

**GOOD MORNING FUTURE LEADERS, ASPIRING LEADERS, AND THOSE OF YOU ALREADY IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS.**

**I AM PLEASED TO JOIN YOU FOR THIS FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP AND WHAT WE CAN ALL DO TO MOBILIZE OTHERS IN OUR COLLECTIVE MISSION TO ADVANCE AND IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH.**

**THE SHELVES AT BARNES AND NOBLE ARE LINED WITH BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP.**

**EVERYONE FROM JACK WELCH TO BILL CLINTON, RUDY GIULIANI TO COLIN POWELL WEIGHS IN ON THE SUBJECT OF WHAT IT TAKES TO LEAD AND MOTIVATE OTHERS.**

**READERS ARE DRAWN TO THESE BOOKS AS ROADMAPS -- SUCCESSFUL ROUTES TO LEADERSHIP -- PURELY AS INSPIRATION, OR PERHAPS JUST FOR A GLIMPSE INTO THE LIVES OF THE POWER BROKERS OF OUR TIMES.**

**ALONG WITH THE HUGE SELECTION OF BOOKS FROM TODAY'S BEST SELLERS' LIST, THERE ARE AGE-OLD THEORIES ABOUT WHAT IT TAKES TO LEAD.**

**C-E-O FRED MANSKE SAYS THAT “LEADERS ARE MADE NOT BORN...” AND THAT LEADERSHIP STYLE “IS ACQUIRED BY STUDY, EMULATION, AND EXPERIENCE.”**

**OTHERS CLAIM THAT THERE ARE INHERENT TRAITS THAT LEADERS EXHIBIT FROM DAY ONE.**

**IF YOU WERE LIKE ME WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER, YOU COULD OFTEN BE FOUND IN THE MIDDLE OF YOUR CIRCLE OF FRIENDS DIRECTING ONE PLAYMATE TO DO THIS, ANOTHER TO DO THAT, AND IF SO, YOU MAY PUT SOME CREDENCE INTO THE THEORY OF INNATE LEADERSHIP TRAITS.**

**OR YOU MIGHT HAVE BEEN CALLED “BOSSY” – ALSO LIKE ME.**

**STILL OTHERS CITE THE “GREAT EVENTS” THEORY THAT LEADERSHIP QUALITIES EMERGE DURING A CRISIS, GIVING ELECTED OFFICIALS LIKE FDR AND LBJ AS EXAMPLES –OR LIKE ME BEING THE FIRST BORN AND LOSING MY DAD AT AGE 10 AND HAVING TO HELP CARE FOR MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS.**

**I HAVE COME TO BELIEVE THAT, AT VARIOUS TIMES IN A LIFE, ALL OF THE THEORIES ABOUT LEADERSHIP, AND EVEN COMBINATIONS OF THEORIES, ARE TRUE ---**

**YOU CAN ACQUIRE SKILLS AND LEARN HOW TO LEAD.**

**ALL OF US HAVE TRAITS THAT CAN HELP US TO BE EFFECTIVE LEADERS.**

**AND WHEN LEADERSHIP IS THRUST UPON US, WE CAN RISE TO THE CHALLENGE AND LEAD OTHERS WITH OUR VISION.**

**AT THEIR CORE THOUGH, I BELIEVE THE BEST LEADERS PERSONALIZE THEIR VISION AND SPEAK TO THE INDIVIDUAL, AND AT THE SAME TIME HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO ENGAGE AND INSPIRE THE COLLECTIVE IMAGINATION.**

**IF I HAD TO COME UP WITH A LIST OF WORDS THAT I THINK GOOD LEADERS USE TO PERSONALIZE THEIR VISION THEY WOULD BE: INSPIRE --- INFLUENCE --- MOTIVATE --- AND REWARD.**

**AND I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK ABOUT EACH OF THESE WORDS AND PROVIDE EXAMPLES FROM MY LIFE AND WORK.**

**THERE IS NO WAY AROUND THE FACT THAT LEADERS HAVE TO INSPIRE, AND I BELIEVE THAT INSPIRATION COMES FROM HAVING A VISION.**

**FOR THOSE OF US WHO HAVE DECIDED TO ENTER THE FIELD OF PUBLIC HEALTH, WE HAVE ALREADY ASSUMED THE MANTLE OF LEADERSHIP BECAUSE THE VERY NATURE OF PUBLIC HEALTH IS LEADING, TEACHING, AND INFLUENCING OTHERS TO CHANGE BEHAVIORS.**

**BUT YOU WILL NEED TO HARNESS THE POWER OF LEADERSHIP SINCE THAT SORT OF MISSION WILL REQUIRE THE ENORMOUS COMMITMENT OF MANY OTHERS.**

**I WOULD LIKE TO TALK A LITTLE BIT NOW ABOUT HOW MY INSPIRATION COMPELLED ME TO TAKE A LEADERSHIP ROLE.**

**SOME PEOPLE CAN TRACE LIFE DECISIONS TO ONE DEFINING MOMENT BUT FOR ME, EVER SINCE I WAS VERY YOUNG, I'VE WANTED TO HELP PEOPLE, AND WHAT BETTER WAY TO REALIZE THAT DREAM -- AS A GIRL GROWING UP IN JAMAICA -- THAN TO BECOME A REGISTERED NURSE?**

**I ACCOMPLISHED THAT BUT AS A HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER IN BROOKLYN AND NEW YORK CITY, AS WELL AS A NEWLY ARRIVED IMMIGRANT, I WAS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE TO THE POOR STATE OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN IMMIGRANT AND WORKING-CLASS COMMUNITIES AND I WOULD EXPERIENCE MANY DEFINING MOMENTS THAT WOULD COMPEL ME TO DO SOMETHING TO CHANGE THAT. SO, I PURSUED AN UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE IN COMMUNITY HEALTH AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION AND A GRADUATE DEGREE IN PUBLIC HEALTH.**

**MANY OF THE PATIENTS I SAW AS AN RN WERE IMMIGRANTS; MANY OF WHOM WERE AFRAID OF A VISIT TO A DOCTOR OR HOSPITAL, DISTRUSTFUL OF THE MEDICINES AND PROCEDURES THEY WERE PRESCRIBED, AND UNABLE – BECAUSE OF LANGUAGE CULTURAL BARRIERS -- TO ARTICULATE THEIR FEARS AND ISSUES.**

**I SAW THE NEED FOR A LOCAL, TRUSTED, HEALTH CARE PROVIDER, AND THAT BECAME MY INSPIRATION AND VISION.**

**IN A WAY, THE STORY OF HOW THE COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH ORGANIZATION I FOUNDED, THE CARIBBEAN WOMEN'S HEALTH ASSOCIATION, CAME TO BE PROVIDES A FITTING EXAMPLE OF HOW A VISION CAN BE TRANSFORMED INTO LEADERSHIP.**

**BUT BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS REQUIRES LEADERSHIP.**

**C-W-H-A HAD TO BECOME A LEADER WITHIN THE COMMUNITY, AND I HAD TO SUMMON ALL MY LEADERSHIP SKILLS TO ESTABLISH THE ORGANIZATION IN THE FIRST PLACE.**

**SO NOW BACK TO MY LIST OF LEADERSHIP VERBS, AND THEY ARE VERBS FOR A REASON --- GOOD LEADERS ARE ACTIVE!**

**IMAGINE HOW MUCH YOU HAVE TO INFLUENCE PEOPLE IN ORDER TO CONVINCING THEM THAT STARTING A COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH ORGANIZATION IN A STRUGGLING NEIGHBORHOOD IS A GOOD IDEA!**

**YOU MUST RAISE MONEY, HIRE A STAFF, ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS, AND CONVINCING A SKEPTICAL COMMUNITY THAT YOU CAN BE TRUSTED.**

**IN OTHER WORDS YOU MUST INFLUENCE A GREAT DEAL OF PEOPLE.**

**THE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE I ACCUMULATED FROM MY LIFE EXPERIENCES, AS A NURSE, AS A PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTITIONER, AND AS AN IMMIGRANT MYSELF WERE THE PRINCIPAL RESOURCES FROM WHICH I DREW THE CONFIDENCE TO INFLUENCE OTHERS.**

**I MADE IT MY BUSINESS TO EVALUATE AND PREPARE DATA ON THE KINDS OF PROGRAMS THAT WOULD BE EFFECTIVE IN PROVIDING HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO THE IMMIGRANT AND WORKING CLASS RESIDENTS WE HOPED TO REACH, AND I ALSO MADE IT MY BUSINESS TO BE ABLE TO SPEAK ELOQUENTLY ABOUT THAT DATA TO PERSPECTIVE FUNDERS.**

**THESE COMBINED EXPERIENCES WERE INVALUABLE BECAUSE A LEADER WHO UNDERSTANDS FIRST-HAND THE STRUGGLES, FEARS, AND FRUSTRATIONS OF STAFF MEMBERS WHO WORK IN THE COMMUNITY, THE RESIDENTS THEY SERVE, AND THE ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS THEY INTERFACE WITH CAN BE MORE INFLUENTIAL THAN ONE LESS FAMILIAR THOSE EXPERIENCES.**

**ANOTHER AVENUE OF INFLUENCE IS WHAT WE IN PUBLIC LIFE CALL THE BULLY PULPIT. BOTH THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT AND I USE PUBLIC SPEAKING AND OUR ACCESS TO BOTH THE PUBLIC AND THE MEDIA TO MOBILIZE OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF PUBLIC HEALTH.**

**MOTIVATE IS THE NEXT WORD ON MY LIST AND I BELIEVE IT IS A SEPARATE AND CRITICAL REQUIREMENT IN ANY LEADER'S REPERTOIRE OF SKILLS.**

**IN NO OTHER AREA OF HUMAN INTERACTION IS MOTIVATION MORE ESSENTIAL THAN WHEN DEALING WITH REFORMING THE BEHAVIORS THAT AFFECT AN INDIVIDUAL'S HEALTH.**

**TAKE OBESITY FOR EXAMPLE, EVERYONE KNOWS OF AT LEAST MOST OF THE FACTORS THAT LEAD TO OBESITY, AND ALMOST EVERYONE KNOWS THAT PAYING ATTENTION TO DIET, INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CAN HELP ADDRESS THE PROBLEM.**

**BUT HOW TO MOTIVATE PEOPLE TO EAT BETTER, EXERCISE MORE, AND REJECT A SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE IS ANOTHER MATTER.**

**AS FIRST LADY ROSALYN CARTER ONCE SAID, “A LEADER TAKES PEOPLE WHERE THEY WANT TO GO. A GREAT LEADER TAKES PEOPLE WHERE THEY DON’T NECESSARILY WANT TO GO BUT OUGHT TO BE.”**

**GOOD LEADERS GET TO KNOW THE PEOPLE WHO WORK FOR THEM, THE FUNDERS WHO SUPPORT THEM, THE CONSTITUENTS THEY SEEK TO HELP.**

**THEY TAKE THE TIME TO DISCOVER A PERSON’S STRENGTHS AND NURTURE THOSE STRENGTHS BY ENCOURAGING THE INDIVIDUAL TO USE THOSE STRENGTHS TO SUCCEED.**

**SOMETIMES GOOD LEADERS EVEN MAKE DEALS AS A MEANS OF MOTIVATION.**

**AND GOOD LEADERS MOTIVATE BY EXAMPLE.**

**DON’T ASK YOUR COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER TO CANVAS THE NEIGHBORHOOD WITH A HEALTH SURVEY IF YOU’VE NEVER DONE SO.**

**DON’T IMPLORE YOUR HEALTHCARE PARTNERS TO PUT IN WEEKENDS IF YOU’RE NOT THERE TOO.**

**THE EXAMPLES YOU SET AS A LEADER ARE A POWERFUL TOOL OF MOTIVATION.**

**EFFECTIVE LEADERS MOTIVATE OTHERS BY CONTINUALLY REAFFIRMING THE ORGANIZATION'S SHARED COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC HEALTH.**

**THE LAST WORD ON MY LEADERSHIP LIST IS REWARD.**

**THERE ARE A NUMBER OF WAYS THAT GOOD LEADERS REWARD THE PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH THEM AND THE FIRST AND EASIEST IS SIMPLY TO ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT THEY DO.**

**EVERYONE LIKES TO BE RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR WORK AND VALUED FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS.**

**IN ORDER TO ELICIT EXCELLENCE FROM YOUR STAFF EACH AND EVERY MEMBER MUST FEEL THAT HIS OR HER TASKS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE VALUABLE TO THE SUCCESS OF THE ORGANIZATION.**

**KNOW WHAT EVERYONE DOES AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE IMPORTANCE OF EACH POSITION.**

**OFFER PRAISE WHEN IT IS DUE, AND GIVE CREDIT TO THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN A PART OF YOUR SUCCESS.**

**AS I SAID AT THE OUTSET OF THESE REMARKS, THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF EXPERTS TO WEIGH IN ON THE SUBJECT OF LEADERSHIP, AND THERE IS MUCH TO BE LEARNED.**

**BUT TO ME GOOD LEADERSHIP BEGINS AND ENDS WITH THE INDIVIDUAL.**

**AFTER ALL, IT IS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO COMES UP WITH A VISION THAT WILL INSPIRE OTHERS.**

**AND AN EFFECTIVE LEADER INFLUENCES, MOTIVATES AND REWARDS EVERY INDIVIDUAL IN THE ORGANIZATION ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, WITH A NUANCED UNDERSTANDING OF EACH INDIVIDUAL'S NEEDS.**

**IF WE ARE TRULY COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR EVERYONE, PARTICULARLY THOSE IN NEED, OUR GOAL SHOULD BE TO FOSTER A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS, THE NEXT AND SUCCEEDING WAVE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, ADMINISTRATORS, CIVIC LEADERS, AND ELECTED OFFICIALS WHO WILL CONTINUE TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF IMPROVED PUBLIC HEALTH.**

**PERHAPS WE SHOULD START WITH THE PREMISE -- ADVANCED BY RALPH NADER -- THAT "THE FUNCTION OF LEADERSHIP IS TO PRODUCE MORE LEADERS, NOT MORE FOLLOWERS."**

**I HOPE THAT YOU WILL BE INSPIRED TO TAKE ON A LEADERSHIP ROLE TO ADVANCE PUBLIC HEALTH.**

**AND WHETHER THAT ROLE MANIFESTS ITSELF AS THE HEAD OF AN ORGANIZATION, OR AS AN ADVOCATE FOR THE RESIDENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY, PLEASE KNOW THAT OUR COLLECTIVE VISION AND COMMITMENT TO IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH CAN INSPIRE, INFLUENCE, AND MOTIVATE OTHERS AND CREATE A GROUNDSWELL OF CHANGE THAT WILL REWARD OUR RESIDENTS WITH LONGER AND HEALTHIER LIVES.**

**THANK YOU AND HAVE GREAT DAY.**