

Self-Reflection is so Helpful to Our Leadership

I had the great fortune last week to attend the dedication of the Calcagnini Contemplative Center of Georgetown University. It is located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, about 50 miles from campus. The center itself is on 55 beautiful country acres.

I had absolutely no intention of writing about the dedication ceremony until I sat there listening to the talks by Arthur Calcagnini, two Jesuit priests and Georgetown's president about how the center helps students of all denominations come together for self-reflection, and how transformative that can be.

Students themselves described their stories of how important contemplation has been for them, to quietly think about how to most effectively use the academic knowledge that they gain in college, how to use it to serve others!

These talks and stories made me think, isn't this so true of our leadership? Isn't self-reflection our path to becoming a more effective leader?

I have previously written about self-awareness and self-reflection:

- Who do we want to be as a leader?
- How do we want to be received by others?
- How can we be more helpful to our team members?

and similar reflective questions.

Arthur Calcagnini spoke about the Jesuits who influenced him as a student and continuously since, the simplicity of their leadership, their caring about and serving others, their passion for teaching and their compassion and empathy, and even their peaceful smiles.

Isn't that the image of a servant leader, our most effective leaders?!

Georgetown students - Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, Orthodox Christian and those who practice other religious traditions - come together for introspection about who they want to be, their values, and how they can best use their knowledge and their gifts.

Taking the time to get away from the stress of our lives to be quiet and to think can be transformative.

Certainly this is true for business leaders. To stop, to listen to what is going on in our business lives. Are we the leaders we want to be? How are we using our gifts, our talents?

The students talked about how they were touched by the kindness, compassion and empathy of friends while away at the center, and how much that meant to them.

And as leaders, we can give our gifts of genuine caring for and believing in our team members to help them grow and succeed.

It is by listening and by letting our silence speak to us that we can improve.

About The Author



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