What Is Contained in This Document
Is the Beginning of Your Course

The *First* and *Second* and *Third* of Nine Pre-Course Readings, "Being a Leader and the Effective Exercise of Leadership: An Ontological / Phenomenological Model"

A quick definition of "ontology" and of "phenomenology":

Ontology is the study or science of the *nature* and *function* of being or existence – and in this course, we are concerned with the nature and function of being for *human beings*.

Phenomenology is the *method* used in ontology. Phenomenology is about the nature and function of our *perception* of or *awareness* of (that is, our *access* to) the world, others, and ourselves.

Reading 1: The Transformational Experiences That Leave Ordinary People *Being* Leaders

Selected quotations from "Crucibles of Leadership" by Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas

Reading 2: Getting Beyond the Limits of the Way You Wound Up Being

Selected quotations from "Education as Stretching the Mind" by Jamshed Bharucha

Reading 3: Your "Course Leadership Project" Assignment, Part I of II

By Erhard, Jensen, and Echeverria

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The History of the Course

This course was created when it was first taught (from 2004 through 2008) at the University of Rochester Simon School of Business, NY, USA by utilizing the classroom as a laboratory. Since 2008 the course has been continuously developed and taught by us every year in an academic institution, such as the United States Air Force Academy, the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, Clemson University's College of Business in South Carolina, USA, and in July 2018 at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). The course has been taught to undergraduates, graduate students, administrators, alumni, business executives, management consultants, and faculty from various academic institutions. The course has also been offered to the public by us in five international locations such as Whistler, B.C. Canada (2012) and Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (2016), each for the benefit of the Erhard-Jensen Ontological / Phenomenological Initiative (a charitable foundation).

Since 2010 (in that year under the sponsorship of the Kauffman Foundation, the Gruter Institute, and the United States Air Force Academy) we have trained a total of 134 scholars to effectively deliver the course. These 134 scholars (all of whom had previously taken the course) are from various academic institutions from North, Central and South America, Europe, Africa, Southeast Asia, the West Indies, the Middle East, and Russia. Forty-four of these scholars are currently offering the course in their universities or colleges. We have also taught the course to a group of over 200 management consultants from more than 60 firms who now offer the course or material from the course to their clients, which clients include almost all the top Fortune 50 companies.

This course: "Being A Leader and The Effective Exercise of Leadership: An Ontological / Phenomenological Model" was developed by Erhard, Jensen, Zaffron, Echeverria (2013-present) and Granger (2008-2015). The course is normally taught over one academic semester. When we authors deliver the course, we do the full course in two three-day periods, with two days between the three-day periods for assignments outside the classroom.

From the beginning of the development of the course we have been committed to discovering what was actually required to leave our students being leaders and exercising leadership effectively as their natural self-expression, and for the course to contribute to the development of a new science of leadership.

Introduction to the Course, What this Course is All About

The promise of this course:

You will leave this course actually being a leader and exercising leadership effectively
as your natural self-expression.

The Model Employed in Delivering This Promise

The word "model" is used in the sub-title of this course, "ontological / phenomenological model". A model is a depiction of something. And in this course the model employed is a depiction of the nature and function of *life* (what we live in), and of *living* (our engagement with life), and of self (the one who does the living in life). This model is derived from an unfiltered awareness of the nature and function of *life*, *living*, and *self*, with no distortion of this direct perception by any concepts, theories, or beliefs about life, living, and self. Deriving a model in this way is formally referred to as "bracketing". To bracket is to set aside all concepts, theories, beliefs, and the like, that could distort one's direct, real-time experience of what one is attempting to model.

We found that the use of an ontological / phenomenological model of human nature and human function was required for us to deliver on the bold promise of this course. As we said above, ontology is the study or science of the nature and function of *being* (as in "*being* a leader"), and phenomenology is the *method of direct access* used in ontology to study and research the *nature* and *function* of being (as in being's impact on "exercising leadership effectively").

Note the sharp difference between *phenomenon* (from which "phenomenology" is derived) and *concept*. Phenomenon is defined in Webster's New World Dictionary & Thesaurus (1998) as "any event, circumstance, or experience that is apparent to the senses". Concept is defined in Webster's as "an idea or thought, esp. a generalized idea of a thing or class of things; abstract notion".

The Way These Pre-Course Readings Must Be Read

Your careful reading of each one of the nine Pre-Course Readings and your completing each assignment as you encounter it is critical to you being able to keep up with the other participants in this course. Moreover and more importantly, having carefully read each one of the nine Pre-Course Readings is essential for you to realize the promise of the course:

"You will leave this course being a leader and exercising leadership effectively
*as your natural self-expression***."**

While studying these three current readings, consistently ask yourself, "What is there for me to get out of what I am reading?" Have this question present for yourself all the time!

What Is Contained in the Balance of this Document

This document contains the **First,** and **Second,** and **Third** of **Nine Pre-Course Readings** for the leadership course: "Being A Leader and The Effective Exercise of Leadership: An Ontological / Phenomenological Model".

1. The first of the three Pre-Course Readings in this document contains quotations selected (with permission) from Warren Bennis & Robert Thomas, "Crucibles of Leadership" (2002), with commentary from the authors of this course.

2. The second of the three Pre-Course Readings in this document contains a quotation by Professor Jamshed Bharucha in the article "What have you changed your mind about?" in the *Edge* (2008), with commentary from the authors of this course.

3. The third of the three Pre-Course Readings in this document contains your Course Leadership Project Assignment Part I, written by the authors of this course.

Reading 1: The Transformational Experiences
That Leave Ordinary People *Being* Leaders

Selected Quotations from *"Crucibles of Leadership"* an Article in the *Harvard Business Review*

by Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas

Compiled by and with comments by Erhard, Jensen, and Echeverria

Our comments about the quotations from Bennis and Thomas that appear five paragraphs below:

As you will see in your reading of the following excerpts from the *Harvard Business Review* article "Crucibles of Leadership" by Warren Bennis[1] and Robert Thomas,[2] each one of the more than 40 leaders they studied shared a *common access* to becoming a leader. The *access* for each of the leaders was without exception a certain kind of personal experience that Bennis and Thomas named a "crucible".

Bennis and Thomas define a crucible experience as "an intense, often traumatic, always unplanned experience". However, as they point out in the quotations below, it is not a crucible experience itself that leaves one being a leader. Rather it is the way one *deals* with a crucible which results in the *transformational experience* that leaves one being a leader.

A *transformational experience* alters the way life, and living, and others, and even one's relation to oneself *occur* or show up for one. It is this transformed way of relating to life, living, others, and oneself that are, as Bennis and Thomas put it "the sources of their distinctive leadership abilities". Putting this in another way, by *transformational experience*, we mean an experience that frees one from being limited to the way one *wound up being*.

The following indented paragraphs are quotations from Bennis and Thomas's article "Crucibles of Leadership" published in the *Harvard Business Review* (September 2002. from the HBR At Large Version). (In the following quotations all emphasis is added and comments from us are in brackets.)

> "In interviewing more than 40 top leaders in business and the public sector over the past three years, we were surprised to find that <u>all of them</u> – young and old – were able to point to intense, often traumatic, always unplanned experiences that had *transformed them* and had become <u>the sources of their distinctive leadership abilities</u>." (p. 3)

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[1]   Warren Bennis, arguably the foremost expert in the field of leadership (author or editor of more than 30 books), was Distinguished Professor of Business Administration and Founding Chairman of The Leadership Institute, University of Southern California.

[2]   Robert Thomas, visiting professor of leadership and transformational change, is Executive Director of the Accenture Institute for High Performance and Chair of the advisory panel for the Perlmutter Institute for Global Leadership at Brandeis University.

"We came to call the experiences that shape leaders "crucibles" … A crucible is, by definition, a _transformative experience_ through which an individual comes to _a new or an altered sense of identity_." (p. 3)

"For the leaders we interviewed, the crucible experience was a trial and a test, a point of _deep self-reflection_ that forced them to _question who they were_ [in our terminology, to question 'the way they wound-up-being'] and what mattered to them. It required them to _examine their values_, _question their assumptions_, … And, invariably, they emerged from the crucible stronger and more sure of themselves and their purpose – changed in some fundamental way." (p. 3)

"Everyone is tested by life, but only a few extract strength and wisdom from their most trying experiences." [It is not what happens or has happened in your life, rather it is the way in which you deal with what happens that makes it transformative.] (p. 2)

"Crucibles force leaders into deep self-reflection …" (p. 1)

As we see from the foregoing quotations from Bennis and Thomas, a "crucible" when dealt with authentically results in the _transformational experience_ that is the genesis (the source) of _being a leader and exercising leadership effectively_ _as one's natural self-expression_.

As Bennis and Thomas point out, such transformations require you to identify and question what you have been taking for granted – that is, your values, what really matters to you, who you know yourself to be, and what you know or believe you know to be true about yourself, others, life, and living. This is the path to creating a transformation for yourself that frees you from the limiting grip of "the way you wound up being", which freedom leaves you dwelling in a new world. Opening up for yourself a world in which being a leader and the effective exercise of leadership becomes your natural self-expression _is_ what this course is all about.

While we do not employ crucibles, we do want to be clear that a part of what is necessary for you to realize the promise of the course is your willingness to examine the views, opinions, beliefs, and sometimes even what you are dead sure about, all of which make up an important part of the way you wound up being. Equally important to realizing the promise of this course is your willingness to examine your current relation to life, and living, and others, and even your relation to yourself. And finally, to do all the foregoing authentically enough to result in the transformational experience that leaves you being a leader and exercising leadership effectively _as your natural self-expression_.

Reading 2: Getting Beyond the Limits of the Way You Wound Up Being

Selected Quotations from "Education as Stretching the Mind" an Article in *Edge,*
by Jamshed Bharucha

President Emeritus, The Cooper Union
Previously John Wentworth Professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences at Dartmouth College[3]

Our comments about the quotations from Professor Bharucha that start in the second paragraph:

Responding to the question, "What have you changed your mind about?" in an article in *Edge*[4], Professor Jamshed Bharucha responded with the following profound insight into the importance of one's pre-existing *worldview* (model of reality) and *frames of reference* for specific subjects (mindsets) as cognitive lenses. (In the following quotations all emphasis is added and comments from us are in brackets.)

> I *used* to believe that a paramount purpose of a liberal education was threefold:
>
> 1) Stretch your mind, reach beyond your preconceptions; learn to think of things in ways you have never thought before.
>
> 2) Acquire tools with which to critically examine and evaluate new ideas, including your own cherished ones.
>
> 3) Settle eventually on a framework or set of frameworks [cognitive lenses] that organize what you know and believe and that guide your life as an individual and a leader.

In the article in *Edge*, Professor Bharucha said he changed his mind about his third point <u>from</u> – "settle eventually on a framework or set of frameworks that organize what you know and believe and that guide your life as an individual and a leader" – <u>to</u> the following:

> Learn new frameworks and be guided by them. But never get so comfortable as to believe that your frameworks are the final word, recognizing the strong psychological tendencies that favor sticking to your worldview.

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[3]   Bharucha was also Provost and Senior Vice President at Tufts University and Dean of Arts and Sciences at Dartmouth College. He received Dartmouth's Huntington Teaching Award and the Distinguished Achievement Award from Vassar College, his undergraduate alma mater. He was editor of the interdisciplinary journal *Music Perception*, a Fellow of the Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences and serves as a Trustee of Vassar College.

[4]   Bharucha, Jamshed. 2008. "Education as Stretching the Mind". *Edge*, World Question Center. http://www.edge.org/q2008/q08_16.html#bharucha Accessed on 18 April 2018.

He went on to say,

> Before you critique a new idea, or another culture, master it to the point at which its proponents or members recognize that you get it. … Stretching your mind is hard. Once we've settled on a worldview that suits us, we tend to hold on. New information is bent to fit, information that doesn't fit is discounted, and new views are resisted.

Regarding What Was Said Above by Professor Bharucha

Please take the time *now* to sit and be with what Professor Bharucha has said regarding settling on frameworks that you somehow wound up being stuck with. Doing this will leave you prepared when in the course room we deal with the importance of transforming aspects of your worldview related to *leader* and *leadership,* and transforming your frames of reference for *leader* and *leadership*. This is required for being a leader and the effective exercise of leadership if it is to be *your natural self-expression*.

> Learn new frameworks and be guided by them. But never get so comfortable as to believe that your frameworks are the final word [the ones you wound up with are not the final word], recognizing the strong psychological tendencies that favor sticking to your worldview.

> Stretching your mind is hard. Once we've settled on a worldview that suits us, we tend to hold on. New information is bent to fit, information that doesn't fit is discounted, and new views are resisted.

Reading 3: Your "Course Leadership Project" Assignment, Part I of II

by Erhard, Jensen, and Echeverria

Background Information Required for You to Create Your *Course Leadership Project*

Any leadership project exists as a *leadership* project because there is a *concern* to be fulfilled. As we use the term *concern*, we mean "a matter of fundamental interest or importance."[5] We do not mean something *worried* about. Note that, when there is (or could be if looked for) a clear-cut pathway to fulfilling a concern, while it may require competent management to fulfill, it does not require leadership.

In short, the genesis of any true leadership project is a *concern* to be fulfilled. Or saying the same thing in another way, leadership projects are born out of some *matter of fundamental interest or importance*, the *fulfillment* of which, you *take on*.

Your Course Leadership Project will come from a *concern* you have (or that another or others may have), the fulfillment of which you will take on.

Why the Need for a *Course Leadership Project*?

You may come to the course with one or more already-existing leadership projects, and you are welcome to work on them whenever you like.

However, to realize the promise of this course, you must have a leadership project that allows you to start trying out (start putting into practice) what is presented in the part of this course contained in the pre-course readings and then the part of the course presented in the sessions. But, this must be a leadership project that you can *complete by the end of the sessions part of the course*, or at least have *moved along significantly* by the end of the session part of the course. We will name this leadership project your "Course Leadership Project."

Creating a Course Leadership Project for yourself provides you with *the personal laboratory necessary for trying out* what is presented in the part of the course contained in the pre-course readings and *trying out* what is presented in the sessions of the course. (As you will see when you are in the session days of the course, the work you will do during the two non-session days is also an important part of your course.)

Putting all the foregoing into one sentence: You must create your Course Leadership Project for the specific purpose of both 1) being able to complete your Course Leadership Project by the end of the session part of the course, or at least have moved it along significantly by the end of the session part of the course, and 2) being a *personal laboratory* in which you try out (start putting into practice) what is presented in the part of this course contained in the pre-course readings and then the part of the course presented in the sessions.

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[5]   See noun definition 1 in Webster's. 1998. *Webster's New World Dictionary* on PowerCD version 2.1, based on Webster's New World Dictionary®, Third College Edition 1994: Zane Publishing, Inc.

Guidelines for Creating Your Course Leadership Project

Relatively Simple: Given that your Course Leadership Project will have been completed (fulfilled) by the last day of the course (or at least have moved significantly to being completed), it obviously cannot be grand, cannot be overly involved (cannot be complicated), cannot be long-term, and cannot demand too much time or effort from you or others to fulfill.

Fulfilling or Contribute To Fulfilling: While your Course Leadership Project will be relatively simple, it cannot be unimportant. Its importance is derived from having created your Course Leadership Project to fulfill, or contribute to fulfilling, a *concern* (a matter of fundamental interest or importance to one). An acceptable Course Leadership Project could be the fulfillment of, or a contribution to the fulfillment of, one of your own concerns, or a concern that involves your family or friends, or that involves this or that area of life, or a concern to be fulfilled related to your professional or business life.

Taking on the Realization of a Step That Contributes To Fulfilling A Concern: If you identify any *concern* you may have (or that another or others may have) that you are willing to *engage* in fulfilling, you may select some step in contributing to the fulfillment of that concern as your Course Leadership Project. This is likely to be the simplest and quickest path to creating your Course Leadership Project.

Use This Definition For Leadership: For the purpose of this assignment, please use the following definition for leadership: *the realization of a future that wasn't going to happen anyhow, which future fulfills or contributes to fulfilling the concerns of the relevant parties*. Your Course Leadership Project must be a future to be fulfilled that you have some sense is fulfillable, but that you haven't already figured out how to fulfill. (If you already know how to fulfill it, it would only require competent management.)

Bigger Than The Way You Wound Up Being: Your Course Leadership Project must call you to be bigger than *the way you wound up being*.

One To A Customer: Each course participant will have their own Course Leadership Project.

Moved, Touched, And Inspired: You will have a lot more fun with this if to some degree the realization of the future to be realized with your project moves, touches and inspires you.

You May Use the Following Procedure to Create Your Course Leadership Project

1. By yourself, or with someone who knows you well, take the time to sit down and make a list of the *concerns* (matters of fundamental interest or importance) that a) could be said to *make* you the person you are, and b) are matters of interest or importance that may not make you the person you are, but that at least *appeal* to you, and finally c) matters that you are willing to speculate about as concerns you might take on.

    a. If any one of these fits the criteria stated above for your Course Leadership Project, and you are willing to take on the realization of it, you have created your Course Leadership Project.

    b. If all of them are too big to fit the criteria stated above for your Course Leadership Project, move on to number 2.

2. From your list of concerns, select the two or three that most call to you. See if there is some step in the fulfillment of one of those concerns that is small enough to fit the criteria stated above for your

Course Leadership Project. If you are willing to take on the realization of that step in the fulfillment of the larger concern, you have created your *Course Leadership Project*.

    a.   If this step still does not leave you with your *Course Leadership Project*, go on to number 3.

Note that in numbers 1 and 2, you yourself may be the only *relevant party* whose concern you are fulfilling, or contributing to fulfilling.

3.   You will have to find someone who has a *concern* that you can identify a step in the fulfillment of that is small enough to fit the criteria stated above for your Course Leadership Project. For this to qualify as *your* Course Leadership Project, realizing the fulfillment of this step must belong to you *as a leader*.

Note that in number 3, someone other than you is the *relevant party* whose concern you are fulfilling, or contributing to fulfilling. Also note, when you take on realizing the step that will contribute to fulfilling that person's concern, you have added yourself as a relevant party.

No Matter Which Method You Use To Create Your Course Leadership Project, These Are the Two Final Steps

Stating Your Course Leadership Project: When you have created your Course Leadership Project, initially you may have to state it from the present as a future to be realized. But for it to be empowering for you, you will have to re-state it *from the future*. That means you stand in that future and state it as a *realized* future – as it will be in that future. Make certain you have stated that realized future so that you and others can actually see what it says. Nothing conceptual, rather this is what this *looks like* as realized.

Create a Handle: In addition to this full statement, create a name that serves as a *handle* – a name that calls up the image of your Project.