

The Nuances of Influence: 'This Little Light of Mine, I'm 'Gonna Let It Shine'

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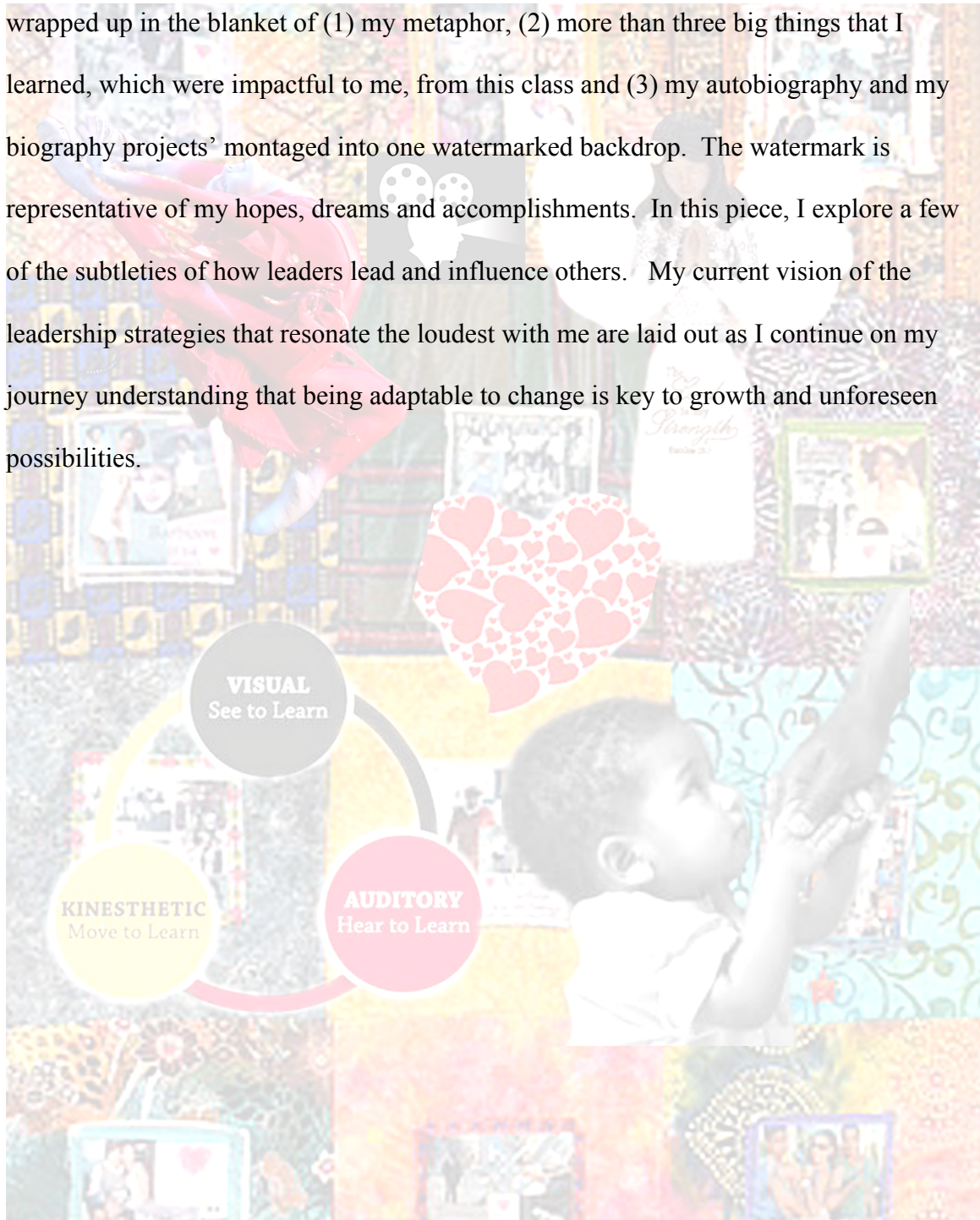
**VISUAL**  
See to Learn

**KINESTHETIC**  
Move to Learn

**AUDITORY**  
Hear to Learn

## Abstract

My leadership platform is outlined below and includes my perspective on leadership wrapped up in the blanket of (1) my metaphor, (2) more than three big things that I learned, which were impactful to me, from this class and (3) my autobiography and my biography projects' montaged into one watermarked backdrop. The watermark is representative of my hopes, dreams and accomplishments. In this piece, I explore a few of the subtleties of how leaders lead and influence others. My current vision of the leadership strategies that resonate the loudest with me are laid out as I continue on my journey understanding that being adaptable to change is key to growth and unforeseen possibilities.



There are shades of difference in the process of influencing people. In other words, from my experience, there is more than one way to get the job done. The different skills needed in the film production industry reflect on those in the education industry.

Leadership in film production. A producer sits firmly in the seat of power, and can conduct and wield that power at will, whenever necessary. A great deal of responsibility comes with that power. A film producer is behind the scenes of the production and is like a school leader/principal. In the article, “How to Think Like a Leader,” Jack and Suzy Welch stated that leaders deflect attention away from themselves, in other words “It’s not about you anymore. It’s about them” (Welch & Welch, 2013). This goes hand-in-hand with a producer’s behind-the-scenes influence and big picture thinking.

Reflecting on our class, I realized that Orton-Gillingham immediately connects the word history. The etymology of **producer** and **conductor** – share the Latin root – ‘duct, duc, duce’ – meaning *to lead*. This interpretive approach increases knowledge and understanding.

The juxtaposition of a movie producer and a school administrator makes the similarities evident. First, having experience in the industry key. It is important to have a good business sense and understanding of finance. Creativity and artistic vision is necessary. Both a film producer and principal should be self-motivated, and good at motivating people. Those interested in leading must be able to do problem-solving and negotiate in difficult situations, keeping a calm head, but carrying on just the same.

The best leaders in these industries understand the creative process of that given industry whether filmmaking or education. As well, these leaders know how to secure finances for the production/school, while preparing and controlling budgets. Excellent

communication skills are a must and being able to work well when their heads, or those of their staff, are in a vise grip or rolling. Motivating your team gets the best results. In terms of the minutia of managing, one must be compliant with regulations and codes of practice in school and on a film set. Understanding the relevant health and safety laws and procedures is also a required skill. Integrity and trust are intertwined. These are some of the main duties that a school leader and a film producers share.

Misty Copeland, the first African-American principal dancer for the American Ballet Theatre began her journey later than most ballerinas. Even Copeland's new title bears the word *principal*. *Principal* as an adjective means 'first in order of importance' and as a noun it means, 'the most important position in an organization, institution, or group' (dictionary.com 2016). As a child prodigy, Misty followed her dream with extraordinary passion. She also knew and recognized the responsibility and influence of her status. "This is for the little brown girls," (Copeland, p. 2) she often said to herself.

Leadership success is about growing others and Misty Copeland understands this well. She wrote in her book, Misty Copeland: Power and Grace, "At this point in my career, having a platform that I have to speak about diversity, I'm motivated by...young dancers who can see themselves through me." She goes on to say, "It's about creating a new dream and possibility for them and that's what drives me to keep dancing" (Corman & Copeland). This is in keeping with the concept of leaders creating more leaders as well as a leader's energy energizing those whom he/she leads (Welch & Welch, 2013).

Since I have been a part of the education community I have led with my heart but I had no idea that that is a major characteristic of becoming a school leader. In this class, my professor related the expression, "Aim for the heart because they don't care how

much you know until they know how much you care.” For me, this is a powerful commentary on the person I am in the classroom. Additionally as Jaime learned from his wise mentor, Brenda Connors that, “You’ll need to make sure that the faculty supports and feels involved in the process” (Bolman & Deal, 2010, p. 63). Collaboration is often the key to consensus. Additionally, Brenda often used analogies, metaphors and other figurative language to bring home a point, which makes a more effective approach.

All leaders are not the same which, Bolman and Deal also concluded in their realistic fictional narrative (2010). “Leadership is not reserved for the select few and everyone can lead in some way to some degree in a given situation at sometime” (Glanz, 2002). When reading an excerpt from Finding Your Leadership Style (2002), a quote from Warren Bennis (2009) tells us that “leaders know themselves; they know their strengths and nurture them.” Outer power often requires inner purity. Joyce Meyer often says on her TV program, “a person is easily led by the Holy Spirit if he/she is pure in heart” (Meyer, 2016). A leader’s positivity is contagious and light shines from the inside out. Leaders are self-actualizing. Their minds are spacious and adaptable to change (Maslow).

In the theories of leadership overhead outline, the charismatic leadership traits are as follows: visionary (my seeing past the immediate to what can be), masterful communication skills (my written, visual and verbal), energy/action (my sturdy work ethic), romanticized risk (I romanticize everything), self-promoting personality (*The Husbands’ handshake* in my video, referenced by my professor), internal focus of control (my passion is my core) and metaphors (my love of figurative language). This sums me up in a nutshell...so far, and suggests that there are nuances in one’s ability to influence.

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