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THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

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DECEMBER 2008 NEWSLETTER

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“What you envision for the future is really all about expressing your passion...Once you’ve reflected on the past, attended to the present, and prospected in the future you’ve got to step back and ask yourself, What is my burning passion?”

—From *The Leadership Challenge*, 4th Edition, by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner

Welcome to The Leadership Challenge Newsletter!

This monthly publication shares stories, examples, and information about the impact of The Leadership Challenge in all kinds of organizations. As always, please let us know how we are doing by emailing leadershipchallenge@wiley.com; we may even contact you about featuring your ideas and stories in future editions of this newsletter.

Check out the recent *LeaderTalk* post by Jim Kouzes on [Practicing Like Lang Lang](#).

We Want Your Opinion!

We would like to learn more about your Web habits to inform us in our endeavors to improve the web-based functions of our community. [Complete the survey](#) and you'll get 20% off your next purchase from [The Leadership Challenge Web site](#).

Thoughts on the Model

Angie Chaplin's inspiring journey from student to community leader, activist, and teacher demonstrates what can happen when leaders find their voice, live a life of passion for learning, and fulfill the real promise of Model the Way. [More](#)

Tips and Techniques

Try this quick ice breaker for your next workshop that explores the link between past and present, and helps develop a deeper understanding of common experiences, trials, and successes among group participants. [More](#)

Ask an Expert

From the world of business to politics, leadership expert Steve Coats explores what being inspiring can mean when leaders tap into the needs and aspirations of others and demonstrate a passion for fulfilling shared values, dreams, and ideals. [More](#)

Rants and Raves

Congratulations to Jim and Barry for a sweep of recent awards and recognition. Praised for the valuable contributions they have made to the study and development of excellence in leadership, they both earned a place among the Top 100 Thought Leaders and Jim was honored as National Leader of the Month by Leader Network. ▶

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What We're Reading

Like many of you, much of my day-to-day work revolves around [The Leadership Challenge](#) and its principles, but I hadn't sat and read it for my own benefit in quite awhile. While the book is usually read in professional or academic capacities, there is no question of The Leadership Challenge's impact on the professional and personal lives of leaders at all levels in all sorts of organizations. This time, when I picked up the book, I chose to use it as a lens through which to view how a person can be his or her own personal leader. This different take on Jim and Barry's wisdom, especially about small wins, had a personal significance for me.

This past summer my brother's good friend fell from a 4th story window. By the time paramedics arrived, called by a guardian angel who witnessed his accidental fall, he was not breathing. He spent the following 5 1/2 weeks in a trauma unit, comatose and enduring multiple surgeries. He was then transferred to a rehabilitation facility, still in a pre-wakeful state. At this renowned facility, he is administered stimulating medications and receives all sorts of therapies. He is consistently showing increasing signs of cognition and physical ability, such as participating in the classic "thumb war" with his oldest sister and reaching out to gently touch his mother's cheek. He is on a road to recovery, although to what extent he will recover we do not know.

There is no doubt that this has been a difficult experience for his family and close friends. Upon hearing about one of his recent incremental accomplishments, I was inspired to share the following quote from The Leadership Challenge as a form of encouragement on a website that chronicles his recovery:

"Small wins build people's confidence and reinforce their natural desire to feel successful. Because additional resources tend to flow to winners, this means that slightly larger wins can be attempted next. A series of small wins therefore provides a foundation of stable building blocks. Each win preserves gains and makes it harder to return to preexisting conditions; each win also provides information that facilitates learning and adaptation."

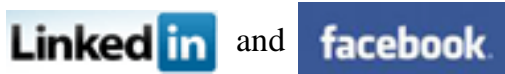
I like to think that this young man is leading himself through his own series of small wins, building his confidence, preserving his gains, and learning and adapting in his own way so that one day it all adds up to a BIG win. It is he who is leading himself to recovery.

So, this holiday season, I invite you to think about how The Leadership Challenge can enrich your personal life (and the lives of those around you) and to share that knowledge with those you hold near and dear.

Marisa Holland Kelley

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