

# THE CRUCIBLES THAT SHAPE US

Navigating the Defining  
Challenges of Leadership

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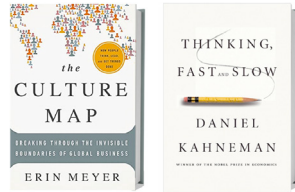
## The Crucibles That Shape Us

### Navigating the Defining Challenges of Leadership

#### 1. The Crucible of Missed Meaning

“They had the experience but they missed the meaning.” – T.S. Elliot

- Cognitive Tunnelling
- Culture Map, Erin Meyer: “Reading the Air”
- WYSIATI tendency: “What You See Is All There Is”



#### 2. The Crucible of Enduring Challenge

“...when you’re going through hell, keep going...”  
– Winston Churchill

#### 3. The Crucible of Human Treachery

- Saboteurs, Charlatans and the Judas Syndrome
- Envy
- Often difficult circumstances are ones we didn’t create but still must respond to

#### 4. The Crucible of Awakened Moral Conscience

“The two most important days of your life are the day you were born and the day you figure out why.” – Mark Twain

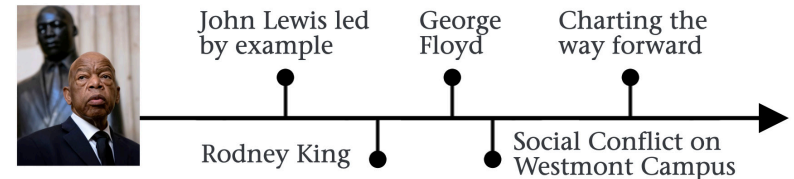
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- Simone Weil, Gravity & Grace



#### 5. The Crucible of Social Conflict

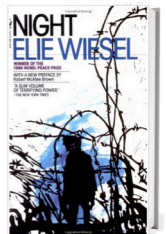
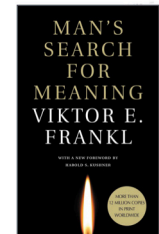
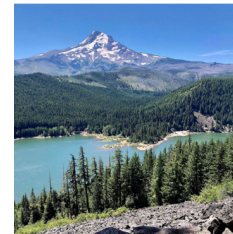
“At a very early stage of the movement, I accepted the teaching of Jesus, the way of love, the way of nonviolence, the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation. The idea that hate is too heavy a burden to bear. I don’t want to go down that road. I’ve seen too much hate, seen too much violence. And I know love is a better way.” – John Lewis

- Causes of Social Unrest:
  - Economic Inequality
  - Political Polarization
  - Social Dislocation
  - Cultural Narcissism
  - Race
  - Gender



#### 6. The Crucible of Human Suffering

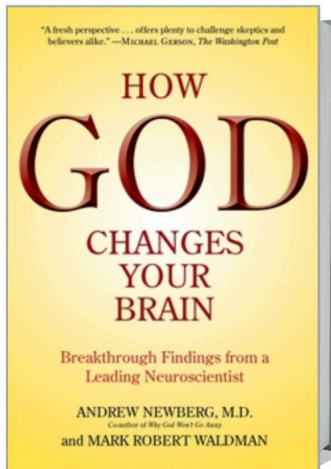
- Don Green’s Accident
- Theodicy
- The Apostle Paul
- Walker Percy
- Natural Disasters
- Illness and Death
- Human Evil



## 7. The Crucible of Personal Choice

“...but the Hebrew word, the word ‘timshel’– thou mayest– that gives a choice. It might be the most important word in the world. That says the way is open.” – Lee to Samuel and Adam in East of Eden (Steinbeck) in commenting on Genesis 4.

1. Risks, regret and the “what if” game
2. Neuroscience, Emotional Intelligence & Amygdala hijacks
3. Experience-based decision making
4. How God Changes Your Brain



## Notes

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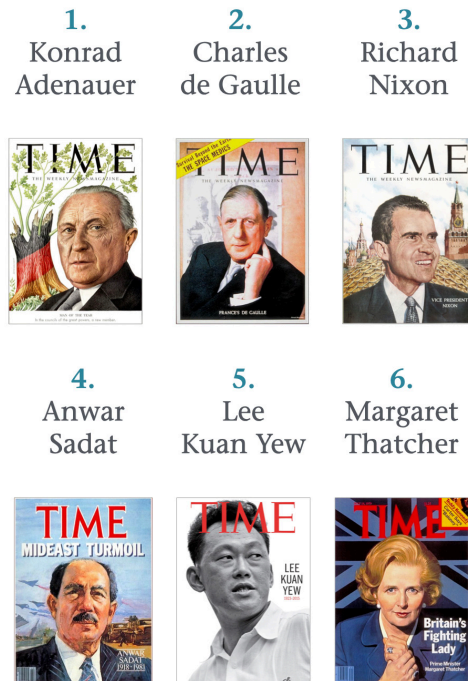
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## 2. The Crucible of Enduring Challenge

### 12 Enduring Lessons:

1. Enjoy today; tomorrow has enough worries of its own.
2. Never open a two-front war if you can help it.
3. Don't overreact to overreactions.
4. Don't say everything you think (I've never gotten in trouble for things I thought but didn't say).
5. Stay emotionally present even when you don't feel like it.
6. I've never had an opportunity expand without a potential problem expanding with it
7. Be disciplined with what you share and with whom you share it.
8. Avoid no-win arguments; it's like wrestling with a pig. You both get dirty, and the pig loves it.
9. Cultivate a results-oriented mindset with attention to doing the right activities.
10. Cultivate an aspiring edge that stimulates hope and renewal.
11. Maintain a commitment to open communication and conflict resolution.
12. Always work to outlast the opposition except when you know it's the right time to leave for the right reason.

## Henry Kissinger, Leadership:



## Why Faith Matters, from American Democracy:

**Kissinger:** “A key factor common to each of the leaders was a devout religious upbringing—Catholic for Adenauer and de Gaulle, Quaker for Nixon, Sunni Muslim for Sadat, Confucian for Lee and Methodist for Thatcher.”

**De Tocqueville:** “...the devout are accustomed to consider for a long succession of years an unmoving object toward which they constantly advance, and they learn by insensible progressions to repress a thousand little passing desires...This explains why religious people have often accomplished such lasting things. In occupying themselves with the other world, they encountered the great secret of succeeding in this one.”

## Winston Churchill's Extraordinary Perseverance

“...(my) success consists of going from one failure to the next without loss of enthusiasm...” – Sir Winston Churchill

- Upbringing
- Travel, spatial relocation
- Curiosity
- Attitude: Optimism and Humor
- Personal Integrity
- Clementine
- He served purposes greater than himself and gave his life's energy to purposes that outlived him.



## The Power of Gratitude:

– Researchers have found that cultivating a spirit of gratitude strengthens our perseverance by bolstering other positive emotions like joy and positivity while counteracting negative emotions such as envy, contempt, and anger. *Gratitude helps us endure well.*

– Develop a mindset that values perseverance. Learning to look for the positives in every situation, learning to control what we can control, our attitude and our effort, and creating relational networks that provide support, encouragement and appropriate perceptions of ourselves helps us endure. Gratitude bears measurable fruit!

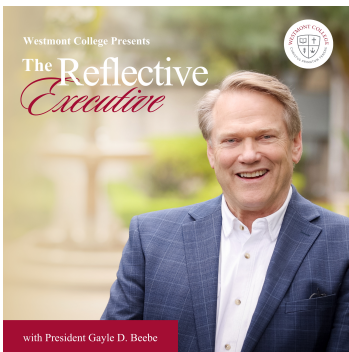
# Biblical Insight Demonstrated in Faithful Perseverance

“...We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”

– Romans 5:3-5

## For Reflection:

1. What are your most prominent experiences of perseverance, and what did you learn from them? About yourself? About others? About God?
2. What has empowered you, and what has hindered you as a result of these experiences of perseverance?
3. What new realities has God awakened in you?



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