

# Leading Change in Health Systems:

## The Yin and Yang of Medical Leadership

Graham Dickson, PhD

# Leadership in times of change...



*This: Leadership in action...*



*Or this--Leadership inaction*



# Yin and Yang of leadership...

- ▶ Yin–Yang are opposites
- ▶ Interdependent:  
Can not exist without each other

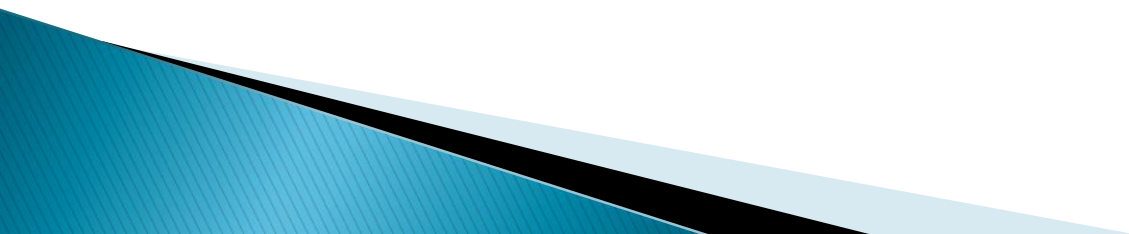


# Change

- ▶ Yin and Yang are never static but in a constantly changing balance.
- ▶ When Yin or Yang are out of balance they affect each other, and too much of one can eventually weaken (consume) the other.



Change 'out of balance'



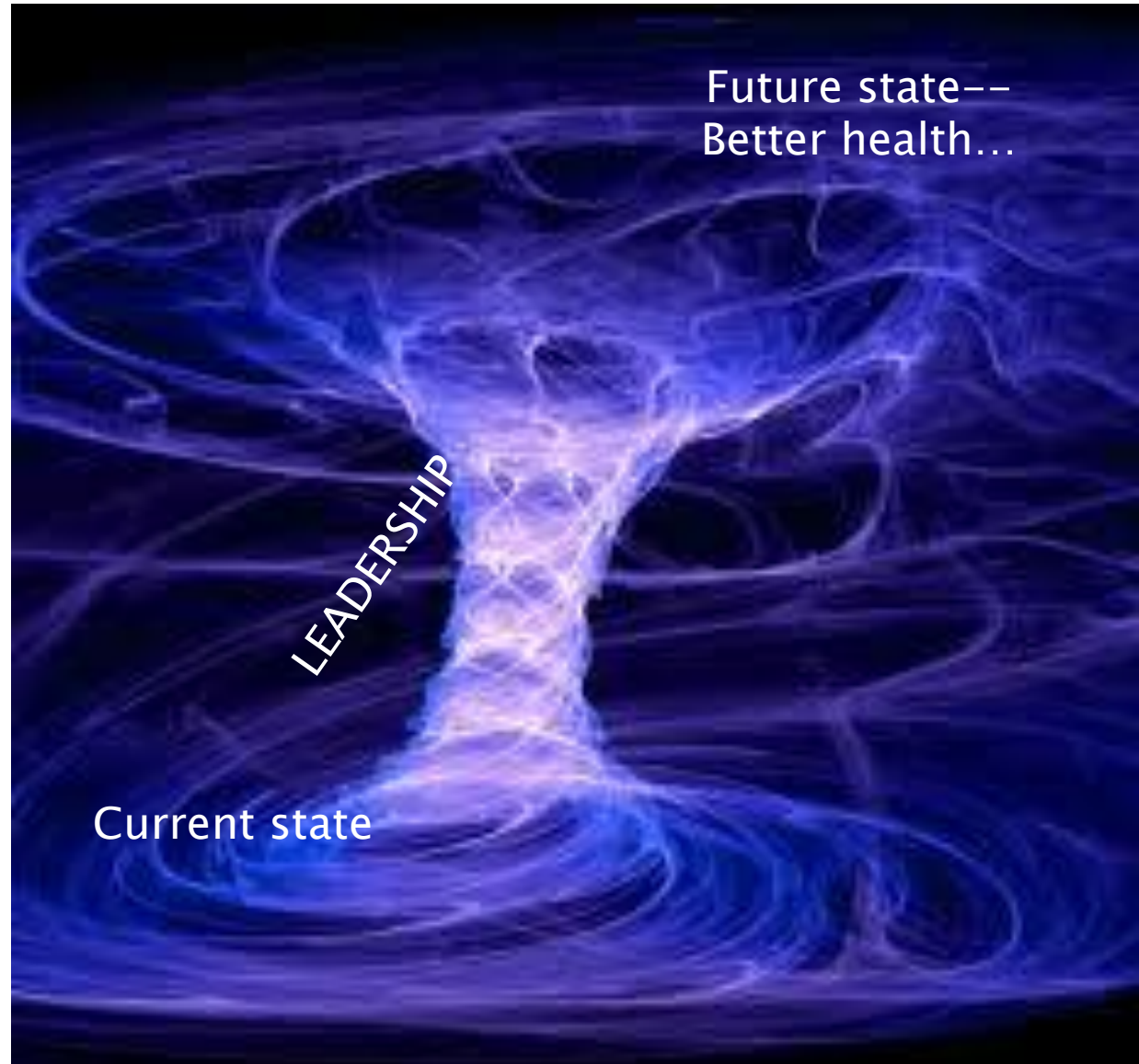
# Forces at play...disturbing harmony, speeding up demands for change...

- ▶ Educated population
- ▶ Globalism/  
interconnectedness
- ▶ From scarcity to abundance
- ▶ Knowledge explosion
- ▶ Professionalism
- ▶ Mass communication  
technologies
- ▶ Public expectations/  
empowerment





You need  
leadership  
for  
change...





# Today's health system requires a shift in leadership...

- ▶ Forces of change 'heat up' the system....

Slow change



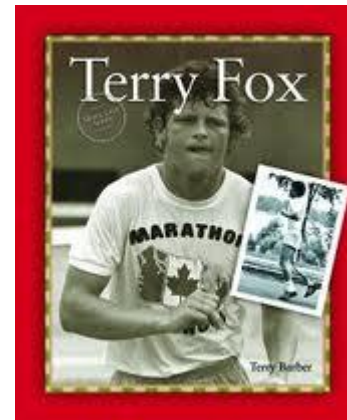
Fast change

Expert, hierarchical leadership

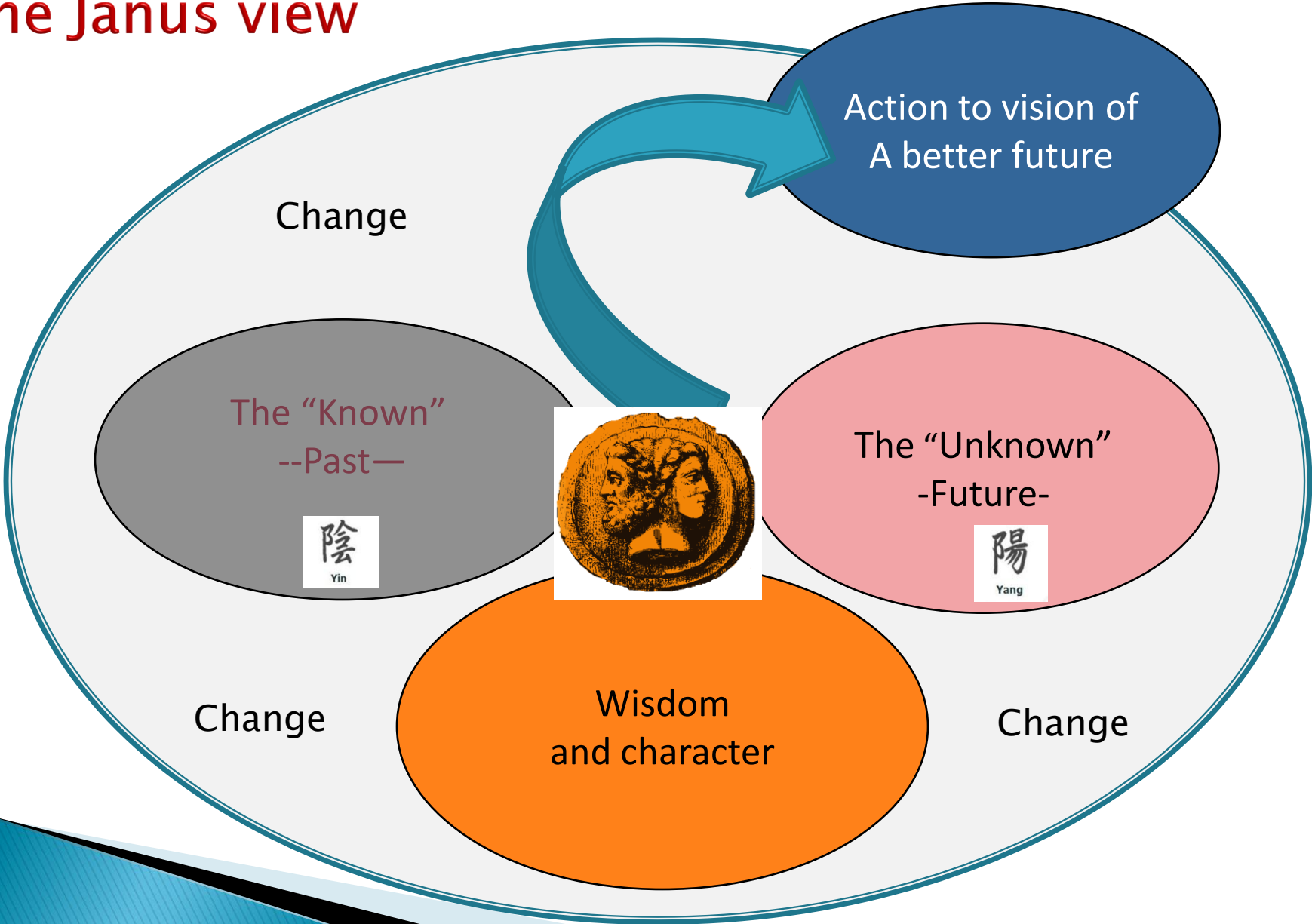
Distributed, collaborative leadership

# Leadership Defined

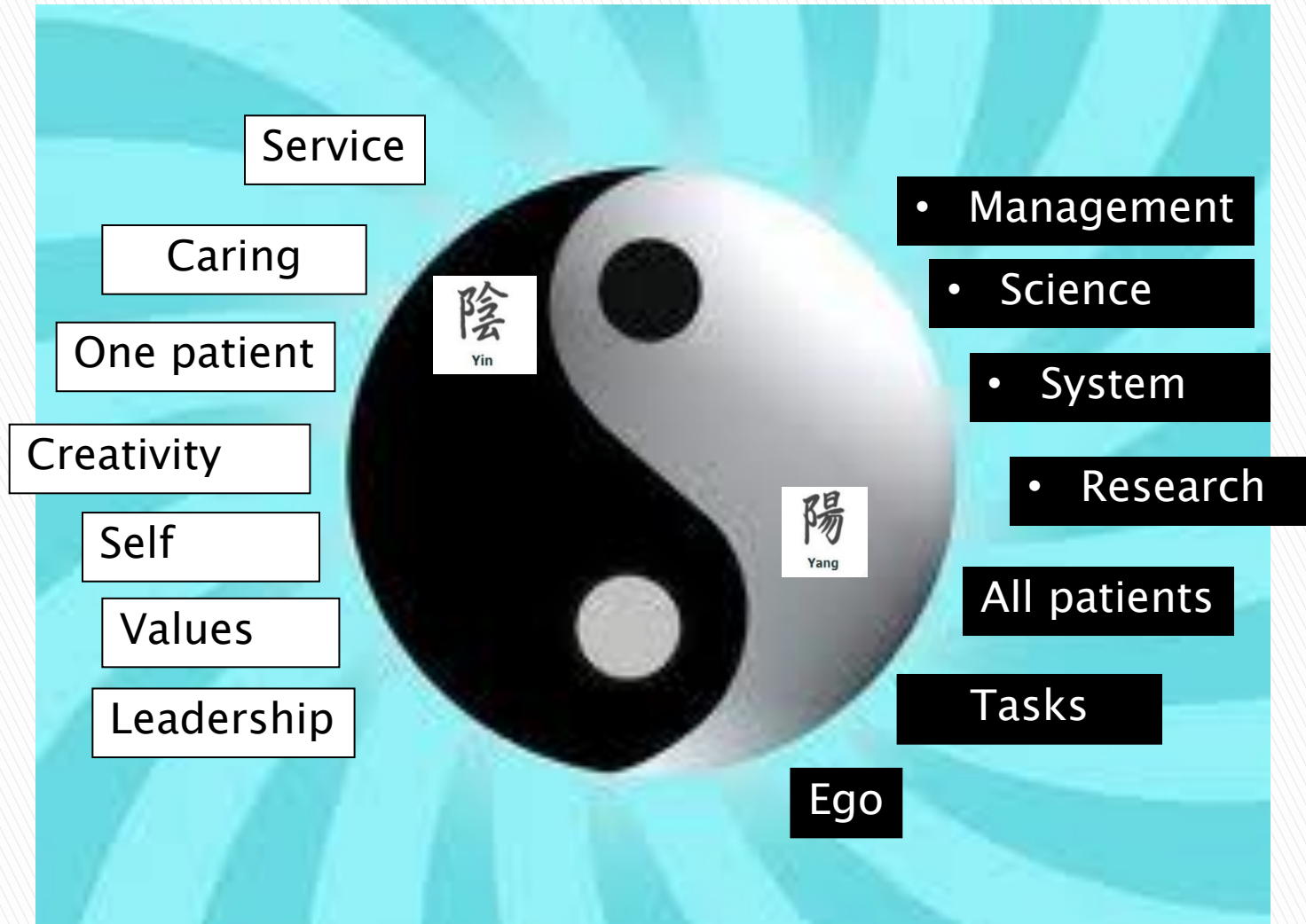
*“Leadership is the capacity to influence others to work together to achieve a constructive purpose”.*



# The leadership dilemma: The Janus view



# Balancing the challenges of leadership...





# Another way of looking at the Yin and Yang of leadership...

A calligraphic Chinese character for Yin (陰), written in black ink on a white background.

Yin

A calligraphic Chinese character for Yang (陽), written in black ink on a white background.

Yang

1

0

# Modern Leadership to meet those demands... 'the code'

**LEADS** in a *caring* environment...

**L** – Lead Self

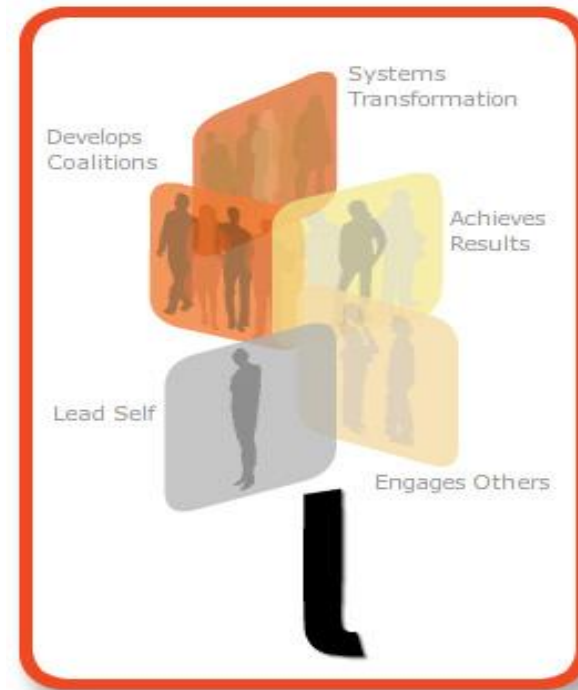
**E** – Engage Others

**A** – Achieve Results

**D** – Develop Coalitions

**S** – Systems

Transformation



1 0 0 0 1 0 1 1 ...

## Lead Self

Self-motivated Leaders...

### ■ Are Self Aware

Is aware of their own assumptions, values, principles, strengths and limitations

### ■ Manage Themselves

They take responsibility for their own performance and health

### ■ Develops Themselves

They actively seek opportunities and challenges for personal learning, character building and growth

### ■ Demonstrate character

They model qualities such as honesty, integrity, resilience, and confidence

The mastery of the art of leadership comes with the mastery of the self. Ultimately, leadership development is a process of self-development.

— Kouzes & Posner

## Engage Others

Engaging Leaders...

### ■ Foster Development of Others

They support and challenge others to achieve professional and personal goals

### ■ Contribute to the Creation of Healthy Organizations

They create engaging environments where others have meaningful opportunities to contribute and ensure that resources are available to fulfill their expected responsibilities

### ■ Communicate Effectively

They listen well and encourage open exchange of information and ideas using appropriate communication media

### ■ Build Teams

They facilitate environments of collaboration and cooperation to achieve results

## Achieve Results

Goal-oriented Leaders...

### ■ Set Direction

They inspire vision by identifying, establishing and communicating clear and meaningful expectations and outcomes

### ■ Strategically Align Decisions with Vision, Values, and Evidence

They integrate organizational missions, values and reliable, valid evidence to make decisions

### ■ Take Action to Implement Decisions

They act in a manner consistent with the organizational values to yield effective, efficient public-centred service

### ■ Assess and Evaluate

They measure and evaluate outcomes  
They hold themselves and others accountable for results achieved against benchmarks and correct the course as appropriate

The shift to a streamlined results-oriented government has required a considerable amount of transformation, presented a number of challenges, and fostered innovations.

— Holtzer & Kloby

## Develop Coalitions

Collaborative Leaders...

### ■ Purposefully Build Partnerships and Networks to Create Results

They create connections, trust and shared meaning with individuals and groups

### ■ Demonstrate a Commitment to Customers and Service

They facilitate collaboration, cooperation and coalitions among diverse groups and perspectives aimed at learning to improve service

### ■ Mobilize Knowledge

They employ methods to gather intelligence, encourage open exchange of information, and use quality evidence to influence action across the system

### ■ Navigate Socio-Political Environments

They are politically astute  
They negotiate through conflict and mobilize support

## Systems Transformation

Successful Leaders...

### ■ Demonstrate Systems / Critical Thinking

They think analytically and conceptually, questioning and challenging the status quo, to identify issues, solve problems and design and implement effective processes across systems and stakeholders

### ■ Encourage and Support Innovation

They create a climate of continuous improvement and creativity aimed at systemic change

### ■ Orient Themselves Strategically to the Future

They scan the environment for ideas, best practices, and emerging trends that will shape the system

### ■ Champion and Orchestrate Change

They actively contribute to change processes that improve health service delivery

Existing roles and functions of decision-makers need to be evaluated to ensure they meet the leadership needs of the new and emerging health care paradigms.

— Briscoe

## Distributed Leadership

Do These Capabilities Look the Same for Everyone, Regardless of Role or Formal Position?

### ■ Yes...

Anyone—regardless of their role, or the position they occupy in the health system—must be able to lead themselves, engage others, achieve results, develop coalitions, and conduct systems transformation

Detailed behavioral descriptors for leaders in various parts of the health system will be available on the Leaders for Life Program website.

### ■ ...And No...

For each of the LEADS domains, 'effectiveness' differs, depending on the context, or arena of action, in which an individual can exert influence.

To create a leadership culture, each person in the system, regardless of position or title, must exercise leadership when it is required. This is distributed leadership.

# Which one is more important?

- ▶ “Those who anciently wished to exemplify illustrious virtue to the whole world, first ordered their own states. Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their own characters. Wishing to cultivate their characters, they first rectified their hearts. Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first made their thoughts sincere. Wishing to make their thoughts sincere, they first extended their knowledge to the utmost. This extending of their knowledge to the utmost lay in the investigation of things.”

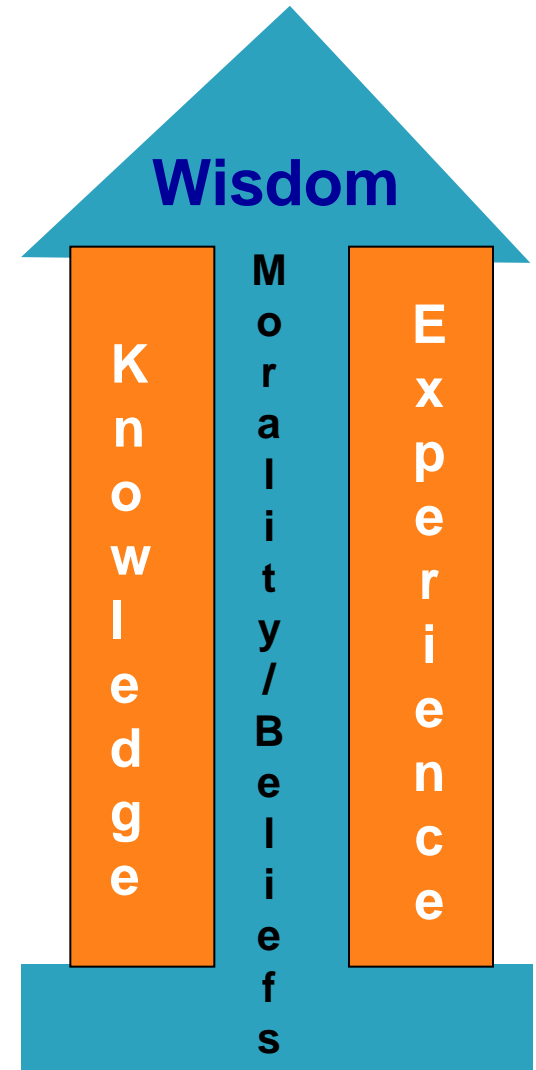
*The dialectic between ourselves  
and the outside world is important...*



# That dialectic creates wisdom...

**Wisdom** is a fundamental source of insight that must be tapped in order to deal with change. It is based on experiential learning.

We develop wisdom through openness, and an ongoing interaction between oneself, one's role, and the world around us...



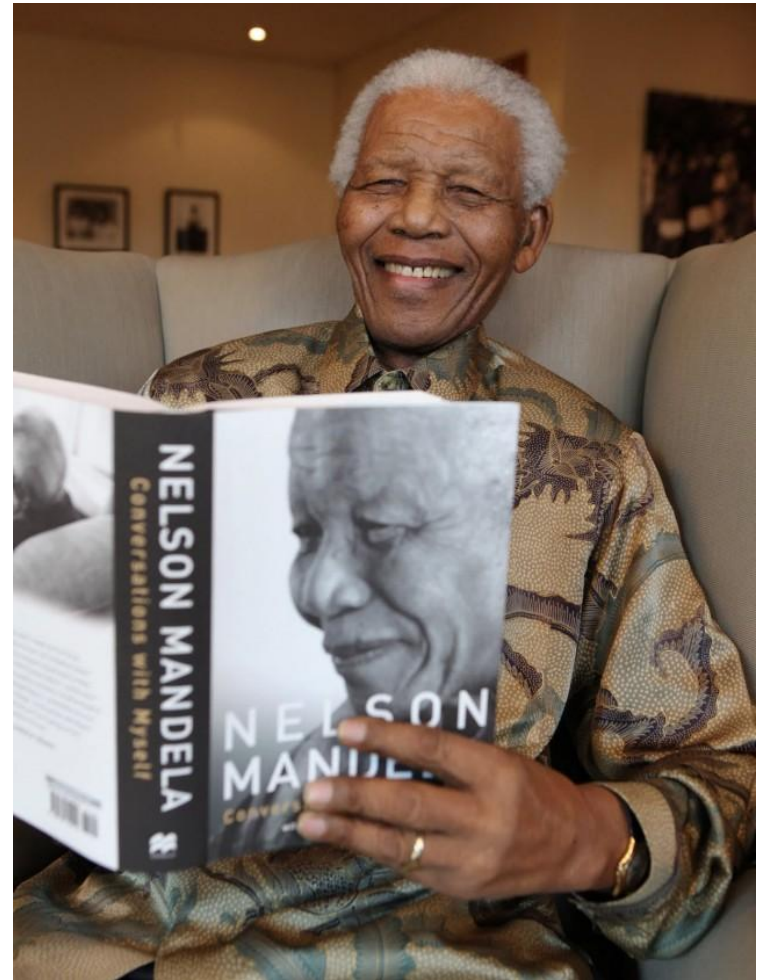
# Character

- ▶ A 'moral or ethical quality: e.g., *a man of fine, honourable character.*
- ▶ Character refers to virtuous and admired qualities that individuals possess that allow them to act in a moral or correct manner when it is not necessarily in their best interests to do so.



- ▶ “If a ruler of a badly governed state seeks to enlarge his territory but neglects humanity and justice, and seeks to enhance his position but neglects the Way and virtue, he is discarding that which could save him and paving the way for his downfall.”

*Confucius*



**In closing...**

**We do it for our  
grandchildren...**



The future's so bright, you  
gotta wear shades...



# Thank you

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