The energy for our leadership comes from broken places in our hearts.

Loving the gifts & potential in a person that too many others don't recognize as an equal and sometimes treat as if empty or threatening.

Living with the painful tension between real gains which justify high expectations & the losses that happen when …

… important people leave a person's life

… transition points require starting over & threaten opportunities & relationships

… when the systems we rely on change & make life harder

Continuing to seek & welcome the goodness in people while at the same time maintaining vigilance and responding to rejection, neglect, & abuse.
Holding a terrible

How can we treat each other this way?

Don’t notice Δ Don’t question

Rejection Δ Violence
Isolation Δ Suffering

Best for… only realistic option

Leadership is a relationship between dark & light

Opening Doors & Building Relationships in Community

The more people I meet who share my passion

Hunger for connection & knowledge

The more I put into practice

The more I learn about what is possible & how to create important change

"Who else can we reach out to"

"I’m not alone"

"Some others can & will help"

"Some others can & will help"

"Others have wisdom, skills, & connections; & so do I"

"We’ve achieved a lot & it’s a continuing fight"

"We keep on coming up against new doors that are closed & new possibilities for relationships"
Energy for Change Grows Through Relationships

- **Sharing our stories**
  - Connecting with members of diverse families who share the bonds of similar experiences with disability
  - Keeping strong ties within our own family
  - Connecting with people who have similar desires for community life though without experience of disability

People who are allies

Energy • Direction • Support • Knowledge

Pursuing our strategies

— Local ——— Alberta ——— Canada ——— World
Leadership Disciplines

- Balance
  - Giving support and Getting support
  - Challenging and Collaborating
  - Doing and Reflecting & planning
  - Moving in front and Walking beside

- Courage
  - Telling our story
  - Forming bonds with other leaders
  - Understanding our story

- Communicating
  - Reaching out to connect & build network
  - Projecting & directing our energy
  - Listening & integrating new ideas & different points of view

- Providing others practical help to build network

- Strength

- Stamina

- Balance
Service
to others

For moral purposes (leadership can be destructive)

Questioning self:
"Am I serving positive values?"
"Are people growing because of my work with them?"
"What problems are created by what I am doing?"

An idea map on Leadership

Anticipate the negatives...
...being labeled
...others turning away
...others standing aside & then benefiting from what you have done

Deal with fear:
feel scared
and do it
"If I don’t, who will?"

Growing as a person, a parent, & a citizen

Deal with your desire to control your allies

Recognize that your responsibility to others will increase

Be thoughtful about conserving & increasing your energy & stamina
Aim to be able to say, "We’ve been working for 30 years."

Position

• Knowing how to...
  ...run a meeting
  ...make decisions in a way that includes people
  ...follow rules & procedures
• Making sure you have the skills, supports & time to do the job
• Knowing when to step aside so others can take over

Speaking the truth...
...describing exactly how things are
...asking for what is needed

Mobilizing people

Position

• Knowing how to...
  ...run a meeting
  ...make decisions in a way that includes people
  ...follow rules & procedures
• Making sure you have the skills, supports & time to do the job
• Knowing when to step aside so others can take over

Forming vision:
helping people discover the thirst for positive change that is already there

Reaching out...
...seeking support
...seeking information
...seeking wisdom

Inspiring:
being an example by acting consistently with integrity & doing what needs to be done

Stirring productive dissatisfaction...
...questioning
...provoking people to think again
...encouraging people to understand more deeply

Position

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Practices for Developing Leadership

- Build relationships that link people with common passions & different experiences and perspectives
- Discover different ways to see common and conflicting issues
- Share and clarify dreams, hopes, and ideas about how to act hopefully in pursuit of dreams
- Find strong ways to frame hard questions and stick with those questions through time
- Look for and learn from identifying with people who are models of leadership among family members and people with disabilities
- Respect and expect capacity in self and others to make a positive difference in difficult situation
- Step outside the fast pace of action from time to time; make time to listen quietly to self and think and feel a way through how things are fitting together
- Create opportunities and invitations for others to develop their leadership
- Find the courage & time to feel the depth
Strategic Thinking

• Be sure your work is rooted in a clear vision & a deep awareness of the difficulties that arise from the social devaluation of people with disabilities. This gives you the clarity necessary to find your way between right & wrong when things get confused & the energy you need to keep on when frightening or disappointing things come up.

• Allow yourself the time & flexibility of agenda necessary to build & strengthen relationships. The more you need to involve people unfamiliar with your values & agenda, the more important this is and the more time & turns relationship building will take. (Many important opportunities call us to work in situations where we have very little control & where our issues are not yet legitimate.)

• Work on a common language that captures what really matters to you. Don’t assume agreement or even shared meanings. Not even those who agree with you may understand key values & ideas in the same way; your own understanding can expand by exploring differences.

• Look at things from other’s point of view. Work to find approaches that offer mutual benefits, even to those you must challenge. Never stop looking for opportunities to build capacity to respond constructively to people with disabilities, no matter how small the step may be.

• Be aware of real oppositions. Alliances are vital, but "partnerships" imposed externally on groups with opposing interests can lead to stuckness, deception, & betrayal.

• Difficult situations & threats can provide opportunities & bring people together. Don’t be afraid to face them and speak out about them.

• Step back from time to time & look at the whole situation. Some important changes happen through moves that are hard to see when you are in the middle of the action. It’s good to take the long view with someone you trust.
Attend to your own spiritual, emotional, & physical health

Celebrate & feel the joy of living for what really matters

Seek to understand those who oppose or threaten you

Know your own "bottom line"

Gather more information

Make time for reflection & renewal

Build skills in communication & creative negotiation

Make time for learning events centered on values & vision.

Keep asking, "What is at stake?" so that you can let go of non-essentials and focus on the change that most needs to be made

Practice asking for exactly what is needed

Rest

Seek counsel from wise people

Laugh

Confusion

Don’t try to go it alone. Get help from friends. Ask honestly for help from opponents.

Act so that your family will know your love & your allies will know you value them

Ask for forgiveness from those you have hurt. Forgive yourself.

Disappointment

Recognize that real changes will call for real sacrifices & prepare as best you can to pay the price

Approach conflict firmly, respectfully, & with love

Betrayal

Acknowledge problems & failures. Invest some time in learning from mistakes.

Take inspiration from those who live at the edge of exclusion

Name the forces that silence you or defeat you; think carefully about exactly how they work on you.

Defeat

Hostility

Slow down. Practice thinking about long-term development instead of instant answers

Practice asking for exactly what is needed

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What we want to take with us into future sessions...

Feeling safe

Generating knowledge & energy

Taking time

Thinking deeper

Building relationships

Speaking from our hearts

Listening & reflecting

I could speak with assurance that what I said would be received, acknowledged, & valued.

Ideas only developed when I stopped being in a hurry for ‘the answer’

I have become aware that inclusion has many levels & we are just beginning to dig beneath the surface

I have found some more companions for my life’s journey

Real stories brought out our passion & the lessons we have learned about making change

I am awed by the depth of experience we represent