

FROM THE EDITOR

# The Need for the Journal of Leadership and Character Development

Dr. Douglas Lindsay, *Editor in Chief, JCLD*

We are told to do our best. This generally starts at a young age when we may have doubts about being able to accomplish a task. We are admonished to go out and try. It is better to try and fail, then to never try at all...at least that is the message. Following this advice, we occasionally succeed in areas that we never thought we would. We conquer challenges, feel good about ourselves, and seek out additional tests of our ability. However, there are also times when we fail. In these moments, we are left to process conflicting evidence often without the skills necessary to know what to do. We may think we are pretty good, but the information in front of us says that we weren't good enough (at least in that situation). It is often said, that in those moments we build character. I would like to challenge that notion. I would offer that in those moments, we don't automatically build character or anything positive. Instead, we must determine what are we going to do with that discrepancy? Will we use that failure to propel us forward and seek improvement or will we use it as an indictment on why we aren't good enough and run a negative narrative to ourselves. In both cases, development occurs. In the former, it can be growth. The individual reasons that their best isn't good enough, and they decide that they need to better their best. In the latter, the individual accepts the failure and can develop a host of behaviors or scripts that they tell themselves to rationalize the lack of success. Regardless, there is development.

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**Dr. Douglas Lindsay** is the Editor in Chief of the Journal of Character and Leadership Development (JCLD). Prior to assuming his current role, he was a Professor and the Founding Director of the Masters of Professional Studies Program in the Psychology of Leadership at The Pennsylvania State University. He also served in the United States Air Force where he retired after a 22-year career, serving in a multitude of roles, including research psychologist, occupational analyst, inspector general, deputy squadron commander, senior military professor, Full Professor, deputy department head and research center director. He has over 100 publications and presentations on the topic of leadership and leadership development. He received a Bachelor's Degree from the United States Air Force Academy, a Master's Degree from the University of Texas at San Antonio, and a PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Penn State University.

For those who study human behavior, there are a myriad of processes, psychological theories, coping strategies, etc. that can be used to explain what is going on in that situation. Of particular interest to our discussion is the idea of development. Development occurs in both intended and unintended situations. It may not be the development that the organization wants or the individual needs from a functionality perspective, but it is development none-the-less. As an institution that is focused on development as it relates to character and leadership, we must not only understand the purposeful (functional) development, we must also be aware of the inadvertent development (dysfunctional). Put another way, it's not just what we do that has an impact on our development, but it is also what we don't do or what we do incorrectly.

### About the JCLD

The JCLD exists to help facilitate a shared understanding and create a dialogue around development. For those of you familiar with this journal, you will notice a change in the name from the Journal of Character and Leadership Integration (JCLI) to the Journal of Character and Leadership Development (JCLD). This change more accurately reflects our purpose to understand how leadership and character are established and cultivated. While the integration of these concepts is still critical, we wanted to take a step back in that process so that we can more fully examine these two constructs and how they are developed across a leader's career. Therefore, we are not just interested in the front end of leader development. Helping us understand how leadership and character develop across a career helps inform not only our accession sources, but also our mid and senior level education, training, and development

programs. In addition, as we know from the literature, there are more aspects of effective leadership that are common across occupational domains than different. Therefore, we must make sure that we are not being myopic in our approach to understanding effective leadership by only looking inward within our organizations. The success of an endeavor like a Journal is fueled by different perspectives, experiences, and knowledge. The JCLD will leverage all of these aspects to produce a Journal that pushes our thought processes and programs to create intentional character and leadership development.

To help us on that journey, we are fortunate to have an exemplary Editorial Board to provide strategic guidance to help us accomplish our mission. The Board is composed of professionals from multiple domains who have been leaders, studied leaders, and are accomplished in their fields. This senior level perspective is critical to ensuring that we stay relevant, intentional, and applicable to character and leadership development.

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### Current Issue

As mentioned, the JCLD is focused on publishing work dedicated to the exploration of character and leadership development. This is done through thought pieces, interviews, and scholarly work. This issue approaches the idea of development through several different perspectives. The first article is by Lieutenant

General Jay Silveria (USAF), the Superintendent of the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). He provides a thoughtful and enlightening piece explaining how USAFA approaches the development of future leaders. To orient the reader, he starts with the purpose and mission of the institution. This sets the stage for why USAFA exists: to develop leaders of character and leaders of Airmen. He then goes on to explicate the differences between individual and organizational approaches to development through a discussion of leader development versus leadership development. This distinction is critical, he elaborates, because the organization can set up education and training experiences, but if the individual is not ready or chooses not to participate, the development will be hampered. After setting this context, he describes the underlying core values that serve as the foundation for USAFA's conceptualization of a Leader of Character. He wraps up his article with several examples of how USAFA is utilizing innovation to support cadet development. This article is the necessary first step for the JCLD as it sets our strategic direction.

The next section of the Journal focuses on interviews with several thought leaders with respect to character and leadership. The first interview is with Edgar Schein and Peter Schein. They are experts on organizational culture and leadership who founded and run the Organizational Culture and Leadership Institute. Recently, they have shifted their focus and just published a new book titled *Humble Leadership*. In this interview, they outline how they came to study this form of leadership and describe what they mean by humility. They frame the discussion around the power and importance of meaningful relationships and how that manifests itself across four different Levels of the relationship continuum. Through an examination of leadership of the past, they reference how the VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous) environment is changing the way that leaders must lead today. The interview wraps up with ties to the military and what humble leadership can look like through several examples.

The second interview is with Chad Hennings who is a USAFA graduate (class of 1988), combat pilot (45 combat missions in the A-10), 3 time Super Bowl Champion with the Dallas Cowboys, author, and speaker. In the interview, Mr. Hennings describes his approach to excellence and explains how one can be a Force of Character which coincides with a book that he recently wrote with the same title. He explains his journey from his time at the Academy to being a successful businessman and how identifying his "why" has helped guide his path. He discusses how character is a choice and how we can develop our character. Mr. Hennings introduces the idea of an intentional mentoring program and how that could add value to the Academy experience by linking cadets with graduates to help facilitate their growth and development. In addition, he describes how what we do and how we interact can be used to strengthen our communities.

The third section of the JCLD features a distinguished group of scholars who expand on important topics related to the development of character and leadership. The first of these Feature Articles is by Dr. George Reed from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. He provocatively writes on the rhetoric of character and what that means for leadership. In his article, he takes the Military Service Academies to task on whether their real focus should be on character development or more fully understanding the context in which leadership is enacted. Through a thoughtful examination of what we know about misconduct and the military context, he explains the power that situations can have on human behavior. He introduces several military examples (Abu Ghraib and annual compliance inspections) to highlight some of the situational demand characteristics. Dr. Reed closes the article by imploring leaders to understand the ethical climate that they establish as a possible precursor to undesired behavior in their organizations.

In the issue's second Feature, Dr. Arthur Schwartz of Widener University introduces a discussion on leader coaching. He takes a philosophical approach

by examining several key constructs such as mental models and wisdom and how they influence leadership. This is used as a foundation for why leader coaching is needed and he reports the results of a comprehensive review of the literature as to the benefits that leaders can take away from a coaching relationship. Through the Assess-Challenge-Support framework developed by the Center for Creative Leadership he describes the results of effective coaching. The article then concludes with an in depth discussion of 5 reasons that prevent leaders from growing via coaching. For anyone who has wondered about the efficacy of executive coaching, this article provides those answers.

The final Feature Article artfully covers the topic of authentic leadership. It is written by a two scholars from the Rawls College of Business at Texas Tech University. Dr. William Gardner and Dr. Claudia Cogliser expand the dialogue around this perspective of leadership by examining the boundary conditions to its effectiveness. After a description of authentic leadership, they discuss several of the core assumptions and principles to this approach to leadership. This serves as a springboard for

a more in depth discussion of barriers to the successful implementation of authentic leadership. They do that through examining the individual, dyadic, collective, and contextual levels. The article closes with future research directions and practical recommendations.

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### Looking Ahead

The JCLD exists to bring a concentrated focus on character and leadership development. This issue is a “line in the sand” of sorts in terms of setting the level of scholarship and application that needs to be brought to bear on these important topics. We hope you see the JCLD as an opportunity to not only facilitate your own development and thinking in these areas, but as a target for your own scholarship. Please join us in the pursuit of understanding how to develop leaders of character.

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