourages learning, innovation, and mutual respect.

**Contextualization:** While no leader enjoys being wrong, I have come to recognize that leaders who are willing to admit their mistakes and appreciate the strengths of others create a more positive, supportive environment. I saw this firsthand while leading the ushers at my church. One Sunday, I made the mistake of using the wrong hand signal while directing the youth ushers, and some of them, young and learning, immediately pointed it out. Initially, I hesitated to admit I was wrong, not wanting to appear lacking in control or authority. But after taking a moment to reflect, I acknowledged to myself, *"You know you were wrong."* I humbled myself, thanked them for their correction, and openly admitted my mistake.

This experience reinforced that leadership is not about being perfect but about being vulnerable and willing to learn from our missteps. By humbly owning my error, I built trust with the youth ushers and modeled for them that making mistakes is a natural part of growth. As Proverbs 3:34 says, *“He mocks proud mockers but shows favor to the humble and oppressed,”* I saw how embracing humility opened the door for greater collaboration and respect within the team. Admitting my mistake not only strengthened my leadership but empowered the youth ushers to take ownership of their roles confidently. By being humble and teachable, I created an atmosphere where everyone felt valued and motivated to improve, ultimately opening the door for a more unified and effective ministry.

**Source Eight:** Kohlberg, L. (1981). *The philosophy of moral development : moral stages and the idea of justice.* San Francisco: Harper & Row Collection.

**Comment 9:** (from LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development):

**Quote/Paraphrase:** *"The teacher can develop a sound value system in the following ways: 1. Be a good example,”* (p.8).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of Developmental Stage Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive and broadens my understanding by reinforcing that a leader should not just stand and give instructions but also model the values he wants others to adopt. As a leader, especially with the youth in my care, I recognize that my actions and behavior are often more influential than my words. By being a good example, I teach values and demonstrate how they can be applied in real-life situations, making those values more tangible and relatable to those I lead.

**Contextualization:** As a leader, being a good example is a core value I hold close to my heart. Working with the youth I serve, I have learned that the most effective way to teach values is not through lectures or directives but by consistently living them out and meeting each individual where they are. Leadership is not about positioning myself above or below the kids I work with; it is about walking alongside them, understanding their experiences, and offering guidance from a place of humility. Both moral and leader development are shaped by how we internalize and embody principles and how we model those principles for others to adopt. I prioritize leading by example and demonstrating respect, humility, and responsibility, especially when I am called to serve alongside my team. For example, when we clean the facility, I make it a point to roll up my sleeves and work alongside the youth and my staff. I do not view my rank or position as a reason to sit back and give orders. That is not me! Instead, I need to demonstrate these values through my actions to instill a strong work ethic and a sense of shared purpose. By engaging in the work with them, I show that no task is beneath anyone, regardless of their position, and this also serves as a model for moral development, teaching the kids that respect and accountability are values that must be practiced, not just preached.

This approach to leadership echoes the example set by Nehemiah in the Bible. When Nehemiah led the people in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, he did not set himself apart from the work. Instead, he worked alongside the people, demonstrating servant leadership. His focus was not on his role or title but on getting the job done with the people, emphasizing that leadership is about serving, not being served, and connecting the idea that moral and leader development grows through actions rather than words. As Nehemiah’s example shows, leadership in any context—spiritual, professional, or personal—is most impactful when grounded in humility and service. The same principle applies to my role with the youth I work with: I believe consistent, humble service sets a foundation for moral growth and spiritual development. I also understand the truth of the saying, *"You never know who is watching."*  I strive to model integrity and service in my leadership and personal actions. Through this, I hope to leave a lasting impact on my staff and the youth, helping them see that authentic leadership begins with selflessness, humility, and an openness to spiritual growth.

**Source Nine:** Thielicke, H. (1966). *Theological ethics.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

**Comment 10:** (from LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development):

**Quote/Paraphrase:** *“This understanding of power embraces a twofold perception and acknowledgement. There is first the perception and acknowledgement of the purpose of power, namely, that as ordered and ordering power it protects the fallen world from chaos, creating order and bringing this threatened aeon to the last day. And second, there is the perception and acknowledgement that power is always something assigned or delegated, so that it has the character of authorized authority.”*(p.246).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of Self-Concept

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is variant to my complete understanding because while power, both a protective force for order and delegated authority, is compelling, it overlooks the potential for power to be misused or corrupted. When viewed solely as something assigned and authorized, power risks reinforcing hierarchical structures that can perpetuate inequality and oppression, which assumes that those in power are inherently trustworthy; however, history shows that power can easily be exploited for personal gain or to suppress others. Additionally, this view neglects the dynamic nature of power, which is not always delegated but can be acquired or contested in various forms, challenging the idea that power is always inherently tied to authority or divine order.

**Contextualization:** While the idea of power as a protective force for order and as delegated authority offers a clear structure for understanding authority, it fails to fully account for the risks associated with the misuse of power. Events such as instances of police brutality, particularly with specific populations, reiterate the dangers of power being abused. However, not all law enforcement officers, whose role is to maintain order, sometimes misuse their authority, especially when dealing with vulnerable populations like teenagers, which has become a significant issue in our area in the past year. Officers who hold biases or become frustrated with youth behavior may resort to excessive force or discriminatory actions. Such perpetuates cycles of violence and mistrust between law enforcement and the communities they serve, particularly those involving at-risk youth. Viewing power solely as something delegated and authorized fails to recognize its potential for corruption, where individuals in positions of authority might use their power for personal gain or to oppress others instead of serving the greater good.

Additionally, this framework overlooks the fluid nature of power and how it can be contested, redefined, or acquired outside of traditional channels. Power is not always delegated—sometimes, it can be challenged, reclaimed, or reshaped by individuals or groups outside established structures. The story of King David from the Bible provides an example of this dynamic shift in power. David, once a humble shepherd, rose to become the king of Israel not because political elites appointed him but because of his character and God's favor. On the other hand, King Saul misused his power, which ultimately led to his downfall. This story reminds us that proper authority is rooted in service, humility, and integrity, not merely in titles or positions. In my experience as an adult learner at OGS, I have seen how power dynamics shift when people come together across different cultures and backgrounds. In the OGS program, students and staff worldwide collaborate as equals, regardless of their position. Whether one is a student or staff member, everyone is encouraged to contribute and serve one another. This spirit of humility and mutual respect develops an environment where authentic leadership is about serving others and being willing to learn and grow together. Like David’s rise and Saul’s fall, I am reminded that leadership grounded in humility and service can transform and that power used justly can lead to healing and reconciliation.

**Source Ten:** Curry-Stevens, A. (2018) Innovations in leadership development: centering communities of color. *Open Journal of Leadership*, *7*(4), 265-284. doi: 10.4236/ojl.2018.74016.

**Comment 11:** (from LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development):

**Quote/Paraphrase:** *“The time savings by being able to provide racial and cultural inclusiveness allowed the cohort members to get quickly to work, and to build durable capacity to work together and both individually and collectively be the types of leaders they wanted to be”* (p.280).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of Self-Concept

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of how racial and cultural inclusiveness can enhance team dynamics and leadership development. By respecting and integrating diverse perspectives, individuals can collaborate and grow without being hindered by biases and creates an environment where relationships are built quickly and leadership skills are strengthened, both individually and collectively. In my experience, especially in programs like OGS, embracing diversity has broadened my understanding of leadership and improved my ability to work with people from different backgrounds.

**Contextualization:** As an adult learner working with peers from diverse backgrounds worldwide, I recognize the vital role that racial and cultural inclusiveness plays in providing a sense of community and leadership. The time saved by embracing diversity allowed the cohort in the selected study to quickly build a strong foundation for collaboration, empowering them to become the leaders they aspired to be. This principle echoes with us, as students and staff at OGS, and is deeply rooted in the biblical concept of "Imago Dei, the belief that all people are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). When we acknowledge this inherent value in every individual, we can better appreciate and affirm their uniqueness, even in moments of challenge.

I was reminded of this truth during a conversation with one of my boys before he went to court last week. Initially, this young man viewed God as distant and unloving, much like his earthly father. But his perspective shifted as he understood God's character and saw Him as a compassionate Heavenly Father. This transformation occurred the evening before facing the judge, illustrating the power of reframing our thinking and grounding ourselves in meaningful values that shape our standards and decisions.

The Bible teaches us to look beyond ourselves, to prioritize humility over pride, and to consider others more than ourselves (Philippians 2:3-4). By adopting this mindset, we can form more reflective, more authentic connections with those around us, finding fulfillment in relationships that honor and respect one another. The cross of Christ unites us as a community, allowing us to experience the power of collective growth and shared purpose. Furthermore, having the capability, resources, and opportunities to influence others is essential to becoming a positive global force. As Scripture reminds us, *"For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-discipline"* (2 Timothy 1:7). By embracing these principles, we can grow into leaders who nurture a culture of inclusivity, respect, and empowerment, impacting those around us in profound and lasting ways.

**Source Eleven:** Alhadabi, A., & Karpinski, A. C. (2020). Grit, self-efficacy, achievement orientation goals, and academic performance in University students. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth, 25*(1), 519-535.

**Comment 12:** (from LDR 807-12: Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development):

**Quote/Paraphrase:** *“Thus, some setbacks and obstacles induce a negative impact on academic progress.”*(p.533).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of Self-Concept

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment adds to my understanding by demonstrating how setbacks can affect both short-term success and long-term advancement. It draws attention to the psychological and emotional obstacles that difficulties can erect, making learning more difficult. It also highlights how vital support and resilience are to sustaining academic progress.

**Contextualization:** Setbacks and obstacles can significantly hinder academic progress, particularly when students face challenges at home, school, or in their communities. A story from the Bible that climaxes resilience in the face of adversity is that of Joseph, who was sold into slavery by his brothers and faced many hardships yet ultimately rose to a position of power in Egypt (Genesis 41:46). Joseph's setbacks, though severe, were ultimately part of God's plan for his life, leading to a greater purpose. Likewise, many students experience setbacks that affect their education, such as bullying, family struggles, or social pressures. For example, a student who does not have the latest clothes may be ridiculed by peers, leading to feelings of isolation and embarrassment. As a result, a cycle is created where the child prefers to skip school rather than face humiliation, which can cause him to fall behind in his studies. Such struggles can also lead to deeper emotional issues, including suicidal ideation, as students feel overwhelmed and unable to escape their circumstances.

At our facility, we see firsthand how students struggle with academic challenges, particularly those with special needs. Many detainees face difficulties because they are not reading or writing at the level expected for their age, and this gap often deepens over time. Our teachers show immense patience and understanding that each student is on a different path and that progress looks different for everyone. Some setbacks, though painful, can lead to unexpected comebacks with the proper support and guidance. In the case of our detainees, the personal growth they experience—whether it is gaining confidence or mastering a difficult skill—can become a powerful testimony of resilience and potential. Despite their obstacles, our detainees are learning to overcome the challenges that life has handed them, understanding that setbacks are not the end of their story but part of their journey toward greater strength and success.

**Works Cited**

Alhadabi, A., & Karpinski, A. C. (2020). Grit, self-efficacy, achievement orientation goals, and

academic performance in University students. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth, 25*(1), 519-535.

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological*

*review, 84*(2), 191.

Chan, E. T., Hekman, D. R., & Foo, M. D. (2024). An examination of whether and how leader

humility enhances leader personal career success. *Human Resource Management*, *63*(3), 427–442. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.22208

Curry-Stevens, A. (2018) Innovations in leadership development: centering communities of

color. *Open Journal of Leadership*, *7*(4), 265-284. doi: 10.4236/ojl.2018.74016.

Fry, L.W., & Wigglesworth, C. G. (January, 2013). Toward a theory of spiritual intelligence and

spiritual leader development. *International Journal on Spirituality and Organizational Leadership, 1*(1), 47-49.

Johnson, O.E. (2020). Creating Space to Think: The What, Why, and How of Deliberate

Reflection for Effective Leadership. *The Journal of Character and Leadership Development, 7*(1), 1-31.

Kohlberg, L. (1981). *The philosophy of moral development : moral stages and the idea of justice.*

San Francisco: Harper & Row Collection.

Lapierre, L. M., Naidoo, L. J., & Bonaccio, S. (2012). Leaders’ relational self-concept and followers

task performance: Implications for mentoring provided to followers. *The Leadership Quarterly 23,* 766-774.

Neroni, J., Meijs, C., Kirschner, P. A., Xu, K. M., & de Groot, R. H. (2022). Academic self-efficacy,

self-esteem, and grit in higher online education: Consistency of interests

predicts academic success. *Social Psychology of Education, 25*(4), 951-975.

Thielicke, H. (1966). *Theological ethics.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Yamada, A.-M., Lukoff, D., Lim, C. S. F., & Mancuso, L. L. (2020). Integrating spirituality and

mental health: Perspectives of adults receiving public mental health services in California. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, 12*(3), 276–287. https://doi.org/10.1037/rel0000260