

When the dark-side comes to town: Is leadership really that great?

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- Trait theory – saw leadership traits as emanating only from people of higher class or social status. The theory saw traits as genetically based and passed on through the generations, thus denying the potential for learnable activities and skills.
- Behaviour theories – examines the tasks and actions of leaders and sought to teach these to others.
- Contingency theories – acknowledged the importance of context. Action planning took into account the context.

- Power theories – challenged the notion of positional power as essential to leadership and examines new types of power with a focus on the way power is used.
- Social change theories – has a focus on leaders transforming followers to move beyond self interest and focus on the good of the organisation
- Meaning making theories – conceptualising leadership as assisting individuals to make sense of the organisational culture and to transform it to achieve the organisations mission.



Values

1. The first step to becoming a leader
2. Knowing your values and beliefs
3. Supports authenticity which is the correlation of values with behaviours



Which self

- 'Best self' or 'ideal self'
- Acknowledge dark-side
- Penetrating illusions of goodness can be frightening



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Characteristics	Best Self	Real Self

Not all typologies of leadership are effective?



With 50 – 75% of leaders experiencing leadership problems or failures (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005), the topic of the dark side of leadership has been increasingly popularised in academic and popular press.

The definition of dark side of leadership in current literature is unclear. The causes of the dark side of leadership are multifaceted and are exposed through a combination of situational and behavioural factors which impact on organisational outcomes (Semann & Slattery, 2009).



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Yet, much of the literature ignores the darker side of leadership — a place inhabited by incompetence, flawed character and unethical behaviour. This shadowy world is further concealed through ambiguous definitions of the dark side of leadership (Semann & Slattery, 2009).



Leadership can be considered to be a reciprocal relationship between leader and follower, where the leader uses social influence to persuade people to set aside their own pursuits in order to attain organisational goals (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005).

The vast majority of leadership literature over the past five decades has focused on determining the characteristics of 'good' or effective leadership (Higgs, 2009).

This has led to the romanticisation of leadership.



Consequently, leaders are often perceived as heroic or saviours of organisations in crisis (Bligh, Jeffrey, Pearce, Justin, & Stovall, 2007).

In fact, Burns (2003, as cited in Higgs, 2009) argues that leadership is essentially good. This argument ignores the possibility of a darker side of leadership in which leadership is not necessarily good or constructive to organisational purposes. It ignores leadership behaviour which may steer organisations to a state of stagnation or decline (e.g. Mellahi, Jackson, & Sparks, 2002; Whicker, 1996).



Defining the dark side

Terms such as

- 'petty tyrants' (Ashforth, 1994);
- 'toxic leadership' (Benson & Hogan, 2008; Whicker, 1996);
- 'destructive leadership' (Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad, 2007);
- 'bad leadership' (Kellerman, 2005);
- 'leadership derailment' (Tepper, 2000) and
- 'aversive leadership' (Bligh et al., 2007) have been used to simultaneously describe and define the dark side of leadership behaviour.



Higgs (2009) found four themes relating to dark side behaviours including abuse of power; inflicting damage on others, over exercise of control and rule breaking to satisfy personal needs.

Leaders exhibiting these behaviours are perceived as untrustworthy, overly ambitious and disingenuous by followers (Hogan, 1994).

Einarsen et al. (2007) propose a definition of ‘destructive leadership’ as:

“The systematic and repeated behaviour by a leader, supervisor or manager that violates the legitimate interest of the organisation by undermining and/or sabotaging the organisation’s goals, tasks, resources, and effectiveness and/or the motivation, well being or job satisfaction of subordinates.” (p. 208)



First, it does not consider environmental or situational factors, which have been demonstrated to influence leadership behaviours such as organisational crisis or increased market competition (Kellerman, 2004).

Second, the definition does not take into account any personality factors or traits also demonstrated to have an effect on leader behaviour (Hogan & Hogan, 2001; Hogan & Kaiser, 2005).



Third, power relationships and power motives are ignored (Elias, 2008; Hughes, Ginnett, & Curphy, 1995; Raven, 1993).

Fourth, it ignores the possibility that some characteristics, such as narcissism and charisma, associated with the dark side of leadership may exist on a continuum from destructive to constructive behaviours, which have both positive and negative outcomes for an organisation (Maccoby, 2004; Padilla et al., 2007; Padilla & Mulvey, 2008).



Therefore, to remedy these shortcomings, the following definition is proposed - the dark side of leadership is an ongoing pattern of behaviour exhibited by a leader that results in overall negative organisational outcomes based on the interactions between the leader, follower and the environment. Organisational goals, morale and follower satisfaction are thwarted through the abuse of power and self-interest of the leader. (Slattery, 2009)



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Power tripper

- Needs power and prestige
- Enjoys manipulating others
- Intolerant of criticism
- Surrounds themselves with sycophants

Surface surfer

- Lacks self-awareness
- Promoted for being extrovert
- Depends on leadership tricks
- Lacks spiritual leadership

Fantasy lover

- Enjoys outsider images rather than self image
- Driven by expectations rather than values
- Lack authenticity and consistency

Emotionally starved

- Controlled, structured and dispassionate
- Lacks ability to empathise or energise
- Contributes to mediocrity



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Hanger on

- Won't let go of the reigns
- Motivated to stay by ego, fear of reprisals or fear their work will be undone
- Often blocks young people

Attention seeker

- Needs attention at cost of others or organizational outcomes
- Highly impressionable rather than critical
- Unquestioning loyalty so no critical feedback

Passive resistor

- Cordial and compliant so hard to identify as negative influence
- Pessimism, resentment or covert resistance undermines outcomes



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Needy

- Dependent needs others to give them direction
- Intense, overpowering connection to leaders who meet their need
- Can't give objective feedback

Martyr

- Accepts blame without reason
- Encourages others to take advantage of them
- Wallows in resultant self pity
- Not able to give critical feedback



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What can we say about the **impact** of early childhood leaders and/or leadership?

To what extent is it **necessary to measure leadership achievements?** Why?

“destructive leadership”: The systematic and repeated behaviour by a leader, supervisor or manager that violates the legitimate interest of the organisation by undermining and/or sabotaging the organisation’s goals, tasks, resources, and effectiveness and/or the motivation, well being or job satisfaction of subordinates”.

(Einarsen et al. 2007, p. 208)



Charismatic – “Pied Piper of Hamelin” has a strong influence over followers. Followers may also enable a charismatic leader. Effective use of “communication skills and impression management” (Slattery, 2009: p.9)

Narcissistic – views themselves as special, entitled. Will often take credit when credit is not due and will blame others for their mistakes. Trying to stand up to a narcissistic leader may result in overt rage or narcissistic rage (a subtle form of aggression that is enacted at a later time e.g. ostracizing a staff member until they leave)



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What strategies can we put in place to prevent or minimise the impact of the dark-side of leadership in EC settings?



Authentic leadership

- Self awareness
- Trigger events
- Self-reflection



Self awareness

- A core component of authentic leadership is self awareness
- This requires the leader to understand how their perceptions drive their assessment of people and situations encountered
- Leaders who invest time and energy in learning their strengths and perceptual biases help themselves see situations more clearly and this capacity better equips them to adapt to new challenges and opportunities more effectively
- Over 20 years of research regarding the Pygmalion effect that leaders who thought they had better employees also obtained better group performance



- Adaptive self reflection is a process of constructively and critically examining one's own beliefs and behaviors in order to learn more about ones leadership (Dewey, 1910)
- Therefore greater self awareness leads to opportunities for enhancing self-knowledge and capacities for self regulation



Trigger events

Trigger events induce self-focused attention and self-assessment and activate a leader's working self concept

Markis and Wurf (1987) use the term “working self concept” to emphasize the dynamic and active nature of one's self concept, thoughts and beliefs about the self, and further suggest working self concepts are changeable

Trigger events refer to a momentary shift in attention to a particular aspect of one's self concept made salient by current cues

By definition trigger events operate as a form of surprising feedback from other people, major life events or perceived failures or successes

These “trigger events” cause a moment or state of focused attention which spark an opportunity for longer term self reflection activity conducive to what is referred to as authentic leadership.



Self reflection

- Self reflection is a “conscious and deliberate process of thinking about and interpreting experience in order to learn from it. This process is not automatic but takes place in response to experience and with a definite purpose” (Getliffe, 1996)
- When leaders reflect on his or her experience, it can lead to new appreciations and understandings about the self.
- Self reflection can vary along a continuum from adaptive to maladaptive reflective processes
- Adaptive self reflection refers to a constructive process involving patterns of thinking and emotions associated with openness, positivity and a learning perspective.



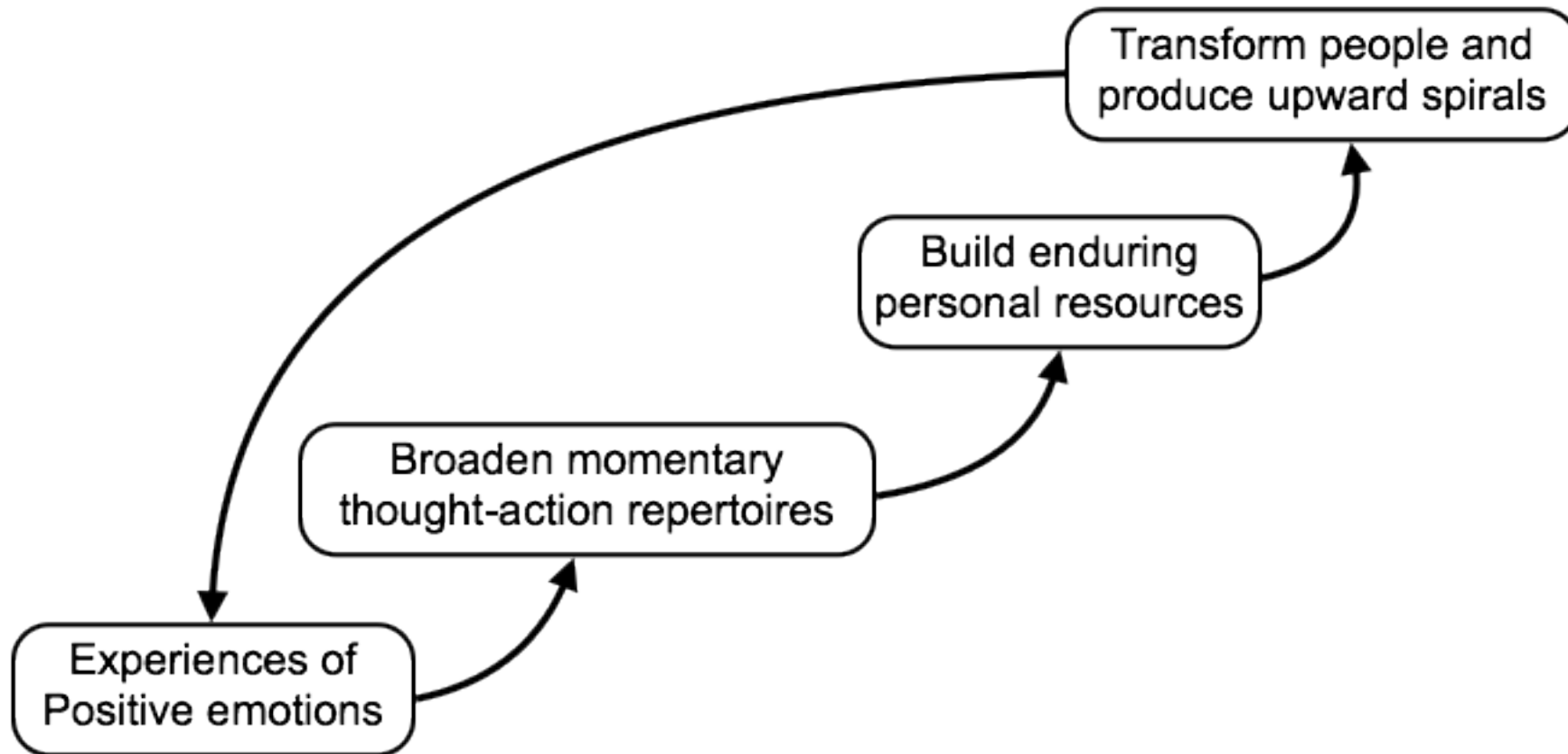
- Adaptive self reflection arises out of curiosity and non-judgmental desire to learn about ones self as a leader.
- On the other hand maladaptive self reflection involves more destructive ways of thinking that depletes energy resources by generating negative emotions such as anxiety, self-doubt and fear based actions.
- Rumination is a particular form of maladaptive self reflection describes as an intrusion of undesired thoughts and emotions that interferes with healthy psychological functioning. Rumination involves repetitive re-examining of an issue coupled with higher levels of resistance and negative judgment (i.e. wishing it were difference than it it with no focus on solving it by changing oneself)

Adaptive self reflection occurs under conditions where the leaders is either promoting his or her self-development or has the support of others to do so. In situations where support and/or internal motivation are not evident, maladaptive rumination may arise and result in downward spiral of negative emotions, this lessening or disabling leadership development progress



Core psychological resources

- Psychological resources theory suggest that constructs such as self confidence, optimism, hope and resilience are best described as “resources” or “energies” that can effect the actions and behaviors of individuals.
- Researchers would suggest that building on one’s psychological resources can result in an upwardly spiral effect and can lead to human flourishing.



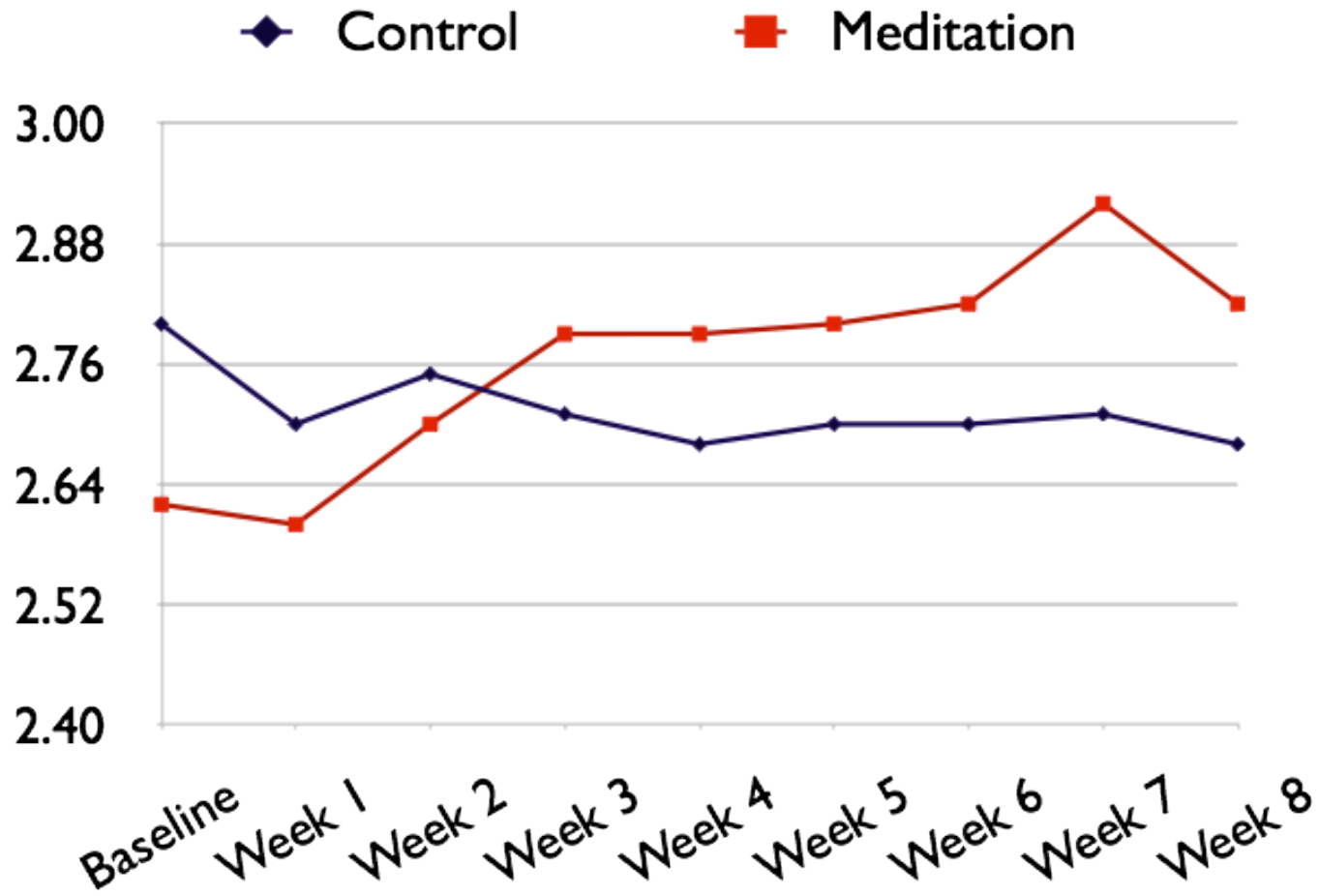


Evidence for broaden and build

- Fredrickson (2008) tested the build effect of the broaden and build theory using a workplace wellness program
- Two groups randomised
- One group received a 7 week program on loving kindness meditation the other was a waitlist control
- Reported on daily positive and negative emotion
- Tested on cognitive, social, psychological and physical resources



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