

# TWELVE SECRETS TO GREAT LEADERSHIP

- SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR

The first major aspect of good leadership is letting go of control. Are you in control when you're sleeping or when you're dreaming? No! Are you in control of any other function in your body? Your heart is pumping all by itself. Your liver functions by itself. The food you stuff in the stomach gets digested all by itself. Do you have any control over them? Are you in control of the Sun and Moon moving around the globe or even the globe rotating on itself? Are you in control of the thoughts that come into your head? So, when you realize you really do not have any control over all major things that are happening in life, you'll stand up and laugh. "Oh, what am I thinking, am I in control of something?" Then you will realize that the idea that you are in control is an illusion. And then you relax. And that relaxed state is called surrender.

What is surrender? A state of mind, where you are absolutely at home, totally relaxed – with no fear, anxiety, burden or problem. That state is called surrender. Surrender is our very nature; you don't have to do it. When you are in your natural state of childlike innocence, you are already in a state of surrender. When you cannot surrender, then you make effort, and effort makes you surrender. So when you say, "I cannot relax", I will say, "Ok, hold your fists tight and tight and tight." Then, when I ask you to make it tighter and you cannot do that, what do you do? Being tired, you just drop. This is coming to the other end with effort! For a leader, it is also important to be in the present moment.

So, what are the qualities of good leadership? How can you be a dynamic, confident and enthusiastic leader?

The first quality of leadership is to set an example. A leader doesn't just order things; he does it so that others can do it.

Second aspect is that a leader takes good care of those whom he is leading.

Third aspect is that he doesn't create followers. A good leader creates leaders. And then chain action happens. A leader should delegate responsibility.

The fourth quality is that a leader does not depend on authority. He just does a thing, whether authority is invested or not. It comes by itself.

The fifth aspect of leadership is that he does not worry about position. The respect that you gain through virtue is very different from the respect you gain through the position. The respect you get through a position is short-lived and temporary. But the respect that you gain just because of your smile, your attitude, your virtues are there with you all the time. You may be a chairman of this committee, a president of that committee, or you are barrister here or governor of that state – these are all momentary, temporary. They come and they go. And the respect you get because of this position is not genuine, it is not from the heart, it is not true. But the respect you gain because you are a nice person, is genuine, it lasts long. It is spontaneous.

The sixth quality is that a leader is alert and when challenges come, he is not disturbed. A good leader is one who does not drop things when challenges appear.

The seventh quality of a good leader is one who does not care for comfort, but who stretches himself beyond the comfort zone. Anything creative, dynamic and great can happen only when you stretch beyond your comfort zone where we are often struck. We think we cannot do something; just make an effort and put one step ahead, and you will find that that you are expanding your comfort zone. Creativity transcends your comfort zone. Or, when you step out of the comfort zone, your creativity comes into play.

The eighth aspect is, a leader should not mix head and heart. If you mix head and heart, you are in a mess! When you have to work, you work with commitment and you live with your head. In life, in situations other than when you are working, listen to your heart.

The ninth quality of a good leader is that he should be multidimensional and see from the other's point

of view. Put yourself in other person's shoes, look from the other person's point of view.

The tenth aspect is that the leader doesn't depend on one-sided information. When you get some news from one side, don't take any decision or conclusion till you hear from the other side also. Leader should be a good communicator.

The eleventh is that a leader should have a direct approach.

Twelfth quality of a good leader is not to judge oneself. You have this tendency of judging yourself, "Am I good? I'm no good." The self-judgment is an obstruction. Stop doing that. Don't judge yourself. When you judge yourself, you are judging others also. Then you oscillate like a pendulum. If you feel you're good, then you are saying that others are not so good. So when you find that others are good, and then you feel that you are no good, you blame yourself. Judgment is very similar to self-blame and blaming others. We have to get out of this vicious circle of self judgment. That is also the state of surrender. When you have surrendered to the Divine that means that you no longer judge yourself. Self-judgment is not necessary. A child is so innocent, why? Because the child doesn't judge itself.