

DAVE URSILLO

**LEAD**

**WITHOUT FOLLOWERS**

“Maybe the leadership that lasts the longest is the leadership that is so humble, so good, and yet so unspoken that it can only take root in others by quietly sprouting within their hearts—dawning in them from a place of intrinsic goodness and unyielding strength; from the originating place of human love and kindness.”

— Dave Ursillo, *Lead Without Followers*



# Introduction

*Lead Without Followers* is the culmination of the last three years of my life. Of course, three years isn't a very long time. But when you're in your mid-twenties, one-eighth of the entire life you've lived—or just under half of your legal adulthood—certainly feels like the culmination of your life's work!

In many ways, this story begins on September 11, 2001. I was fifteen years old, and, while beginning to take an interest in student leadership and the study of government, the attacks ultimately compelled me to pursue some avenue, career path or outlet of leadership that would best enable me to help people and make a difference in world that apparently needed it.

*Lead Without Followers* details some of my journey because, fascinatingly, my own story and experiences with leadership—ranging all the way to the West Wing of the White House—aids the reader to understand the underlying causes of our world's modern leadership problems. And, by radically redefining the meaning of leadership, *Lead Without Followers* reveals an inspired, widely accessible and intrinsically human solution—a heartfelt alternative leadership philosophy based in love, selflessness, compassion and hope.

I recently came across a motivational slogan that read, “Don't undertake a project unless it is manifestly important and nearly impossible.” *Lead Without Followers* and my impassioned mission to invert a long-ingrained but utterly backwards leadership paradigm both embody this powerful mantra.

Three years is not a very long time. But with your help, perhaps in just three years' time we will no longer be talking about our world's dire leadership problem, and instead, realize how quickly we've inspired the solution.



## About the Author

Dave Ursillo is a former “politico” insider turned alternative leadership writer, author and speaker. He can be read at [DaveUrsillo.com](http://DaveUrsillo.com).

The Rhode Island native teaches men and women how to become “leaders without followers” in any walk of life by discovering a personal and profound sense of inner leadership.

At 23, Ursillo abandoned his fast-track career path in public service amid a crisis of identity and while battling depression. Opting for the unemployment line during a 100-year recession, Ursillo has built an expansive digital platform through a growing social media presence and as an avid writer, helpful personality and determined world-changer.

Since its inception in 2009, [DaveUrsillo.com](http://DaveUrsillo.com) has reached over 60,000 readers from 172 countries. In June 2011, Ursillo and his blog were also seen in a feature story on CBS Sunday Morning about the world of blogging.

Ursillo’s experiences from “his past life” span five governmental offices over six years from 2003 to 2009, including the White House Council on Environmental Quality under the Bush Administration in 2008 and as a “body man” to a state gubernatorial candidate in 2009.



# About the Book

*Lead Without Followers* is a radical reinterpretation of what it means to be a leader.

The long-awaited debut of author Dave Ursillo is set against a disturbing backdrop: an escalating atmosphere of unbridled anger with our modern elected leaders; venomous partisan bickering in Washington D.C. and an uncharacteristic but prevalent pessimism shared by the American people.

Our world is at a crossroads.

As cynicism and hatred become the modern political status quo, America's ever-important place as the leader of the free world is falling into severe question.

Unlike any book before it, *Lead Without Followers* not only explores the cultural, social and political origins of today's "Leadership Problem," but cuts into the heart of the *human* source of today's convoluted definition of what it means to lead.

*Lead Without Followers* invites readers to abandon the political sphere in order to embark upon a unique personal journey to discover an unconventional and profound form of "quiet" leadership that can be embodied by men and women in any walk of life.

The book lays out a step-by-step process for ordinary men

and women to discover and harness a unique, highly-effective and influential form of quiet leadership.

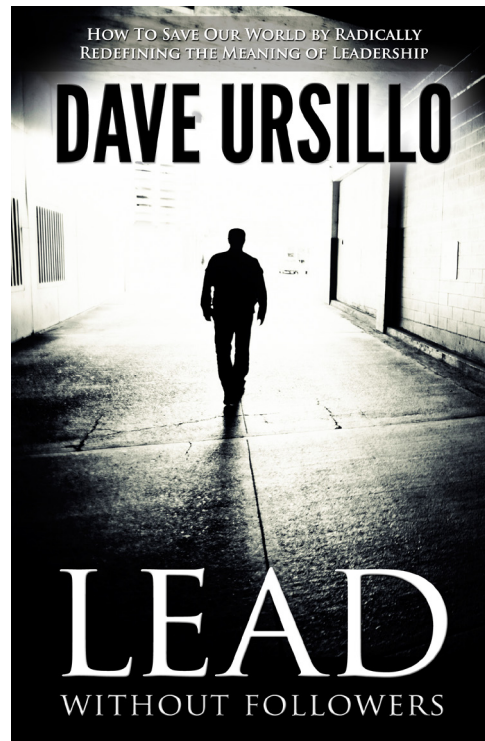
The philosophy reaches into the shared humanity of the reader to help him or her reconnect with leadership's truest traits, such as positivity and hope, love, selfless giving, forgiveness, compassion and much more.

By becoming "leaders without followers," readers free themselves from their disillusionments and regain a purer sense of what it really means to lead.

And, by the book's end, the reader is invited to return to the political sphere and to reapply a newfound understanding and appreciation for genuine, earnest and authentic leadership to the important topic of who we elect into positions of power.

Guided by the voice of a rising Generation-Y leader, Dave Ursillo lays out powerful but pragmatic methods for readers to access and understand leadership individually, in their everyday lives; and collectively, as an American nation entering in the 21st century.

*Lead Without Followers* is a timely and important examination of what it really means to be a leader in our troubling day and age, and is bound to inspire its readers in any walks of life to begin leading—with, or without followers.



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## Introduction

*Lead Without Followers* is less about convincing you to believe something, and is far more about awakening what is already within you: a long-forgotten mindset, an innate yearning, a deeply-rooted drive that you were born to set free.

You are a leader, already, and right now—although you’ve been quietly conditioned to forget it, and in some cases, taught outright to think otherwise.

My name is Dave Ursillo and this is my still-young story. But in full candor, this story is far less about me than it is about our world and your important place in it—even if you don’t yet realize how, or why.

*Lead Without Followers* is an alternative leadership philosophy that is swiftly stirring men and women across the globe and from all walks of life into a passionate, positively-driven and politically-nonpartisan social movement. We are radically redefining the very meaning of leadership. In this troubling day and age, we need you—yes, you, of all people—to reawaken to your inner truth, to discover your leader within and to exert this highly influential form of lasting leadership that has the

earnest capacity to profoundly change the world.

We need you to shine amid the darkness and on behalf those in your life that could use some guidance, inspiration or motivation. But further, and perhaps to a much more significant degree, this alternative leadership philosophy contains within it the radical power for you, individually and on your own, to develop an incredible sense of meaning and enduring happiness within. With a little practice, you will begin to embody it effortlessly and be able to literally radiate simple joy, an energized magnetism, and a purpose-filled existence in your everyday life.

In other words, *Lead Without Followers* doesn’t intend to guilt you into bearing the repressive weight of a difficult day and age or compel you to become a martyr who sacrifices your own happiness and well-being for people who don’t know it, let alone appreciate it.

Rather, *Lead Without Followers* will teach you how to become a luminous and purpose-filled powerhouse for good whose very existence will positively influence the lives of everyone who you encounter in an undeniably pure and radiant manner.

This form of leadership has the incredible ability to self-perpetuate in others—theoretically enduring for the rest of time. Simply put, by becoming a leader without followers you have the capacity to radically change our entire world for the better, for generations and generations.

Beyond the individual benefit, the step-by-step process that you will undertake in *Lead Without Followers* to discover your own unique style of inner leadership will further provide us all, collectively, with the very means to reprioritize our understanding of leadership from a “big picture” perspective—in



essence, revealing a roadmap for an entire country to return to its true identity, to reconsider who it elects to positions of power, and how it should embody the very principles it wishes to espouse to the world.

The very process for rediscovering leadership on an individual level can help us to jointly guide a nation and its most powerful elected leaders upon a course toward newfound peace, indiscriminate liberty for all, and a far brighter tomorrow. In a day and age of rampant pessimism and distrust among our elected leaders, such a roadmap is desperately needed.

The *Lead Without Followers* philosophy has had almost magical ways of appearing and reappearing throughout my life, as if something has been working to capture my attention and force this path beneath my feet.

And I truly do believe that it has been my calling and mission to deliver this message to you. I cannot be sure why this message picked me to deliver it, but I have fought tooth and nail for it to reach your hands today. Because my life and this alternative leadership message are truly inseparable, my own personal story is thus weaved throughout the book.

Even still, *Lead Without Followers* is far from an autobiography and is not a memoir, or even really about me. This story is about you. Your dreams. Your decisions. Your life. I need you. We all need you. Now is the time to stand up and to tell this world to reclaim the meaning of leadership for itself.

And finally, the intentions of this book are both many, and none. I believe that the *Lead Without Followers* philosophy can radically stoke the flames of renewed vigor and passion for much of our world's misplaced values and ideals, and further inspire us to collectively return the state of modern leadership

to a far more noble, pure and effective condition. However, for this book to be a true success, it alone cannot be the “end-all, be-all” of such a desired leadership revolution. The sort of top-to-bottom, paradigm shifting, status-quo-inverting leadership revolution that can save our world can't ever be fully explained in so many words: it must be lived.

To inspire such a revolution on a widespread scale, we need to first sow the seeds of a basic-but-inspired, open and widely-accessible philosophy—before allowing them the time to sprout. In other words, the philosophy must first become, and then it must be. *Lead Without Followers* intends to be the action, the spark, the beginning that allows such a philosophical revolution to become a reality. You, then, must be the one who—by living it—allows it to be. In that way, there is no one intention of this book: it is, and will become only what you make of it.

Though words may capture the essence of this alternative leadership philosophy, they can never truly define the way—the path that we must take, individually and together. For, any hardened definition will only restrict it, confine it, and thus fail to allow the inherent Truth of this philosophy to radiate in the hearts and minds of the human beings who will nurture it, evolve it, and share it with others.

This Truth—the essence of genuine leadership, an inherently human quality that has been manifested millions of times over, every single day, since the dawn of humankind—has been gently woven throughout history in a brilliant but mysterious tapestry of love, selfless giving, courageousness, compassion and hope. We aim to revive these principles today, and with unapologetic vigor.

To you, the reader, my new friend, I warmly say welcome to this beginning point in your journey. Thank you, because you are my personal inspiration. I am so grateful for you. I have dreamed many dreams for these words, ideas and concepts to finally reach your eyes. I have also shed tears and feared many fears to make this book a reality at long last. But that we have each made it here to this point, to this page, to this place in our lives—I'm quite sure it was neither by chance nor accident at all.

I hope that you find *Lead Without Followers* to be inspiring and humbling, thought-provoking and discussion-worthy, and certainly revolutionary. Remember that its success will depend upon you—a leader without followers.

Beyond all else, I implore you to explore this work not as an answer to the problems with modern leadership in our world today because, in this life, there are rarely—if ever—any “real” answers. Instead, I ask you to explore *Lead Without Followers* as a new beginning. Where this new path takes you, I cannot be sure. And, of course, neither can you! But isn't that the exciting nature of our world that makes life worth living?

Trust the unknown path. And walk it all the same.

**Dave Ursillo**

# Part 1: The Leadership Problem

“The United States was always the last resort and hope for all other nations. There was the hope, whenever something was going wrong, one could count on the United States. Today, we [have] lost that hope.”

- **Lech Walesa, 2010**

Father of Polish democracy and humanitarian

## Chapter 1: A Gathering Storm

*Searching for Answers in a World of Unrest*

“Right now, we are at a very, very low point—the worst I’ve seen since I moved to Washington in September 1972. Never in my memory have both parties and both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue appeared as dysfunctional as they do today.”

— Charlie Cook, *The National Journal*, 2011

By the summer of 2008, I was beginning to believe that something was wrong—very wrong—with not only the United States of America amid a divisive and hotly contested presidential election, but truly, with the world at large.

While our collective attention was consumed by another campaign cycle, I began to sense a problem that ran far deeper than the usual partisan exchanges, heated debate and frenzied bickering between candidates and their parties—what had already, in my youth, become a familiar atmosphere that wildly burns through the national landscape and consumes the entire

country’s focus every few years.

This was far different.

And as a 22-year-old recent college graduate who was working over 60 hours per week as an intern at the White House in Washington D.C., I certainly had a uniquely privileged point of view.

I had moved to Washington D.C. that very summer with what belongings could cram into a rented minivan, and just five days after receiving my Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. The eight-hour road trip from New England to “the District” was intended to be the start of a lifelong career in government, politics and public service—a career that, after September 11, 2001, I had waited for and worked toward throughout my high school and college years.

The immediate move to Washington D.C. was prompted by a summer-long internship at the White House Council on Environmental Quality or CEQ, an Executive Office of the President that houses his appointed advisors on environmental issues. CEQ’s environmental duties are numerous, ranging from historic river preservation and natural wildlife conservation efforts, to greenhouse gas emissions regulations and international environmental negotiations with emerging world powers like India and China.

A stone’s throw from the White House itself, just off of Pennsylvania Avenue and juxtaposed to neighboring Lafayette Park, every day from our office windows we could watch gatherings and protests, tourists snapping photos and activists handing out flyers.

We would receive high-alert emails from the Secret Service

notifying us of security threats, and filter through hundreds' more form-style emails from active constituents who were determined to make their opinions known.

We could hear cheers and jeers; witness visitors from around the world quietly revere the historic grounds and see anxiety on the faces of citizens who reviled the powerbrokers who worked inside that monument's gleaming white walls.

On my commute to the White House on my very first day, I caught a surprise glimpse of the Vice President's morning convoy zoom down the street at an absurd speed, and later—because I hadn't yet received my White House identification badge—bore an intimidating warning from a Secret Service agent who sternly told me to “Walk directly to the door of your office, and don't try anything else, because I'll be watching you.” (When I later got my badge, I found that most Secret Service agents were surprisingly friendly. I can't say the same for Israeli Al-Assad agents, who seemed to enjoy sizing me up and silently conveying that they could break me in half).



Beyond the stories that I can tell from my White House days, it was a remarkable vantage point to have during some utterly historic months in our nation's history.

And for every pressing environmental issue that came across our desks over those humid months, much graver questions began to ensue throughout the entire District as summer waned into autumn—the 2008 Presidential Election between

Democratic Party candidate Barack Obama and Republican Party candidate John McCain still undecided—and the entire country was suddenly thrown into a massive and far-reaching financial crisis that would wildly reverberate throughout the entire world, and still lingers on to this very day.

Outside of my White House experience, when I escaped from the suit and tie and quietly walked the smoldering District streets as a buzzed-headed kid in a t-shirt and jeans, I gathered a disturbing sense of disillusionment and widespread cynicism among ordinary people—something that quickly became quite unsettling. In my youth, I had only known the United States of America and its citizens as a proud, patriotic and determined people.

Coming of age in the booming 1990s, I knew nothing but a “sky is the limit” mentality—a culture that greatly shaped me, like most of Generation Y. And so, such a widespread attitude of desperation that I began to detect when living in the nation's capital thus felt seriously uncharacteristic, very unsettling, and outright ominous. Worse, this air of discontent characterized the psyche of people wherever I went, from my home state of Rhode Island to Boston and New York City and Washington D.C. itself.

Beneath the surface of petty headlines and trifling political arguments, there was a bleak, suspicious and dark atmosphere that had begun to grip the entire public psyche—as if a widespread virus had subtly inflicted the collective consciousness with pessimism, hopelessness, fear and anger. It ran far deeper than Republican and Democratic party-lines, or incumbent-versus-challenger voting patterns. You could hear it on the streets. You saw it on the nightly news. You could sense it

among family and friends, and feel it stifling the air just as a heavy dew weighs down upon wide, open pastures.

Others felt it too. But the experts and politicians dismissed the sentiment as “just another” bout of political debate—an unpleasant but necessary side-effect of the democratic process.

What they told me was a normal and fleeting reaction from the voting public during in the course of a presidential election—and one that would eventually, and without question, regress—I began to sense was a genuine, pervasive and deeply-rooted plague of the American consciousness: a prevalent air of discontent that had come to characterize the entire public; a gathering storm that was settling over our heads and beginning to influence a startling reality.

Was this “gathering storm” a result of the difficult times our nation was facing? An off-shoot of an impatient and war-weary nation? Was it the result of some dramatically shifting cultural mindset in a rapidly changing world? Or, perhaps, was it some degree in between?

I couldn’t say for sure, but what I did know was that the entire American psyche was devolving into a historically unhappy, increasingly distrustful and dangerously pessimistic state. It was a terrifying ailment to witness. And it didn’t take much looking at the time to find some evidence.

In 2008, an unprecedented percentage of Americans believed that the United States was “headed in the wrong direction” and that agreed when asked whether or not “America’s best days are in the past.” President George W. Bush exited office with a mere 25 percent approval rating—one of the lowest in recent history. And just months after President Obama’s inspiring and historic election to the highest office in our country,

op-eds were already questioning, “Is this the end of America?” while other outlets began to quickly report that “anger” was already replacing the new President’s vision for hope.



By 2010, when the Vice President was critical of the Congress, claiming that “Washington right now is broken,” a shocking 73 percent of Americans polled agreed. Meanwhile, leading New York Times columnist Thomas L. Friedman was asserting that it “feels as if we are entering a new era,” one described by foreign policy expert Michael Mandelbaum as a time “where the great task of government and of leadership is going to be about taking things away from people.”

When we look forward to this day a few years later, the air of discontent that I had only just begun to fear in 2008 has now become a scary characterization of the American populace, and prevails as a genuine representation of the entire status quo.

Today, less than twenty percent of likely U.S. voters believe that America is “headed in the right direction.” Only one in five U.S. registered voters believes that most members of Congress deserve re-election—the lowest response percentage ever on record. Further, almost half of those surveyed believe that “most in Congress are corrupt.” Think about that. Nearly half of the voting population believes that most elected officials in Congress are crooked! President Obama has himself not been immune from startling ratings in opinion polls, either: at the

end of his first presidential term, the President's approval ratings have dipped below 40 percent, while his disapproval ratings are eclipsing 50 percent.

I began realized this startling trend—a widespread, atmospheric pressure of worry and unrest, steeped in startling disillusionment and anger—as it suddenly weighed down upon the popular consciousness with alarming pace and wild disregard in the summer of 2008. We were becoming consumed by a darkness. And this darkness, I suspected, far exceeded the temporary circumstances of the election cycle and stretched way beyond the American political landscape, itself.

In the passing summer days of 2008, I was more and more convinced of a problem. That problem, I feared, was that our world was losing the meaning of leadership.

And nobody else seemed to realize it.

### **Why It All Begins and Ends With Leadership**

*Lead Without Followers* begins where we naturally must begin: by examining the big picture, including the global stage and the monumental issues surrounding the condition of modern leadership in our world.

If you're like me, the idea of examining politics in any capacity is near stomach-churning, especially nowadays when everyone is justifiably burnt out from the constant, high-pitched political discourse that bombards us day in and day out. We're on the same page. I'm with ya. However, we really do have to begin with a brief examination of the political sphere from a nonpartisan perspective, as that stage remains the single most

important and influential sphere of leadership in our world—one that literally affects the lives of people around the world on an hour-by-hour, minute-by-minute basis.

The startling deficit of trust for our modern leaders on every state and federal level is a scary and serious concern—and has created what I call, the Leadership Problem. Today, more than ever, people are severely disillusioned to our leaders. The possible repercussions of such an overwhelming sentiment—one that defies political party affiliation, socio-economic class, race and gender, and even entire nationalities—are endless.

Of those concerns, good and hardworking people are quietly discouraged from aspiring to reach positions leadership that could use their dedication and help—for fear that they will be demonized by an angry public and burned in-effigy. Beyond all else, the danger of the Leadership Problem reveals that the American people have limited remaining confidence in their governmental system.

They believe that the state is even barely capable of functioning, let alone prioritizing the needs of the people above politicians' own partisan political games.

The same can be said for many nations around the globe, which spells incredible danger for the democratic way of life.

The most remarkable and compelling aspect of the Leadership Problem—an overwhelming and uncharacteristic perception at the core of our shared concerns—is that it does not reflect political partisanship. The Leadership Problem does not originate or ends with President Bush or President Obama. The problem is not the Democratic Party or the Republican Party. It's not even Sarah Palin or Michael Moore.

This widespread air of discontent—a gathering storm of

anger and distrust that has grown to plague the American psyche—remains unchanged even throughout power shifts between major political parties and individual elected leaders. That’s a pretty scary reality. And it means that something far more significant and alarming is going on—within the hearts and minds of us all.



This is the very problem that I began to realize in the summer months of 2008: an almost unheard of agreement from “both sides of the aisle” of a deeply-rooted, fundamental problem with modern leadership, and one that we can’t seem to overcome, mollify, or barely fix with one or several leaders that we elect into office.

While we must begin with the political sphere to start our exploration of leadership in *Lead Without Followers*, don’t worry—this is not a book about politics. And in truth, it’s really not about “leadership” in any conventional sense that you may already be familiar with.

When we think of leadership today, we tend to discuss it in very strict and limiting terms. Have you ever done an image search online for the word “leadership” or “leader”? You’re bound to stumble upon dozens and dozens of stock photos of cookie-cutter men and women in suits with plastic smiles who are posing in “power positions.” You’ll find template art of upward-pointing arrows (that are apparently meant to invoke the idea of, “*Profit! Higher! More! More is better!*”) and illustra-

tions of those weird, faceless, human-shaped figurines with a single brightly-colored one that stands out from a group of monotone others.

And when we commonly discuss any sort of “leaders,” we commonly use the phrase to strictly refer to politicians, our workplace bosses, celebrities and pop culture icons, our parents and superiors, the hierarchy of an establishment, a board of trustees, the “cream of the crop” among us, and so on. The very word “leadership” has a stuffy, pretentious and elitist overtone to it, which tends to create a divisive sense of distance and disconnect between you and me, and “them,” the leaders.

For all the opportunities I was privileged as a kid, I, like anyone else, was born at the bottom of such a “leadership totem pole.” That’s where everyone starts. You’re follower-less and thus powerless, without any sway, platform or expertise that would ever encourage people to listen to you, follow you, or do as you say. It was only through a series of unique experiences—including being pushed to the brink of total emotional collapse at the age of 23, which you’ll hear more about later—that I was compelled to escape the confines of this “totem pole” leadership paradigm, within which I found life to be totally unlivable.

My own story (as a young idealist hoping to make a difference, turned to a disillusioned hater of “all things politics”) might explain why people across the world are today beginning to rebel against this static, long-entrenched idea that there is a literal divide between “ordinary” people and their leaders who reside at the top of that totem pole.

This gathering rebellion is echoed today in historically-low opinion polls; perpetually harsh criticism of our elected leaders and prevalent unrest that is wreaking havoc in nations across



the world.

As my own life has literally mimicked the path, my personal story is the strongest and most honest example that I can use to explain how we all, collectively and at large, are quietly conditioned to interpret “leadership” in this way from birth.

### **The Goals of *Lead Without Followers***

As an alternative leadership philosophy, *Lead Without Followers* will incite and encourage you to rethink, reinterpret and radically redefine the very meaning of leadership.

The definition of what it means to be a leader today is broken. With such an incredible level of outright hatred for our political, economic and financial leaders wreaking havoc in seemingly every facet of leadership, people at large have never been more discouraged to call themselves leaders—let alone to pick up the torch and act like one. Naturally, this sentiment is having a severe impact in our world. Leadership, as I make my case throughout *Lead Without Followers*, is rooted in a number of intrinsically good and unequivocally positive human emotions that have been historically understood throughout the ages to be the absolute cornerstones to happy, healthy, and purpose-filled life.

These emotions and traits are now starting to be substantiated by modern scientific studies as truly incredible keys to overcoming some of the plagues of modern society like mental-emotional disorders, physical ailments and more. These intrinsically good and positive human emotions include forgiveness and gratitude, compassion and selfless giving, humility

and forging bonds with total strangers.

As I myself have treaded the desolate path of depression in my youth, I can say safely (and now with very promising proof from the scientific community) that embodying the *Lead Without Followers* step-by-step method for discovering, nurturing and practicing “quiet leadership” in your everyday life will provide you with worlds of daily satisfaction and simple contentment, and even senses of true purpose and long-lasting fulfillment.

*Lead Without Followers* will encourage you to invert the common social perception of what it means to be a leader—and further, inspire you to radically redefine leadership itself by prompting you to question:

- ▶ If you are already a leader, right now—even in your “ordinary” daily life
- ▶ What effective, influential leadership really looks like and how it should function
- ▶ Who we call our leaders, look to as potential leaders and inherently assume to be the “best” potential leaders in our society
- ▶ How we can, both individually and collectively, inspire new generation of leaders in our world to tackle the litany of problems, issues and hardships affecting so many people

But, why? Why should any of us bother to go to such lengths to examine a situation in our world that seems so dire and hopeless?

I believe that every human being naturally longs, aspires

and hopes for the same set of things in life. While the means to attain them is different and varied for each person, all human beings seem to naturally wish for simple peace, the freedom to do what they will, to love and be loved, to be happy and live well, and to attain some lasting sense of purpose that provides them with an understanding that their existence has had deep meaning.

When we apply these intrinsic human “wants” and “needs” to the idea of leadership—both on individual and collective levels—we begin to understand that achieving these human needs is greatly accelerated and, further, most effectively sustained over our entire lives.

On the collective level, excellent and effective leadership accelerates the common good, secures peace and increases quality of life. On an individual level, when one assumes the role of a “leader without followers,” he includes others in his life into his own personal desires of happiness, purpose and fulfillment—and what he discovers is that his own wishes are more easily achieved by including others into the process.

This personal level of leadership reveals a powerful, two-pronged effect: you not only reap all of those natural human wants; you are further able to help everyone else you encounter to realize and attain them as well—effortlessly, by simply being.

In other words, you apply the concept of being a “leader” to your own wants and needs and the pursuit of your individual happiness because by exemplifying this profound form of quiet, everyday leadership—and including other people in the process—you actually accelerate your own success, and ensure that it lasts.

But achieving this incredible, bilateral benefit from embody-

ing the *Lead Without Followers* alternative leadership philosophy—through which we radically redefine the meaning of leadership; rediscover true identity; nurture an incredible sense of power from within and cultivate inner gifts that allow us to effortlessly sow and reap radical goodness in this life—is a lot more difficult with the state of leadership being what it is today in our world.

### **American Problem, Global Implications**

With our beloved way of life facing severe scrutiny and question, and worse, with the beacon of human freedom and equal rights delicately hanging in the balance, we as a freedom-loving people are compelled to take up action—not only on behalf of our own well-being—but because the fate of liberty itself in our world is at stake.

The Leadership Problem is a widely shared ailment of the national psyche in the United States, but this so-called “American” problem is already having significant repercussions around the globe—making it far more of an international issue than an American one.

The Leadership Problem can be seen throughout most modernized world, especially in Europe where social frustrations and widespread economic problems have spurred rioting and unrest in many nations, including the United Kingdom, Greece, Italy and France.

I have personally received emails from men and women around the world, even in developing nations like Nigeria, who are desperate to understand why the landscape of leadership

across the entire planet, including in their own back yards, is so seemingly dire. Simply put, the widespread repercussions of the Leadership Problem are not only indicative of our incredibly overlapping world, but a deeply-rooted and globally-prevalent problem with leadership today.

With the United States remaining a foremost power and looked-to leader on the international stage—if only for its historical importance as a beacon of human rights, opportunity and freedom around the world—it’s understandable that the highest levels of leadership in the United States have a significant impact upon the world at large.

The impact of one country’s leadership on an international scale is multiplied when we consider the advanced technological nature of our globalized and ever-shrinking world.

Suddenly, the significant interconnectivity and inter-dependency between every country, society and economy greatly magnifies the effect that one significant event, powerful occurrence or overwhelming mindset can potentially have upon the others. It’s the domino effect, force-multiplied.

Truly, the profound effect of America’s elected leadership—and something as significant as an overwhelming and popularly shared psyche of outright cynicism, rampant distrust and venomous anger—resonates with an unheard of immediacy throughout the globe on a minute-by-minute scale.

Consequently, working to remedy the Leadership Problem by radically redefining the very meaning of leadership and reclaiming it on behalf of the “ordinary” citizen will not only propel a renewed American spirit, but further, reestablish America’s important place as a quiet leader in our world.

## ***How Lead Without Followers Treats the Problem***

Although *Lead Without Followers* begins with a political examination of our world from a “big picture” perspective in Part 1, we will quickly abandon that political sphere, and with explicit purpose: to honestly examine the true meaning of leadership, we must temporarily escape the political world and all of the disillusionments, biases and qualms that we have with our modern elected leaders.

A genuine and intimate examination of leadership requires us to be as honest as we possibly can with ourselves and with one another.

To achieve that level of honesty, we need to temporarily divorce our minds from any of the partisan inklings that are bound to crop up when we discuss politics, the state of our country or the condition of our planet. We must completely escape our discontent with our political leaders, and all the blinding anger and bias that comes from examining politics. In attaining this level of clarity, we allow ourselves to think more openly and humbly about such an imperative topic.

Like an astronaut in the stratosphere who can’t help but think of the tens of millions of lives being lived below his window’s view, Part 2 of *Lead Without Followers* will invite you to escape from that high-up, stratospheric, utmost-level of observation and leave behind the “big picture” view of politics in our world. We will return to “ground level” and refocus attention onto leadership on an extremely personal, individual level. As we step back and temporarily abandon the political sphere, you will begin to embark upon a unique journey that will help you to discover a highly personal, unconventional form of “quiet”

leadership in your everyday life. This style of leadership will guide you as you regain an incredibly empowering and far purer sense of what it really means to be a leader.

Throughout Part 2 and while drawing from some of the greatest minds in history, you will endeavor upon a step-by-step process to discover your inner leader and begin to embody a style of leadership that does not require approval or permission, great sums of material wealth, prestigious social status or political power. Such material measures that we as a society interpret as typical “qualifiers” of career success do not, in fact, make a man or woman any more or any of a leader. In reality, they are often the very forces that corrupt even the most well-intentioned of leaders, and can ultimately spell their very downfalls.

This alternative leadership philosophy will beckon your heart, mind and soul to reconnect on a fundamental level—a level that we tend to forget as time passes us by and as we become understandably distracted by our busy lives.


In this way, *Lead Without Followers* is a true catalyst for genuine self-discovery, inner-growth, and a profound, renewed sense of personal happiness.

Beyond rethinking leadership, this book will inspire you to reconnect with an understanding of purpose and fulfillment in your life—no matter your age, socioeconomic status, or professional career. As you look deeply within to discover your “inner leader,” you will likely feel compelled to reflect upon some vital questions—questions about assuming personal responsibility over assigning blame, choosing positive action over anger or indifference, examining how we should live amongst and for others in our world, and so on.

And finally, in Part 3 of the book we will venture again back into the political sphere to properly complete our full-circle journey, and begin to apply our renewed understanding of leadership to a global, world-changing scale. From there, *Lead Without Followers* does not “end” but instead becomes a part of your life—your unique journey, your hero story—as you take up the torch of determined and inspired quiet leadership and begin to lead your life with vigor and excitement, determined positivity and overflowing optimism, which each and every person you encounter will feel and reap.

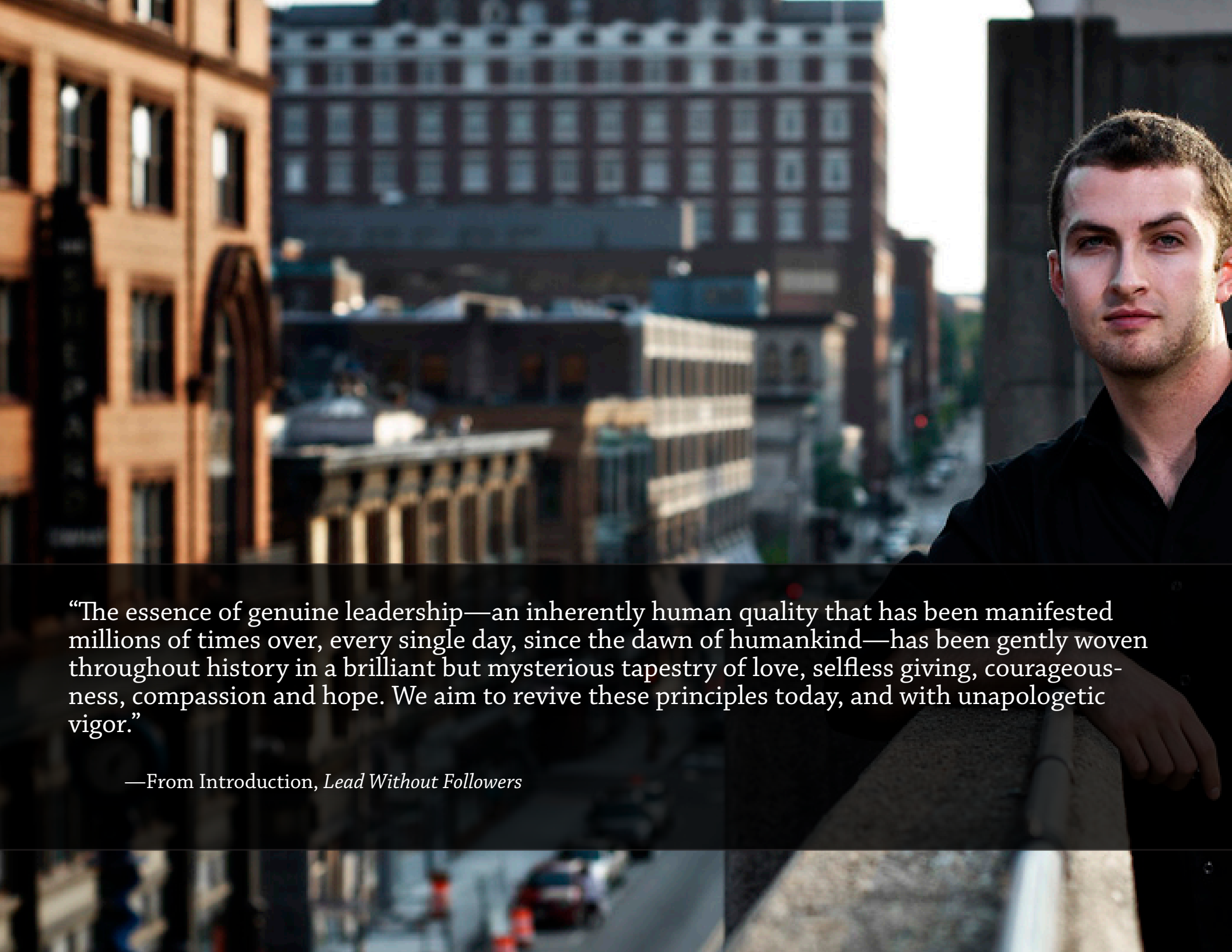
The proud foundation upon which this book stands is one of love, goodness, and peace. This alternative leadership philosophy is built upon a basis of hope, goodness and lasting liberty. These highest and noblest of indiscriminant ideals are deserved by all and aspired by many, but entirely depend upon you and me to be brilliantly manifested in this world—into their brightest and fullest potentials.

And it all begins by leading without followers.

A man with short dark hair and a light beard, wearing a black button-down shirt, stands in front of a green door. To his right is a stone wall with a carved face. The image is overlaid with a dark semi-transparent box containing text.

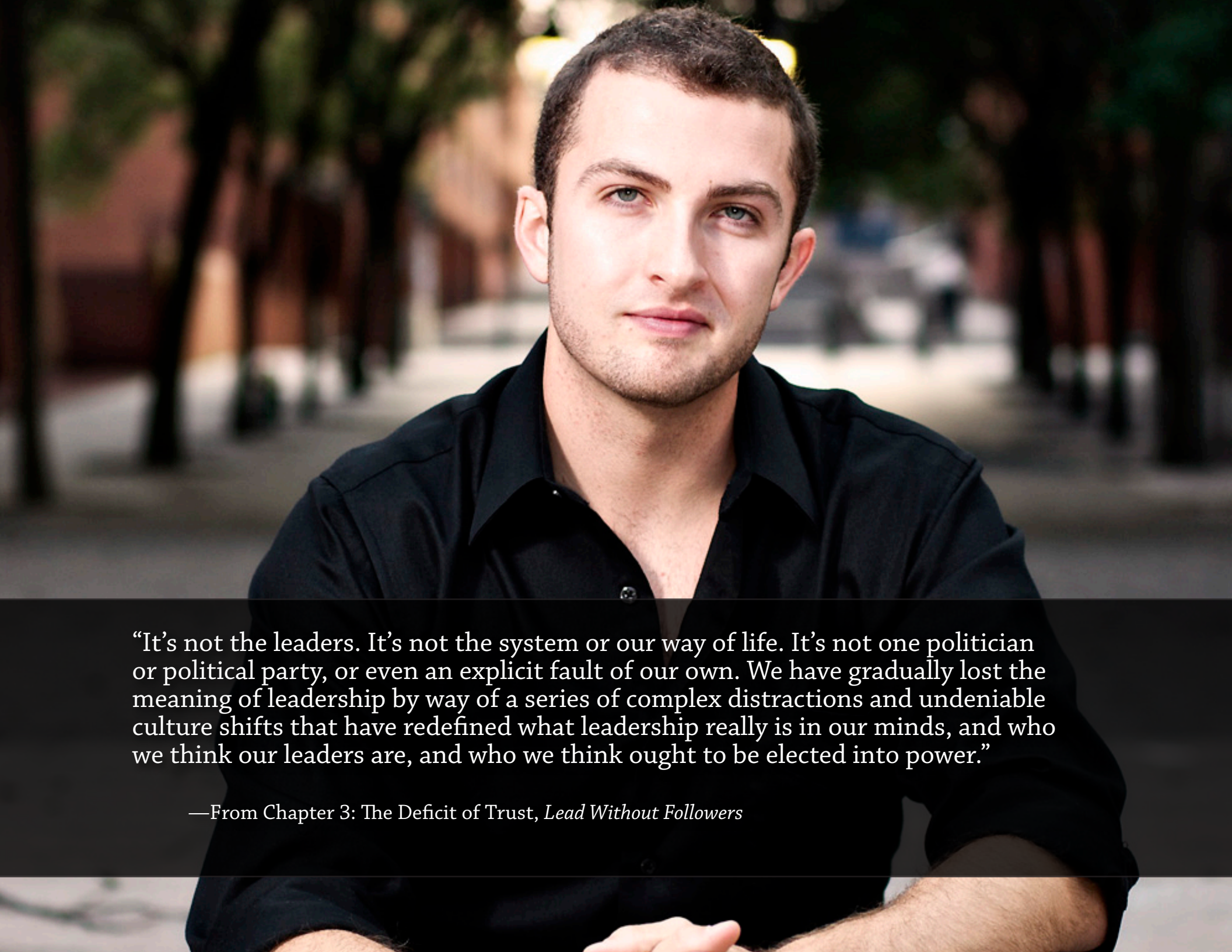
“We need to conclusively kill the idea that leaders are—in any way, shape or form—different than the rest of us. As leadership is a basic human trait that is most powerfully embodied by working to become more human, we need to culturally defeat such an outdated concept—for the betterment of every human being, especially those who wish to become leaders without followers.”

—From Chapter 15: What's Wrong With Our Modern Leaders, *Lead Without Followers*



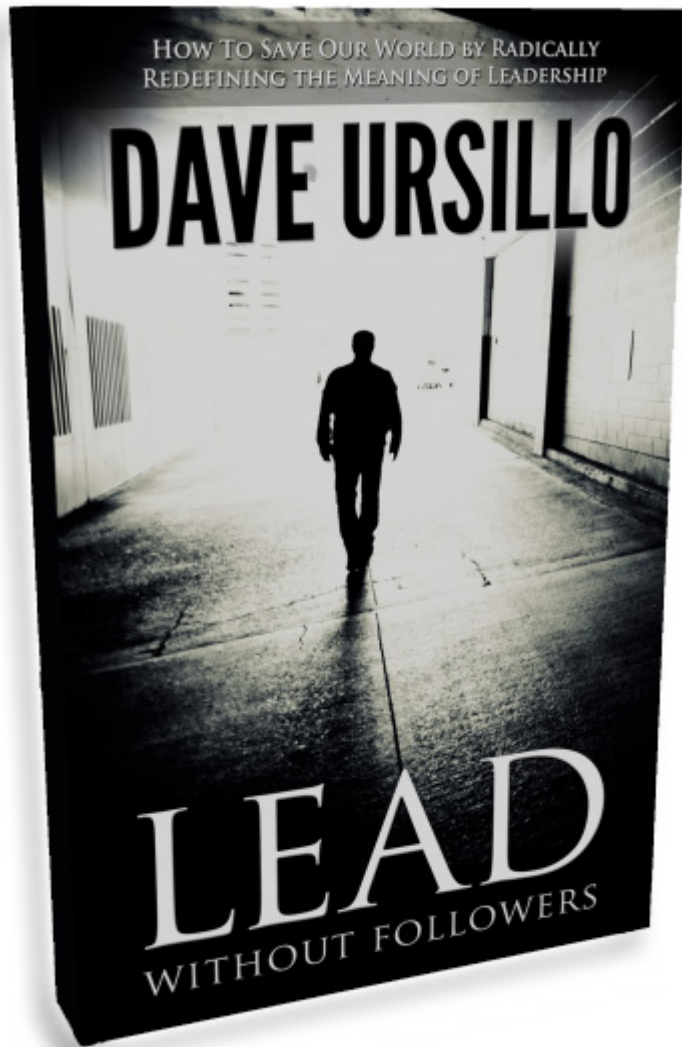
“The essence of genuine leadership—an inherently human quality that has been manifested millions of times over, every single day, since the dawn of humankind—has been gently woven throughout history in a brilliant but mysterious tapestry of love, selfless giving, courageousness, compassion and hope. We aim to revive these principles today, and with unapologetic vigor.”

—From Introduction, *Lead Without Followers*



“It’s not the leaders. It’s not the system or our way of life. It’s not one politician or political party, or even an explicit fault of our own. We have gradually lost the meaning of leadership by way of a series of complex distractions and undeniable culture shifts that have redefined what leadership really is in our minds, and who we think our leaders are, and who we think ought to be elected into power.”

—From Chapter 3: The Deficit of Trust, *Lead Without Followers*



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