

# HIGH ROAD LEADERSHIP

By John C. Maxwell (2024)



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## CHAPTER 1: BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER

- Whether interacting with business leaders, volunteers, or government leaders, when you've finished working with them, ask them these questions: (p.11)
  1. How are your people?
  2. Are they better or worse off as a result of your leadership?
  3. Are the people rising or falling because you are their leader?
- **Why Are Things Going Downhill?** (p.12)
  - Leadership *rises* when leaders possess good leadership skills and good values. (p.12)
    - It *falls* when leaders' skills or values are poor.
      - It may be obvious that leaders who lack good skills are incapable of helping people.
      - What's less obvious is the impact on people when leaders don't possess good values.
- **Disrespect Has Become Common** (p.14)
  - "Hate has caused a lot of problems in the world but has not solved one yet." - Maya Angelou (p.14)
- **Disagreement? Often. Disrespect? Never!** (p.15)
  - The moment we think a person's motives are wrong, we lose trust. (p.16)
- **We Need Each Other** (p.17)
  - If you can't work with people who disagree with you, you will never become the leader you could be. (p.17)
  - You lose the best way when you must always have your own way. (p.17)
- **The Three Roads We Can Take** (p.18)
  - **The Middle Road** (p.19)
    - When we travel the middle road, we **value fairness**. (p.19)
      - We are open to give-and-take to keep things even.
      - We think, *I have received this much, so I should give that much*.
      - We are willing to compromise — as long as we're getting at least as much as we're giving, and we'd prefer that we get our share first. (p.19)
        - That can work if we are trying to be positive, though this kind of mindset is limiting because it is very transactional. (p.19)
    - But there are downsides to middle - road thinking. (p.19)
      - We *might* be willing to work with people on the other side, but we want the other side to make the first move.
      - We want *them* to listen first, then maybe we will decide to listen too.
      - We want *them* to acknowledge the good ideas our side offers first, and then maybe we will be open to their ideas. (p.19-20)
      - We want *them* to be fair first, to change, to give us justice, and to make things right. (p.20)

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- Then — maybe — we will treat them the same way, until then, we wait.
- **The Low Road** (p.20)
  - Where people on the middle road strive for fairness, people on the low road **think only of themselves**. (p.20)
    - They believe they will be left out or get left behind.
  - I've also observed that more and more people who travel the low road think the world *owes* them.
  - Ironically, even though they are constantly taking, they are never satisfied. (p.21)
    - They live in a perpetual state of neediness.
    - The more they take, the more they want. (p.21)
- **The High Road** (p.21)
  - High-road people intentionally give first without worrying about receiving anything back. (p.21)
  - They aren't trying to make their interactions fair, because they acknowledge life isn't fair.

High-Road Leaders	Middle-Road Leaders	Low-Road Leaders
Value Others	Seek Value from Others	Devalue Others
Bring People Together	Move Back and Forth	Divide People
Close the Gap between People	Live with the Gap between People	Widen the Gap between People
Give More Than They Receive	Give Equal to What They've Received	Take More Than They Give
Give First	Give Back	Give Nothing
Don't Keep Score (Unconditional Giving)	Keep Score (Conditional Giving)	Don't Keep Score (Unconditional Taking)
Want <i>You</i> to Win	Want <i>Us</i> to Win	Want <i>Me</i> to Win
Treat Others Better Than They Are Treated	Treat Others the Same as They Are Treated	Treat Themselves at Others' Expense

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- **Why The High Road Is The Best Road** (p.23)
  - 1. The High Road Brings People Together (p.24)
  - 2. The High Road Brings Out the Best in People (p.24)
  - 3. The High Road Creates Winners Without Creating Losers (p.24)
  - 4. The High Road Has Less Traffic (p.25)
  - 5. The High Road Is the Path to Significance (p.25)
  - When your focus is on only yourself and what you can achieve, you may become successful.
    - This is the path many people travel in life.
    - But significance lies on the path of helping others and making the world better. (p.25)
- **The Practices of High Road Leaders** (p.27)
  - If you are to be a high-road leader, you must do these twelve things:
    1. Bring People Together
    2. Value All People
    3. Acknowledge Your Humanness
    4. Do the Right Things for the Right Reasons
    5. Give More Than You Take
    6. Develop Emotional Capacity
    7. Place People Above Your Own Agenda
    8. Embrace Authenticity
    9. Be Accountable for Your Actions
    10. Live by the Bigger Picture
    11. Don't Keep Score
    12. Desire the Best for Others
- Many young people today have never seen good models of high-road leadership. (p.28)
- **The Pathway to Bringing People Together: COMMON GROUND** (p.30)

## CHAPTER 2: VALUE ALL PEOPLE

- **Starting Out On The Right Foot** (p.32)
  - How can anyone demonstrate a positive belief in people by being negative? (p.32)
    - It just doesn't work.
    - Emphasize what people *could* do, not what they *should not do*.
- **How To Value All People** (p.33)
  - If we are to take the high road, we can't pick and choose who we value. (p.34)
    - We should never devalue someone by accepting others' low opinion of them or placing a low value on them ourselves. (p.34)
  - But nobody ever wins with anger. (p.34)
    - It's a negative emotion that doesn't add value to anyone. (p.34)
  - In the Maxwell Foundation's effort to transform nations, the foundation works with the top 10 percent of the people in a country. (p.36)

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- If they help the bottom 10 percent, their needs will be met and it will stop there because they aren't in a position to help others. (p.36)
- Influence filters down, not up. (p.36)
- **Believe in the Potential of All People** (p.336)
  - 1. Express Your Belief in Them (p.37)
    - "In life, you don't rise to what you believe is possible. You rise to what you believe you are worthy of." – Jamie Kern Lima (p.37)
  - 2. Equip Them (p.37)
    - What's the greatest expression of belief in another person? Equipping them! (p.37)
      - Equipping is belief in action.
    - Equipping is an expression of value in another person. (p.38)
    - As you equip people, all you can offer them is what you have to give. (p.38)
      - It's up to them to take it and make the most of it.
      - Don't feel any need to try to force anyone to receive it, nor do I feel obligated to change what I give or how I teach it. (p.38)
  - 3. Challenge Them (p.38)
- **How To Create A Change of Heart** (p.39)
  - 1. Develop Humble Appreciation for Yourself (p.40)
    - How you see yourself translates to how you treat other people. (p.40)
  - 2. Choose to Start Putting Your Focus on Others (p.41)
    - Sam Chand's single-word definition of leadership: others. (p.41)
  - 3. Take Action (p.41)
    - Acknowledge them with kind words. (p.42)
    - Seek common ground with them by asking questions.
    - Look for value in them and express it to them.
    - Find ways to add value to them.
    - Treat them with dignity.
  - 4. Allow Your Heart to Grow for People (p.42)
    - It's important to keep taking action, because without it, you won't change. (p.43)
  - 5. Enjoy the Positive Return (p.43)
    - Three kinds of returns you can receive by valuing others: (p.43)
      - A Relational Return
      - An Emotional Return
      - A Leadership Return
  - How we view things is how we do things.
- **The Pathway to Valuing All People: SELF-WORTH** (p.45)

## CHAPTER 3: ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR HUMANNESS

- Whatever talents or gifts we possess were given to us. (p.47)
  - We didn't earn them. (p.47)

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- The best we can do is use whatever we have been given to benefit others. (p.47)
- **The Eagle and The Hippopotamus** (p.48)
  - We're all in this together. (p.49)
  - Knowing that makes us less likely to judge people and more likely to give them grace and lend them a hand. (p.49)
- **How to Acknowledge and Accept Your Humanness** (p.51)
  - 1. See Yourself (p.51)
    - The first and most important step in acknowledging your humanness is developing self-awareness. (p.51)
    - Every one of the qualities and abilities we need to lead on the high road is enhanced by self-awareness. (p.53)
    - Three common obstacles we may need to overcome: (p.53)
      - Experience
        - It's hard to listen and learn when you think you already know everything. (p.53)
      - Power (p.53)
        - Studies also show the more power a leader holds, the more likely they are to overestimate their skills and abilities. (p.53)
      - Pride (p.54)
        - If we possess too much pride and are trying to feed our egos, we are less likely to recognize our weaknesses and are more likely to overinflate our strengths. (p.54)
          - Both make us less aware .
    - The best way to combat these potential problems is to seek out honest feedback from people with your best interest at heart who are willing to tell you the truth. (p.54)
  - 2. Care for Yourself (p.54)
    - "I'm an imperfect human being living an imperfect life." - Kristin Neff (p.54)
    - The most important voice in your life is your own. (p.54)
    - Experts say one of the ways to do this is to ask *what* instead of *why* about our mistakes and shortcomings. (p.55)
      - Asking *why* tends to lead us into unproductive negative thoughts, and if we don't have the means to understand why, we make things up to explain our feelings - that doesn't help us. (p.55)
      - On the other hand, *what* questions help us to be objective, future-focused, and inclined to action, which can help us improve. (p.55)
  - 3. Forgive Yourself (p.56)
    - The solution to this tendency is forgiveness. (p.56)
      - You must let go of perfectionism and forgive yourself for not being perfect.
  - 4. Laugh at Yourself (p.57)

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- When you can forgive yourself for not being perfect, it becomes easy to get over yourself and begin to laugh at yourself. (p.57)
- Research suggests that a tangible way to spot a self-aware leader is by looking for a self-deprecating sense of humor. (p.57)
- 5. Believe in Yourself (p.58)
  - Confident humility is being secure enough in your expertise and strengths to admit your ignorance and weaknesses. (p.58)
  - Confident humility allows you to believe in yourself while questioning your strategies. (p.59)
  - Adam Grant suggests three steps a leader can take to develop or strengthen their confident humility. (p.59)
    - Become Part of a Learning Culture (p.59)
    - Give Yourself the Benefit of Doubt (p.60)
    - Identify Where You May Be Wrong (p.60)
  - Grant's two favorite questions for himself are: (p.60)
    - How do you know?
    - What if we're wrong?
- **Pathway to Acknowledging Your Humanness: SELF-AWARENESS** (p.62)
  - Most of us believe we are self-aware. However, researchers have found few people are truly self-aware — only one or two individuals out of ten.
  - That means it's more than 80 percent likely you are not self-aware.

## CHAPTER 4: DO THE RIGHT THINGS FOR THE RIGHT REASONS

- **A Life-Changing Experience** (p.66)
  - You don't have to win every time - just do the right things for the right reasons. (p.67)
- **Motives Matter** (p.68)
  - The most important question leaders can ask themselves is: Why do I want to lead others? (p.68)
  - Anything that's not serving others at least as much as it's serving me is manipulation. (p.69)

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Motivation	Manipulation
Is for Mutual Advantage	Is for My Advantage
Cares About Results and the People	Cares Only About Results
Is Fueled by Love	Is Fueled by Ego
Relies on Substance	Relies on Style
Empowers People	Controls People
Values People	Devalues People
Fosters Loyalty	Fosters Resentment
Takes the High Road	Takes the Low Road

- One of the things all leaders have in common is their ability to see more than others see and before others see. (p.70)
- **The Right Values Help You Stop Making Wrong Choices** (p.71)
  - 1. Stop Chasing What's Easy (p.71)
    - Everything worthwhile in life is uphill. (p.71)
    - The right choice is always the choice that's best for everyone, no matter how difficult it is. (p.71)
  - 2. Stop Chasing Applause (p.71)
    - This desire for applause can drive you right off the high road. (p.71)
    - In the end, if we are motivated by applause, we care too much about what others think about us, but if we're motivated by adding value to people, we care about what others think about themselves. (p.72)
  - 3. Stop Insisting You're Right (p.72)
    - We need to stop trying to *be* right and understand what *is* right. (p.74)
  - 4. Stop Paying Lip Service (p.74)
    - Too many people today mistake statements for solutions. (p.75)
    - Lip service is no substitute for doing the right thing. (p.75)
      - Saying you believe in something or that you *intend* to do something doesn't actually accomplish anything positive, yet our culture gives you credit as though it did. (p.75)

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- It's totally possible for you to say you are for justice, yet actually oppress people at the same time. (p.75)
  - You can say you stand for integrity while lying and stealing. (p.75)
  - You can *say* anything, but what you *do* shows who you really are. (p.75)
- 5. Stop Placing Blame on Others (p.75)
- **Start Paying The Prices To Stay On The High Road** (p.76)
  - The first time you pay is the Hardest (p.77)
  - You won't always know the full cost on the front end (p.77)
  - Your account is never "paid in full" (p.78)
    - It's been Maxwell's observation that when people stop growing and improving as leaders, it's seldom due to a lack of capacity or ability. (p.79)
      - They stop because of an unwillingness to pay the price. (p.79)
- The Value Of Doing What Is Right Outweighs The Costs (p.79)
  - Doing the right thing can cost you time, money, friendships, and opportunities. (p.79)
  - But the cost of *not* doing the right thing? Loss of self-respect. (p.79)
    - You may lose ground, but you will gain growth
    - You may lose power, but you will gain strength
    - You may lose money, but you will gain wealth
    - You may lose celebrity, but you gain credibility
- **The Pathway to Doing the Right Things for the Right Reasons: GOOD MOTIVES** (p.81)
  - The first question you must ask yourself to know whether your reasons are right is why you want to lead others. (p.81)
  - The second question you need to ask is whether you're willing to pay the price of high-road leadership. (p.81)

## CHAPTER 5: GIVE MORE THAN YOU TAKE

- **Give or Take** (p.83)
  - While most people go through their day wondering what they will receive, high-road leaders are preoccupied with the idea of what they will give. (p.84)
- **Learning to Give** (p.84)
  - Three kinds of generous thinking: (p.84)
    - Open-Hearted Generosity: I desire to add value to others.
    - Open-Minded Generosity: I think the best of others.
    - Open-Handed Generosity: I give freely and often to others.
- **Use Receiving as Inspiration for Giving** (p.85)
  - High-road leadership means living a life that says, "I want more *for* you than *from* you." (p.87)
- **Give What You Can** (p.87)
  - Here are some of the things we can give others as we travel the high road as leaders: (p.87)

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- Talent (p.87)
  - Every person on the planet has been gifted with talent of some kind, and that talent can be used to serve and add value to other. (p.87)
  - Every audience member who attends should feel like they got more than their money's worth. (p.87)
- Time (p.88)
  - It's up to us whether we choose to give the time we have to others. (p.88)
- Opportunities (p.89)
  - We can help people go places and do things they would never be able to do on their own. (p.89)
  - This can be done using what Marilyn Gist calls *generous inclusion*. (p.90)

## GENEROUS INCLUSION

Do	Don't
Encourage people to share ideas and feelings on important issues.	Limit participation to minor discussions and routine matters.
Notice when your power may cause others to defer to you unnecessarily, and encourage them to contribute.	Assume that others have little to offer.
Examine your attitudes toward diversity of all kinds.	Allow biases to result in excluding certain types of people.
Listen deeply—even when others present views that seem unfamiliar or uncomfortable.	Ignore others' views or cut people off when they share opinions.
Present an emotionally welcoming demeanor.	Signal that you are too busy or disinterested to interact with others. <sup>51</sup>

- She (Gist) explains, "Inclusion means inviting people to be part of the real action." (p.91)
  - Money (p.91)
    - Anyone can be financially generous, whether they possess little or much, because generosity has everything to do with your mindset, not your net worth. (p.91)

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- Connections (p.92)
  - Who do I know that they should know? (p.92)
- Experiences (p.92)
  - All it takes is thinking ahead, thinking about the person, and doing something that makes them feel special and appreciated. (p.93)
- **You Can't Give What You Don't Have** (p.93)
  - Successful people excel in four areas: relationships, equipping, attitude, and leadership. (p.95)
  - Don't be motivated by success, instead be motivated by significance, which can come to fruition only through giving. (p.95)
    - Be a river, not a reservoir. (p.96)
    - High-road leaders aren't hoarders. (p.96)
- **The Pathway to Giving More Than You Take: AN ABUNDANCE MINDSET** (p.97)
  - When you possess a scarcity mindset, you hold tight to what you have, fearing you will lose it. (p.97)
    - Ironically, because your hand is closed, you can't receive more.
  - The way to overcome this obstacle is to embrace the idea of abundance. (p.97)
    - If you give, your hand opens, and it is in position to receive more.

## CHAPTER 6: DEVELOP EMOTIONAL CAPACITY

- As leaders, we must weather the storms, make hard decisions, and lead people to a better place. (p.99)
- **How to Increase Your Emotional Capacity** (p.100)
  - Emotional capacity is the ability to respond to adversity, failure, criticism, and pressure in positive ways. (p.100)
  - Eight ways to develop emotional capacity: (p.100)
    - 1. Refuse to See Yourself as a Victim (p.100)
      - Take Responsibility for Your Life (p.101)
      - Don't Build Your Life Around Your Troubles (p.102)
        - Leadership is problem-solving. (p.103)
        - Focus on the vision you want to accomplish, not the obstacles along the way. (p.103)
      - Make Action Your Priority (p.103)
        - Don't complain about what you permit - instead, do something about it. (p.103)
        - Psychologist George W. Crane said, "Remember, motions are the precursors of emotions. You can't control the latter directly but only through your choice of motions or actions." (p.103)
        - It's always more effective to act your way into feeling than to feel your way into action. (p.103)
      - Express Gratitude (p.104)
    - 2. Control Your Emotions and Process Them Quickly (p.105)

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- Financial coach Toyin Crandell said, "If a person is prone to sadness under pressure, she recommends they make *gratitude* an emotional home and practice tapping into it when they're feeling sad." (p.106)
- Crandell recommends if someone is easily frustrated, they tap into resourcefulness to counter it. (p.106)
- 3. Keep Short Accounts (p.107)
  - One of the best things you can do to increase your emotional capacity is to process conflict quickly and keep yourself from carrying emotional baggage or keeping score. (p.108)
  - Be a good forgetter - Business dictates it, and success demands it. (p.108)
- 4. Put Other People's Opinions in Perspective (p.109)
  - One of the most limiting beliefs people hold is that others' opinions about them are more important than their own. (p.109)
  - Stop being a people pleaser and start being a principled leader. (p.110)
    - Placed your values ahead of the people you want to please. (p.110)
    - Think more about looking forward than looking backward. (p.110)
    - Find new models to emulate. (p.110)
    - Move away from people who are holding you back. (p.110)
- 5. Understand the Difference Between a Problem and a Fact of Life (p.111)
  - The fastest way to increase your emotional capacity and reduce your stress is to keep yourself from getting caught up in issues you cannot control or which aren't your concern. (p.111)
- 6. Become Comfortable with Discomfort (p.113)
  - When your sense of purpose is greater than your sense of fear, you are able to master your emotions enough to move forward.
- 7. Keep Growing Your Capacity So It's Always Greater Than Your Responsibilities (p.114)
  - Find Healthy Ways to Manage Your Responsibilities
    - If you are in the habit of taking on more responsibilities than you can handle, you need to **establish better boundaries**. (p.114)
    - Another way to manage your responsibilities is to **count the cost of your commitments**. (p.115)
    - A third way to manage your responsibilities in a healthy way is to **align them with your purpose**. (p.115)
  - Seek Proactive Ways to Increase Your Capacity (p.115)
    - Focus on your strengths. (p.115)
    - Manage your energy every day. (p.116)

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- 8. Make Caring for Yourself a Priority (p.116)
  - Seeking Spiritual Nourishment (p.117)
  - Receiving Relational Energy (p.117)
  - Maintaining Physical Health (p.117)
  - Promoting Mental Growth (p.118)
    - I know the only guarantee for a better tomorrow is personal growth today. (p.118)
- **The Pathway to Developing Emotional Capacity: RESILIENCE** (p.119)

## CHAPTER 7: PLACE PEOPLE ABOVE YOUR OWN AGENDA

- **What's Your Agenda?** (p.122)
  - "Leadership is the capacity to translate a vision into reality." - Warren Bennis (p.122)
- **How to Place People First** (p.124)
  - 1. Develop Empathy Intentionally (p.124)
    - We need to broaden our minds and perspectives if we want to become more empathic. (p.124)
    - We need to get out of our own circles. (p.124)
    - And we need to seek out and embrace thinking different from our own. (p.124)
  - 2. Make Time for People Daily (p.125)
    - Our work is never so big or so urgent that we should overlook or devalue people. (p.126)
  - 3. Check Your Agenda Repeatedly (p.127)
    - Anytime you work to accomplish your agenda at the expense of people, you're on the low road of leadership. (p.129)
  - 4. Create Win-Win Outcomes Continually (p.129)
    - Many leaders today are so bent on winning that when they realize they are going to lose, they work to make sure everyone else loses along with them. (p.129)
    - Leaders who cause other people to lose to gain their own success always receive a lower return for their work over time. (p.129)
      - When people lose, they lose trust.
      - They don't want to return to the table again.
      - They avoid working with the low-road leader who made them lose.
    - Every person you work with has the potential to become an ally or an adversary, depending on how you treat them. (p.130)
    - You must tune in to people's emotions and patterns of working. (p.130)
- **The Leadership Dance** (p.130)
  - Five ways you can interact with them more effectively doing the high-road leadership dance. (p.130)
    - Sometimes You're Ahead: Lead by Example (p.130)

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- Leaders are always setting the example because people do what people see. (p.131)
- Sometimes You're Beside: Ask Questions and Listen (p.131)
  - The best way to understand people is to listen. (p.131)
  - The best way to learn from others is to listen. (p.131)
  - The best way to receive people's best contribution is to listen. (p.131)
  - The best way to learn what others need from you is to listen. (p.132)
  - The best way to gain people's buy-in is to listen. (p.132)
- Sometimes You're Below: Serve Your People (p.132)
  - What are some of the ways a leader serves people? (p.132)
    - By removing obstacles no one else can. (p.132)
    - By providing resources they need. (p.132)
    - By lifting burdens off them that prevent them from being and doing their best. (p.132)
- Sometimes You're Behind: Support Your People (p.133)
  - Three main ways to support people that you can adopt:
    - Pull Them Forward (p.133)
      - You pull people forward when you focus on their giftedness and are trying to help them grow. (p.133)
    - Push Them Forward (p.133)
      - When people need a push, it's usually in areas of choice. (p.133)
      - In these situations, it's often best to speak with candor and to challenge them. (p.133)
    - Patiently Wait for Them to Move Forward (p.134)
      - Joyce Meyer said, "Patience is not simply the ability to wait — it's how we behave while we're waiting." (p.134)
- Sometimes You're Above: Advance the Big Picture (p.134)
  - If you fail to identify and communicate the common vision for your organization or team, you create a void that someone else will try to fill. (p.134)
- **The Pathway to Placing People Above Your Own Agenda: SERVING** (p.136)

## CHAPTER 8: EMBRACE AUTHENTICITY

- "You're working under a misconception. You think your people don't already know your weaknesses and flaws."
  - The purpose of admitting them isn't to give them new information, it's to let them know that you know what they are. (p.137)
- **How to Embrace Authenticity** (p.139)
  - Six things you can do that will help you: (p.139)
    - 1. Embrace and Live Good Values (p.139)

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- W. Somerset Maugham observed, “Hypocrisy is the most difficult and nerve-racking vice that any man can pursue; it needs an unceasing vigilance and a rare detachment of spirit.” (p.139)
- The solution is to embrace good values and then do everything in your power to live them honestly and authentically. (p.139)
- Kevin O’Neill, a leadership guide at CEO-coaching firm Vistage, said that compromising your values in an effort to help others is analogous to moving a lighthouse. (p.139)
  - “A child, employee, or colleague may get lost in rough seas for a time.” (p.139)
  - “However, if they know where the lighthouse is, they can be guided back to safety. (p.139)
  - If the lighthouse has been moved, they may never find safe harbor.” (p.139)
- Robert McKee said, “Values, the positive/negative charges of life, are at the soul of our art. (p.140)
  - The writer shapes story around a perception of what’s worth living for, what’s worth dying for, what’s foolish to pursue, the meaning of justice, truth — the essential values. (p.140)
  - Ours has become an age of moral and ethical cynicism, relativism, and subjectivism — a great confusion of values. (p.140)
- 2. Embrace the Idea of Living between Success and Failure (p.142)
  - Craig Groeschel, the founder and leader of Life Church says, “People would rather follow a leader who is always real than one who is always right.” (p.143)
- 3. Embrace the Value of Character Over Reputation (p.144)
  - What really matters is character because that determines who you are, how you interact with people, and what you’re capable of accomplishing. (p.144)
  - People of good character have no reason to feel threatened by views different from their own. (p.145)
- 4. Embrace the Choices You Make Over the Gifts You’ve Been Given (p.146)
  - Leaders who emphasize their talents and gifts to the people they work with separate themselves from others and often alienate them. (p147)
    - High-road leaders avoid doing that. (p.147)
    - Instead, they connect with people, emphasizing what they have in common. (p.147)
    - The positive choices you make will set you apart from those who have talent alone. (p147)
- 5. Embrace the Value of Your Contribution (p.148)

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- If you desire to be a high-road leader who embraces authenticity, you must be true to yourself and offer the world whatever you have to give, not what you wish you had. (p.148)
- What are the clues that you might not be valuing your contribution appropriately?
  - If You Often Seek Validation from Others (p.148)
  - If You Often Compare Yourself to Others (p.149)
  - If You Assume Your Contribution Isn't Enough (p.149)
- 6. Embrace Honesty When You're Wrong or Make Mistakes (p.151)
  - Jamie Kern Lima - "Authenticity doesn't automatically guarantee success... but inauthenticity guarantees failure." (p.153)
- **The Pathway to Authenticity: OPENNESS** (p.154)

## CHAPTER 9: TAKE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR YOUR ACTIONS

- "Pass the buck" origin: (p.155)
  - The latter expression is said to have originated with the game of poker, in which a marker or counter, frequently in frontier days a knife with a buckhorn handle, was used to indicate the person whose turn it was to deal. (p.155)
    - If the player did not wish to deal he could pass the responsibility by passing the "buck."
- Until you take responsibility, you are a victim. (p.157)
  - And being a victim is the exact opposite of being a leader. (p.157)
  - *Take* accountability, not *be* accountable. Why? (p.157)
    - Because this process is not passive. (p.157)
    - Accountability is active and intentional. (p.157)
  - To be considered accountable, you must demonstrate responsibility and ownership of your actions consistently, yet imperfectly. (p.157)
    - Accountability isn't a one-time occurrence. (p.157)
    - It's ongoing, so you are either accountable or you aren't. (p.157)
- **Insights On Accountability** (p.157)
  - 1. Accountability and Responsibility Work Together (p.158)
    - Gary Burnison, CEO of organizational consulting firm Korn Ferry: (p.158)
      - Responsibility is all in the present.
        - Accountability is after the fact, which means owning the outcome — win or lose."
    - **Personal Responsibility** (p.159)
      - "At the heart of accountability are two key principles: honesty and humility. (Burnison) (p.159)
        - With these 2 Hs, we become accountable for who we are — and who we become." (p.159)
      - Maxwell Foundation accountability elements: (p.159-160)
        - We will keep our word.

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- We will be on time.
- We will make things right.
- We will seek truth.
- We will be mature.
- We will celebrate others.
- We will not make excuses.
- We will look out for others.
- We will accept consequences.
- “When an archer misses the mark, he turns and looks for the fault within himself.” (p.160)
  - Failure to hit the bull’s-eye is never the fault of the target.
  - To improve your aim — improve yourself.
  - Take responsibility.
- **Team Responsibility** (p.160)
  - If your teammates can’t depend on you *all* the time, then they really can’t depend on you *any* of the time. (p.160)
  - Either a team is pulling together, or it is pulling apart. (p.161)
    - Without a unified commitment to accountability, there isn’t a team.
    - So if you can’t or won’t take on that responsibility, you should leave and become part of another team.
- **Leadership Responsibility** (p.162)
  - If you want to lead a team effectively and remain on the high road, you must take responsibility for the team’s performance. (p.162)
  - John Wooden - “Every day I ask myself, How can I make my team better?” (p.162)
    - That is the question every leader needs to be asking. (p.162)
  - The responsibility ripple is an important principle because the moment we choose to act, the potential for a viral response is always there. (p.163)
    - Often, however, there is a need for one person, or a few, to be the catalyst that encourages others to step up. (p.163)
- 2. Accountability Builds Your Credibility (p.163)
  - The Law of Credibility (16 Laws of Communication), which states: “Your most effective message is the one you live.” (p.164)
  - Your accountable actions every day build your credibility with the people around you. (p.164)
  - Your behavior today is the latest deposit in your credibility. (p.164)
- 3. Accountability Keeps You Consistent (p.165)
  - I’ve observed that long-term consistency is more powerful than short-term intensity. (p.165)
    - That’s because consistency compounds.

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- The Law of Consistency (15 Laws of Growth) says, “Motivation gets you going — discipline keeps you growing.” (p.165)
  - Taking accountability helps you become more consistent. (p.165)
- **4. Accountability Increases Your Self-Respect** (p.166)
  - Chris Hodges, the founder of Church of the Highlands, likes to say, “Choices lead — feelings follow.” (p.166)
- 5. Everyone Needs to Be Accountable to Someone (p.167)
  - Being accountable to someone else helps close the gap between intention and results. (p.168)
- 6. Saying No to Accountability Means Saying No to the High Road (p.168)
  - Trust is the foundation of high-road leadership. (p.169)
- **The Pathway to Taking Accountability for Your Actions: COURAGE** (p.170)

## CHAPTER 10: LIVE BY THE BIGGER PICTURE

- The distinctive ability of leaders is that they see more than others and they see before others. (p.171)
  - They possess a different perspective. (p.171)
  - They see the bigger picture, and they do so more quickly than others. (p.171)
- **A Difference in Perspective** (p.171)
  - This ability in leaders to see more and before is called the “leadership advantage.” (p.173)
    - High-road leaders use the leadership advantage to help others. (p.173)
    - Middle-road leaders use it to help themselves first before helping others. (p.173)
    - Low-road leaders use it to help only themselves. (p.173)
  - Madeline Miles points out the great value in big-picture thinking, saying it provides organizations with five main benefit: (p.174)
    - It helps organizations stay resilient in the face of change and adversity. (p.174)
    - It keeps companies agile (especially during challenging times). (p.174)
    - It helps improve your bottom line. (p.174)
    - It creates a culture of imagination and creativity. (p.174)
    - It can increase your organization’s ability to adopt strategic foresight. (p.174)
- **Acquiring the Bigger Picture** (p.175)
  - Focusing on growing in three ways: (p.175)
    - 1. Develop Maturity (p.175)
      - The hallmarks of maturity are humility, perspective, and patience. (p.176)
      - If we can be humble enough to understand the world is not about us, perceptive enough to recognize what’s important, and patient enough to wait and play the long game for the best outcomes, we have the potential to live by the bigger picture. (p.176)

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- 2. Understand the Greater Context (p.176)
  - Develop seven contextual frameworks for seeing the bigger picture to help you lead on the high road. (p.177)
    - Informational Context (p.177)
    - Historical Context (p.178)
      - “Before you tear down the fence, ask why it was put there in the first place.”
    - Situational Context (p.178)
      - Dennis Rouse, founder of Victory World Church, says, “Leaders have to be willing to make changes when things are still going well, if they want to avoid decline.” (p.178)
    - Motivational Context (p.179)
      - As a leader, if you tell people what to do and not why, you get followers who don’t think for themselves. (p.179)
    - Collaborative Context (p.179)
      - When you include others in your conversation and thinking, it can’t help but expand your perspective. (p.179)
    - Experiential Context (p.179)
      - Most people become progressively less open to new experiences as they age. (p.179)
      - They stop putting themselves into difficult or emotionally challenging situations.
        - Instead, they seek out experiences similar to what they’re used to, and as a result, their picture stops expanding. (p.179)
    - Tactical Context (p.180)
      - Great leaders know that when they execute their plan, the situation will change, and that will require changes in tactics. (p.180)
        - Any leader who fails to read the changing context and sticks too closely to their plan is destined to fail. (p.180)
- 3. Become Highly Intentional About Seeing and Living the Bigger Picture
  - Becoming intentional (Nido Qubein) (p.182)
    - Become Bigger on the Inside Than on the Outside (p.183)
    - “Frame Your ‘Masterpiece’ (p.183)
      - What is your masterpiece?
        - It’s what you do best. (p.183)

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- It's your main contribution or your core business. (p.183)
- What is the frame?
  - It's what complements the masterpiece and takes it to the next level. (p.183)
- "Uplevel Added Value to Appreciated Value" (p.184)
  - As leaders, we can add appreciated value to them, which has a multiplying factor. (p.184)
  - Appreciated value comes from giving people something of value plus finding out what they desire and adding that. (p.184)
- Choose to Become Distinctive — Not Just Different (p.185)
- Create an Environment That Brings Out the Best in People (p.186)
  - Living by the bigger picture is seeing the world as it is, finding opportunities to help others become great, and using your skills, talents, and resources to help as many people as you can in the time that you have. (p.187)
- **The Pathway to Living by the Bigger Picture: PERSPECTIVE** (p.188)

## CHAPTER 11: DON'T KEEP SCORE

- **Why You Should Never Keep Score** (p.191)
  - Six ways scorekeeping hurts people: (p.191)
    - 1. Keeping Score Puts Guilt on Others (p.191)
      - Guilt — making people feel they *did something* bad. (p.192)
      - Shame — making people feel they *are* bad. (p.192)
    - 2. Keeping Score Creates Feelings of Unfairness (p.192)
      - If you're a leader who intentionally gives while keeping score so that you can later collect on the "debt," you're taking advantage of others, and they will feel manipulated. (p.193)
      - People will not want to follow you because they won't be able to trust you. (p.193)
    - 3. Keeping Score Becomes an Act of Control (p.193)
      - Leadership is influence. (p.193)
      - High-road leadership is positive influence. (p.193)
    - 4. Keeping Score Removes Gratitude by Poisoning Attitude (p.193)
      - When people lose their gratitude, their attitudes become negative. (p.194)
    - 5. Keeping Score Increases Emotional Baggage Too Heavy to Carry (p.194)
      - If you are a leader, someone is going to hurt you. (p.194)
        - People you lead will disappoint you.
        - They will question your judgment and the decisions you make.

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- They will criticize you.
    - Some may even betray you.
  - What will you do with that hurt? (p.194)
    - You have a choice.
      - You can carry it with you by keeping score, or you can let it go.
  - 6. Keeping Score Breeds Entitlement (p.195)
    - Because I've given so much, we think, others should be giving back to me. (p.195)
    - Our relationships become more transactional. (p.195)
  - To stay on the high road, we need to focus not on what we deserve but on how we can serve. (p.196)
- **How Not to Keep Score** (p.197)
  - Follow these three pieces of advice: (p.197)
    - 1. Keep Track Without Keeping Score (p.198)
      - Keeping *track* is about my behavior. (p.198)
      - Keeping *score* is about yours. (p.198)
    - 2. Forgive Everyone — Because Everyone Needs Forgiveness (p.198)
      - Forgiveness is not about keeping score; it's about losing count. (p.199)
      - High-road leaders forgive others without placing conditions on them. (p.199)
      - They make that choice because it not only *releases the other person* from any harm they have caused, but because it also *releases the forgiver*. (p.199)
    - 3. Practice the Platinum Rule (p.200)
      - That says we should treat others better than they treat us. (p.200)
      - This is the essence of not keeping score. (p.200)
      - Kindness is an inner desire that makes us want to do good things even if we do not get anything in return. (p.200)
- **The Pathway to Not Keeping Score: GRACE**

## CHAPTER 12: DESIRE THE BEST FOR OTHERS

- "People do not care how much you know until they know how much you care." (p.205)
- **Who Will Step Up to the High Road?** (p.206)
  - Mary Kay Ash
    - "We need leaders who add value to the people and the organization they lead; who work for the benefit of others and not just for their own personal gain." (p.206)
    - "Leaders who inspire and motivate, not intimidate and manipulate; who live with people to know their problems in order to solve them and who follow a moral compass that points in the right directions regardless of the trends." (p.206)

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- Tim Spiker
  - “Three-fourths of your effectiveness as a leader comes from who you are, not what you do.” (p.207)
- Effectiveness as resulting from being inwardly sound and outwardly focused. (p.207)
  - Inwardly sound: Ideals such as personal disciplines, integrity, authenticity, health in all areas of life, self-awareness, a clearly understood sense of purpose, humility, emotional intelligence, and unconditional love all made the list. (p.2-7)
- **Bringing Out Their Best** (p.208)
  - 1. Change Your Thinking (p.208)
    - Be known for desiring the best for others. (p.208)
  - 2. Change Your Words (p.209)
    - King Solomon (Proverbs 18:21): “Words kill, words give life they’re either poison or fruit — you choose.” (p,209)
  - 3. Change Your Actions (p.210)
    - The ultimate goal of desiring the best for others is to actually help them be their best. (p.210)
  - Five specific ways you can align your words and actions to be the kind of high-road leader who helps others be their best. (p.211)
    - 1. “I Value You” — Affirming Words and Actions (p.211)
      - The reality is that each of us is either a plus or a minus in the lives of others. (p.211)
        - We add value, or subtract it.
        - We give, or we take.
        - We either make people feel like more and that they can do more, or we make them feel like less and we undermine them.
        - High-road leaders continually work to be pluses and to add value.
        - The most basic way to do this is to affirm people by telling and showing them you value them.
      - If we find and focus on people’s worst, we will want to *correct* them. (p.211)
        - But if we find and focus on their best, we will *connect* with them.
        - High-road leaders always place connecting above correcting.
    - 2. “I Believe in You” — Encouraging Words and Actions (p.212)
      - Wolfgang von Goethe once said, “When we treat people merely as they are, they will remain as they are. When we treat them as if they were what they should be, they will become what they should be.” (p.212)
    - 3. “I Need You” — Empowering Words and Actions (p.212)

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- Henry David Thoreau said, “The greatest compliment that was ever paid to me was when someone asked me what I thought and listened to my answer.” (p.213)
- 4. “I Want More for You Than from You” — Expanding Words and Actions (p.214)
  - Bill Russell said, “The most important measure of how good a game I played was how much better I’d made my teammates play.” (p.214)
- 5. “I Will Help You” — Serving with Words and Actions (p.215)
  - When you’re willing to be the first person to help, because it demonstrates how much you care and means so much to the person being helped. (p.215)
- 6. “I Will Do What You Cannot Do for Yourself” — Enlarging with Words and Actions (p.216)
  - People can trace their successes and failures to the relationships in their lives. (p.218)
- **The Pathway to Desiring the Best for Others: INTENTIONALITY** (p.220)