

## CHAPTER 1

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### WHO IS THIS MANLEY CHAP?

One Christmas I received a framed poster from my children saying, 'Some people wish for things to happen, some want them to happen, others make them happen.' I can relate to all three.

There's lots of stuff I wish for and much I want; but, thankfully, I do tend to *make* things happen – for me and for others. And you do rather get the point when a message is repeated by others independently and, seemingly, coincidentally.

While at an exhibition of the photographs of Leonard Huxley taken during Robert Falcon Scott's second Antarctic expedition of 1910 to 1912 (Huxley edited Scott's journals), I bumped into and was inspired by an amazing lady in her nineties, Susan Ewer. She's a daughter of the Raj, brought up in a colonial world, now bent and weathered, but with an incredible sparkle in her eye and an energy in her voice. Our worlds met as we gazed, in awe, at an iconic photograph of Scott and his men in their hut. We spoke, we connected and, in a way, we both found inspiration within each other.

Susan was moved by my desire, nay, intent, to 'go south' and pit my wits against the mightiest of continents, and I was inspired by her stories, energy and passion for life. We exchanged details and went our separate ways. It tells much for the 'discipline' and social etiquette lost over the years that, after that encounter, it was Susan who first made contact, and by letter! She wrote to say thank you and to share her thoughts. Susan felt invigorated by

our meeting and shared something truly special that I have with me all the time: it's become my iPhone screensaver and my Facebook image and has fashioned much of my work since. It was a card with an inscription taken from a Sussex church *circa* 1730:

A Vision without a Task is but a Dream,  
A Task without a Vision is Drudgery,  
A Vision and a Task is the Hope of the World.

Within this card she wrote, in ink, in a beautiful flowing hand, 'A Dream, a Vision and a Task Accomplished is Fine Achievement and Inspiration for All.' And on the back was a quote from Franklin D. Roosevelt saying, 'The only limit to our realisation of tomorrow will be our doubts of today.'

Classic! Thank you, Susan.

That card with a 300-year-old inscription and the FDR quote from more than 200 years after that sum up, when combined, much of my attitude to life and also the concepts of what it takes to be a what I'll be calling a 'Compassionate Leader'.

My journey to the role of adviser on developing high performance in organisations, teams and individuals has not been a straightforward one. My colourful career has been as much due to my tendency to say yes to any opportunity, and to put a 'task' to that 'vision', as it has been to help others find their path and say yes, too. I have learned much along the way. Sometimes I got it right and other times very wrong. My original exploration around leadership, team and personal development was fashioned by my experiences as an adventurer, a businessman and a leadership coach, mentor and catalyst.

I was recently interviewed for a magazine and was asked, 'What makes you do these adventures? What makes you think you can do them?' Both my parents, in their own way, have created within me the thinking that I can do anything and make it work. My father, whose naval career inspired me greatly and whose natural charisma and rapport I could see impacted on

those around him, clearly had, and still has, a large impact on my life as, apparently, I am becoming more and more like him every day in looks, sound and mannerisms. Cripes!

But I put it down to something my mother said when I was a small boy. I was a lively child and would frequently be pushing the boundaries and exploring what I could do. My mother was reluctant to administer corporal punishment or to physically restrain my activities – and, on this particular occasion, she was baking so it would have meant a smack round the head with a wooden spoon covered in cake mix! Instead, she said in a stern voice, ‘If you do that, you must accept the consequences of your actions and redeem the situation.’

Initially, I was confused and uncertain about exactly what that meant, but it sounded serious, so it worked: I *did* stop whatever it was that I was doing and contemplated my options, just as Mum wanted. Later she was to explain what it meant: if you *do* choose to do something, then only *you* made the choice; you cannot blame someone else, so you have to accept whatever happens as a result. And, if it is not a good consequence, then you need to sort it out yourself!

However, it worked in a way that my mother did not intend, although even now she congratulates herself on the ‘unintended consequence’ of her actions. For, as I began to understand the words within her ‘threat’, what I was hearing in my mind was, ‘Manley, you are free to do anything, whatever you wish. There are no bounds to what you can do as long as you accept the consequences of your actions and redeem the situation!’ So now, wherever I may be – be that on an ice cap, in mid-ocean or in the boardroom – I believe I *can* do anything, and I will always try, because my mother gave me the freedom to do so. And I know that I must ‘accept the consequences’ of my actions and ‘redeem the situation’.

Funny old thing, life, as are the unintended consequences of what we say and do. Who would have thought?

My job as an inspector in the Royal Hong Kong Marine Police did not end up being a lifelong career. It was followed by my running and owning a boat-building and -servicing company in the Far East, and was sandwiched between twice serving as an officer in the Royal Navy. During the first stint, I attained a degree in marine engineering. The second stint, after I left Hong Kong, came when I rejoined the service for the first Gulf War. The sea is in my blood and for many years as a professional skipper I captained various craft in various oceans before coming back to Blighty to work as a marine surveyor, then applying my seaborne skills ashore as a contract project manager for Granada Media, leading one of its major Year 2000 projects. All great skills that I would apply later, on land, in the boardrooms and offices of some of the world's largest corporations.

Adventure is part of my genetic makeup. Racing around the world as a skipper in what is billed the world's toughest yacht race, the BT Global Challenge, and winning the first skiing race to the Magnetic North Pole in record time have provided excellent training for other adventures, great stories to tell and a lot of learning along the way.

I am working on other 'expeditions' as I write. As an adviser and mentor on the topics of leadership and success, I need to be constantly testing myself and improving my understanding of what works and what doesn't. I would hate to be considered a one-trick pony!

Yet my ramblings on leadership and team working were not forged and fuelled only by quest and exploration: much has been learned in the boardrooms and on the shop floors of businesses globally. I have worked as a consultant and facilitator across so many different fields of business, and have become an integral part of many organisations within the leadership team to effect deep cultural shifts. A few years back, I had the incredible opportunity to sit on the board of the ATLAS Consortium and then that of Hewlett-Packard Enterprise Services Defence & Security UK Ltd, tasked with delivering a fundamental shift in culture to

enable the businesses to become what are known as high-performing organisations, or HPOs (and we'll meet this term again later). Being an accountable part of the business meant that I learned so much more by being on the inside and I could add so much more value as a result. It is a *modus operandi* I enjoy and have repeated to great effect. Today, I advise a number of corporate boards, coach senior executives and business leaders and work closely with senior leadership teams and boards effecting large-scale cultural change and delivering high business performance all over the world, each time not just sharing my stories and my learning, but growing my stories and learning too.

I learn at every corner; on the ice, at sea, in the desert and when working with leaders all over the globe – but I think I learn most from my children. I also coach kids in rugby and sailing. I believe that to be even more demanding and rewarding. Kids tend not to offer as much 'respect and attention' as adults. When they are bored or lose interest, they show it. You have to be on your toes and cannot gloss over any element of the learning. It is also a great lesson in not externalising your own motivation. Research clearly shows that kids play sport to enjoy themselves, have fun, be with mates. It is only the coaches and parents who, bellowing from the touchline, force the focus on to winning. We have so much to learn from kids! (We'll look a little more at externalising motivation later.)

My experiences have allowed me to learn at first hand about how to create and develop the transformational leadership behaviours needed for businesses, sporting teams and individuals to perform at a high level, consistently. From turning around failing teams to creating new ones, I have enabled people to gain a deeper understanding of self, and through that a better understanding of others, leading to more effective business and personal relationships.

And that is one of the fundamental premises of this book and all my experience: it comes down to understanding self first. A Compassionate Leader starts their understanding at

home. Look in the mirror first: Who are you? How are you? Really? Be honest!

There is a lovely expression that says that a good leader has the smallest gap between what they do, what they say and who they are – a Compassionate Leader. I believe that simple communication facilitates understanding, and stories build memorable images. If the lesson is understood and remembered, there is a chance that behavioural changes will follow. I have inspired audiences worldwide by recounting my experiences and bringing the topics of leadership, ‘team-ship’ and ‘self-ship’ – the essences of ‘relationships’ – alive using powerful metaphors from my journeys to bring benefit to many of the world’s leading organisations and the people within them.

## **My values**

I was once interviewed for a magazine. The topic of discussion moved on from my adventures to my family. ‘So what would you like your kids to do when they leave home?’ I had to really think hard. ‘I honestly don’t mind what “work” they do. That’s irrelevant, and, in reality, no business of mine. But, when they do fly the nest, if they have inside them some core values, then I believe that my work is best done.’ That discussion afforded me the opportunity to reflect deeply on what I hold most dear, on what my biggest lessons have been and what I aspire to be. Though my answer at the time was not so succinct and clear, the subsequent deep reflection and revelation is at the heart of all I do and forms the core of Compassionate Leadership.

Having challenged, tested and refined my answer to that question, I would like to share with you my views on how we must be – the values that, if held close to our being, will guide us through the stormy and the tranquil seas to fulfil our own destiny to best effect and so help others fulfil theirs. The five values that are the foundation of Compassionate Leadership – I call them the ‘Big Five’ – are:

- awareness
- courage
- confidence
- joy
- compassion

I try to live by these Big Five and I try to encourage those I have an impact on to consider the same. I believe that values should not just be used to describe who you are, but should include an element of aspiration, the stretch required to become the best person you want to be and can be. I believe my role as a parent is to try to instil these values in my offspring, and my role as a leader and mentor is to help you and others understand them too. I can feel I've succeeded if, when they leave the nest, my children venture into the world with awareness, courage, confidence, joy and compassion. I feel I have been successful in any leadership development or cultural evolution programme if I can instil those core values into my audience. These do not necessarily need to be overt, visible 'corporate values' that splash the walls and inform the activity and culture in an organisation, but instead can be the culture of my interventions and a 'challenge' to the organisation's leaders to live by them as individuals, asking, 'What if?' – 'What if you tried to live by these? How would it be? How would you feel?'

Let me explain the behaviours I see that support the 'Big Five'.

## Awareness

It all starts here. Nothing else can happen if we are blind to ourselves and blind to others. There is so much we need to be aware of, and I talk about that later in the book with my model 'Me, You and Us', which is about raising our 'Me Aware' and our 'You Aware' and putting them together in the 'Us Aware' space for mutual benefit (see Chapter 5). We need to know so much about what is going on within ourselves that drives our

behaviour, and that very much includes being aware of our emotions. We need to understand others and, vitally, we must be aware of the impact we have on others. Being aware of 'who' we are allows us to act with that next value: courage.

## Courage

I see so many people in our modern world who are detached from who they really are. The strong influences of our community and corporate world have driven us away from our core value set. We'll spend some time later exploring how that happens and what the consequences are for the individual and for society. What is set at an early age is where we want to be, but we get dragged away by external influences – schools, national cultures, churches, media, celebrity and the dominant corporate cultures. At each step we become more and more detached from who we actually are. With each new community we meet, our 'values gap' widens.

We may be aware of it or we may not – either way, it leads to internal conflict as we find that we are deprived of self-esteem. How can we relate to others when we cannot relate to ourselves? Why are so many people living other people's dreams? The courage I speak of is the courage to live your own life, your own dreams; the courage to be you within any community; the courage to take the first step on that true journey towards your own fulfilment. There is a beautiful Arabic saying: 'A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.' True courage is taking that step on the long journey of self.

## Confidence

The confidence that I speak of is the self-belief that you can and will make it work. When others may doubt you, confidence is in not doubting yourself. Confidence allows the making of mistakes as you believe you can prevail. Confidence gives freedom.



Confidence *breeds* confidence – in yourself, in others and in your own abilities.

Sometimes, your confidence may be unfounded as you stumble and fall, but, aligned with courage, confidence sets you up to try again. Remember the old adage? ‘If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.’ We need confidence deep within, and we need that *awareness* we spoke of earlier to understand that, even if deep inside there are doubts (and they do exist and should not be denied), we can muster up our *courage* to act with *confidence*! I have never ‘failed’ at anything! Frequently, I did not get to where I wanted to be or as high as I had thought, but I learned a lesson; I was able to grow and move on. Confidence is understanding that ‘not succeeding’ in a specific task is not failure: it is a lesson!

## Joy

I feel that so many of us have lost the ‘joy of the journey’. We are caught up in a world that does not value or encourage joy; a world where it is the numbers and only the numbers that count in our unsustainable, perpetual desire for growth. Our world seems to revolve around what we can get and not what we can give, where the journey is not important and is subservient to the destination. It is not. That is wrong. The journey is where the joy is found. Feel joy in your journey, in this journey, our leadership journey. Feel and share the joy of being a leader. Enjoy life. I half-jokingly point out that we must enjoy life because the destination, death, does not sound like so much fun!

Whatever your beliefs may be for what happens or does not happen beyond this life, even if this life is the preparation for the next, then the value of joy still stands true. Create an intrinsic enjoyment of the journey. And with joy comes the feeling of ‘gratitude’ – being thankful feeds being joyful. As the famous saying goes, ‘Smile and the whole world smiles with you’. Try it. Smile! Be joyful!

## Compassion

Compassion, in essence, is having the peripheral vision to see others and help them along the journey of awareness, courage, confidence and joy. Our society has created a focus on self. We are not seeing those people around us. The Dalai Lama explains the difference between 'compassion' and 'empathy' pretty well, and I paraphrase: 'Empathy is a desire to know the other person. Compassion is to act on that knowledge with positive intent.'

As I was driving recently in my home town, an old lady was trying to cross the road but the continuous stream of traffic did not see her. I stopped to let her cross, for, after all, it would have no negative impact on my journey for such a short time. But still the traffic coming the other way did not stop. Eventually, I held out my hand to stop the oncoming traffic and beckoned towards the lady. The driver on the other side, on seeing the old lady, understood her needs and was only too happy to stop and let her cross. It is not that we did not want to help the old lady: it is that we did not 'see' her!

Compassion is about *seeing* the other, and, on seeing, then understanding and providing for their need. It is about increasing our peripheral vision, being aware of our fellows and all sentient beings on our precious planet.

Consider a dinner with a silent order of monks. How do you ask for the salt? That's the point. You don't. If the salt is in front of you and you desire it, your compassionate thinking leads you to the understanding that, if you desire something, your fellow may too, so, having salted your dinner, you naturally, without request, pass it on. On my yacht, you never made a brew for yourself. If you fancied a brew, so too, more than likely, would others in the crew. If I felt like a (very British) cup of tea, I asked all and made for all. That is a compassionate act.

I feel that if those closest to me, and within my influence, can show . . .

- *awareness* – knowing ‘Me, You and Us’
- *courage* – to take that first step on their own life’s journey, to be themselves
- *confidence* in themselves – that they will make it work
- *joy* in our world, the here and now, and
- *compassion* towards others

... then so can I; and, if I can, then so can they. It’s a virtuous circle!

Above all else, this book and the whole premise of Compassionate Leadership requires the essence of these values.

This book encourages you to be more aware – to look deep in the mirror and to raise your awareness of your fellow person.

It aims to give you the **courage** to use it – the courage to go out there and try; the courage to take on the world or the systems you find yourself in and not just to accept mediocrity or wrong; the courage to stand up for what you know to be true; the courage to be true to yourself.

A truly profound and challenging saying attributed to Edmund Burke (and found in various versions) is, ‘It is necessary only for the good man to do nothing for evil to triumph.’

So you will need **confidence** in yourself; confidence in your ability to make things happen; confidence to stand up after being knocked down; confidence that, no matter what, you can and will make it work. You will also need confidence in people around you.

As we strive for greater self-awareness in the lives we lead and the values we hold, so we will feel and share the **joy** of life. Love life. Live it to the full. Do not waste a single day – you will never get it back.

And, most importantly, even in the simplest of actions we can demonstrate **compassion**. In fact, it’s in the simplest of actions that it becomes real. The everyday gesture. The smallest recognition. Be aware of those around you – of the people, the animals and the planet. Increase your peripheral vision –

see more, feel more, do more. Compassion, when we are in our true state, is an intrinsic quality of humanity.

Being a dad, a polar adventurer, a businessman, a former police inspector, a former naval officer, a yachtsman, a motivational speaker, a coach and a leadership catalyst, I have had incredible opportunities to learn about and test my ideas of leadership and teamwork. I have worked with some impressive and generous people who have given me their time and shared their wisdom; they have taught me much.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my journey so far, and my intention is to continue in the same vein. I hope *you* enjoy my adventures, too, as much as I do, and I also hope you can draw on my learning and make it part of your own. I have no doubt that by reading and applying the principles in this book, you will find that things will happen for you too.

It has been a pleasure and honour sharing it with so many. This book is for you, from me. Join me on a new journey.

And say 'Yes'!

### **EXERCISE: THE BIG FIVE VALUES**

Let's look again at the Big Five values and how they can form an inspirational and aspirational part of one's life's journey. These were awareness, courage, confidence, joy and compassion.

The awareness ties in with the Me, You and Us model touched on earlier, but dealt with in detail in Chapter 5. How much do you know about yourself, the people you are with, the impact you make and the environment you create?

Do you have the courage to be yourself, follow your own life's journey? Do you recognise that you have your own path in life and you must dictate it? Do you have the courage also to act, move and decide?

Do you have the confidence to trust in yourself and in the people around you? →

Then there's the joy of the journey. Focus on the 'how' as well as the outcome. Live in the present and enjoy the moment, develop your intrinsic motivation.

Muster the compassion not only to 'see' others to but to help them fulfil their true life's journey by being aware, courageous, confident, joyous and compassionate!

Here's what you do. Reflect on how your life and your leadership journey would be affected if you adopted these Big Five? Ask 'What if ...?'

With each value, capture its impact on you, your people and your organisation. Use the grid below.

| Value      | Impact on me | Impact on family, friends, team | Impact on my organisation |
|------------|--------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Awareness  |              |                                 |                           |
| Courage    |              |                                 |                           |
| Confidence |              |                                 |                           |
| Joy        |              |                                 |                           |
| Compassion |              |                                 |                           |

## Notes

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