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# **Leading with Soul**

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# **Contemporary Perspectives on Spirituality in Education**

Series Editor: Dannielle Joy Davis

Segments of society are drawing upon their faith and spirituality to develop strategies to mend social relationships and fragmented communities within America. The Contemporary Perspectives on Spirituality in Education book series features volumes geared toward understanding and exploring the role of spirituality in addressing challenge, conflict, and marginalization within education in the US and internationally.

## **OTHER TITLES IN THE SERIES**

*United We Stand: The Role of Spirituality in Engaging and Healing Communities*

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# **Leading with Soul**

## **Examining the Praxis of Critical Servant Leadership Theory and Spiritual Leadership for School Administrators**

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*Edited by*

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## ABOUT THE EDITORS

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**Dr. Clyde Barnett III** is the founder and executive director of Discover Without Barriers Consulting. He also acts as senior research associate at Wayne State University. Dr. Barnett's research focuses on investigating the possibilities of and barriers to advising through a transformative leadership lens in P-20 education spaces. This investigation occurs through the collection, exploration, and analysis of community voices in both K-12 schools and higher education institutions to inform advising, policy, and practice. From his research, Dr. Barnett developed the transformative advising model, which leverages tenants of transformative leadership, intrusive advising, and critical self-reflection to guide advisors on how to question systemic norms to effect change and become advocates for students shaping more equitable campus environments. Dr. Barnett has an extensive history of advising student groups and organizations where he assumed the task of developing discerning, inclusive, and transformative student leaders.

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## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

**Dr. Effie N. Christie** is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania with a BS in Secondary Education and an M.A. and Ed.D. from Seton Hall University in Administration and Supervision. She has held numerous positions in the public sector and served as the supervisor of bilingual/ESL education in two NJ urban districts. She established the state bilingual education template for Haitian bilingual students during the early years of the Haitian immigrant influx into NJ. Dr. Christie was the first female superintendent in two NJ districts, served as the coordinator of the urban initiative with the NJ State Department of Education, and was recruited by the state's Commissioner of Education to participate in President Clinton's Goals 2000 program. Dr. Christie was appointed the assistant superintendent during the state takeover of the largest district in NJ. She has held several positions in higher education, served in various positions for the Institute for Women in Educational Leadership at Kean University, and is a doctoral faculty member at the University of Phoenix.

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**Rané M. Garcia** has served as an elementary school teacher and principal, PreK-12 district administrator and superintendent, and state administrator. Her research is focused on educational leadership decisions and actions that create the conditions necessary for liberatory education. She is interested in supporting and sustaining educators' actionable opportunities that leverage positionality and privilege to transform educational opportunities and outcomes in culturally responsive ways, centering students and families who face the greatest barriers.

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**Neven Holland** is a PhD student in education at the UCLA School of Education and Information Studies. In addition to his studies, he serves as a graduate student researcher for the Comprehensive Assessment of Leadership Learning (CALL)-Equity Centered Leadership project examining how to prepare leaders to create more equitable schools for students and communities. He is also a contributing writer for Edutopia and has featured his work in Education Week. Previously, he proudly served as an elementary teacher in Memphis-Shelby County Schools in Tennessee. His dedication to teaching was recognized when he was selected as a 2022 Tennessee state finalist for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

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interdisciplinary scholar, he draws from educational policy, educational leadership, and special education to examine how special education policy and educator practices shape student experiences. In his current research, Deonte explores an administrative rule change regarding the eligibility criteria for emotional behavioral disabilities in Wisconsin. Further, his work aims to address long-standing historical inequities, such as racial disproportionality in special education, through policy innovation, research-practice partnerships, and capacity building.

**Yvette C. Latunde**, EdD, is the immediate past Director of the Center for Educational Equity and Intercultural Research (CEEIR) and a Professor of Organizational Leadership at the University of La Verne. With over 20 years in education, she has traveled widely, advocating for the strengths and capacities of students, their families, and communities globally. An international speaker, author, and community servant, she has made significant contributions to the field. Dr. Latunde is the architect of the Hospitality framework for family engagement, offering strategies to build safe spaces and trust in organizations. Her work examines what schools can learn from faith-based and race-based community organizations. Through this framework, she has influenced schools, county offices, and nonprofits to provide more welcoming, flexible services for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). Dr. Latunde's impact on education emphasizes collaboration and affirmation in achieving equity and excellence for all students.

**Charles L. Lowery** is an Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies in the School of Education at Virginia Tech. He teaches courses in administration of instructional programs, advanced school law, and qualitative research. His research interests include exploring intersectionality and interdisciplinarity in educational leadership, as well he focuses on how school leaders use critical theories and critical literacies to address crises, controversies, and conflicts in K12 settings.

**Daniella Molle** is a researcher at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research. She is currently the research director of [CALL-ECL](#): a multiyear national project funded by the Wallace Foundation and focused on equity-centered leadership. She is interested in practices that advance equity for historically marginalized students. Daniella is a qualitative researcher by training, and has a background in the teaching and learning of multilingual students. Her research interests include equity-centered leadership practices, professional learning for teachers of multilingual youth, and interorganizational partnerships focused on equity. Daniella received her PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2010.

**Jennifer L. Saylor** has served as an art and reading teacher, and school, district, and state administrator in PreK-12 communities for over 25 years. Jen’s research interests include opportunities for reflexive, interactive learning that promote humanizing approaches to education and that center student, family, and community perspectives. With an emphasis on relationships and community cultural wealth, Jen looks forward to continuing to learn alongside the school communities and edu.

**Celena Tribby** has served as the principal at Cook Literacy Model School since 2021. She is currently completing her 25th year as a public school educator in North Carolina. She has devoted her life’s work to serving students and staff at Title 1 schools. She hopes to encourage future administrators to lead with compassion, care and courage and to remember that *“Competition happens at the bottom, The people at the top are collaborating”-author unknown*. Celena earned a bachelor’s and master’s degree from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. She also has a master’s degree from the University of North Carolina Greensboro.

**Mark White** is a PhD student in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where he focuses on the intersection of race and class in public schools. Before beginning his doctoral studies, Mark earned a BA in English from Huntingdon College in Montgomery, AL. His research centers on how school districts navigate policies and political rhetoric related to school choice while striving to provide an equitable education despite various internal and external challenges to their region. Drawing from his upbringing in rural Georgia, Mark has developed a strong appreciation for the crucial relationship between public schools and the broader community, and his passion for education equity at the intersection of policy and practice motivates his work.

**Heather P. Williams**, PhD, is a department chair, associate professor, and program coordinator for Executive Educational Leadership at Boise State University in Boise, Idaho. Heather’s research interests include systems leadership and policy implementation, with an emphasis on improving rural communities. She has published numerous articles in peer-reviewed professional journals and several book chapters. Dr. Williams has spent over three decades in public education, which includes higher education and twenty years in the P-12 arena as a superintendent, principal, curriculum director, teacher, coach, and school improvement consultant. She works nationally conducting superintendent searches, serving as a school improvement consultant, and providing training and technical assistance to school leaders, teachers, communities, and their governing boards.

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# SERIES EDITOR FOREWORD

**Dannielle Joy Davis, PhD**

The first volume of the series, *Contemporary Perspectives on Spirituality in Education*, was developed and birthed during a sociopolitical time of uncertainty and a seeming rise in national daily consumption of xenophobic “trauma porn.” Despite the socio-political climate, community activists and scholars came to together and, via the book “United We Stand: The Role of Spirituality in Engaging and Healing Communities,” highlighted multifaceted ways our country came together to heal and move forward with spiritual principles as foundational guides. Examples of solidarity and community also illustrated the overlap between social justice, spirituality, ethics, and morality at both micro and macro levels in society.

This “Foreword” is being written during a similar moment of our history, where in some national and international spaces partisanship overrides compassion, community-building, and decency. It is in this climate that I am honored to introduce the second volume of this important book series: *Leading With Soul: Examining the Praxis of Critical Servant Leadership Theory and Spiritual Leadership for School Administrators*.

Here, the volume’s Co-Editors begin with illustrations of how servant leadership prompts excellence in both teaching and administration. It then explores how spirituality can shape administrative practice, as well as established missions and intended outcomes for liberatory education. This examination of the role of spirituality meets the current social moment, where communities grapple with countering youth overexposure to unethical and immoral messages or actions in social media, the entertainment industry, and the political sector.

We have a responsibility to move the spiritual and religious doctrines of world religions from mere routine, half hearted observation, toward genuine action on behalf of youth and communities. From ego-centric, xenophobic adaptation of the life and lessons of Jesus Christ, Mohammad, and

other historic global leaders of faith, to divine action that demonstrates the love, grace, compassion and glory of God almighty to all, regardless of race, gender, or creed.

The Christian, Jesuit value of *Cura Personalis* (care for the individual person) and my interest in research ethics has led me to adopt Caring Theory (Watson, 2006) as a framework to explore research ethics and practice. Caring Theory holds “that human caring and relationship-centered caring is a foundational ethic for healing practices; it honors the unit of the whole human being, while also attending to creating a healing environment” (p. 52, 2006). Aspects of this type of care are reflected in the contents herein.

In addition, there are additional Jesuit tenets that mirror aspects of servant leadership and offer a framework to understand the degree to which divine right action demonstrates itself as a manifestation of foundational tenets of faith for leaders. The most notable and relevant of these tenets include.

1. Magis.
2. Being a man and woman for and with others.
3. Unity of heart, mind, and soul.
4. Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.
5. Forming and Educating Agents of Change.

The following chart illustrates connections between spiritual aspects of the Jesuit values and Caring Theory as they relate to community engagement.

Jesuit Values	Community Engagement Via the Lens of <i>Caring Theory</i>
<b>Magis:</b> To do “more” and always strive for excellence.	How might doing more serve the public good? In what ways might service yield the greatest benefit to all?
<b>Women and men for and with others:</b> Pursuing justice with and having concern for the poor or marginalized.	In what ways is it possible for community engagement to promote social justice?
<b>Cura personalis:</b> Care for the individual person	Can application of community engagement genuinely promote care for others? How might it work? How might it falter?
<b>Unity of heart, mind, and soul:</b> Developing the whole person and integrating all aspects of life.	Can community engagement be used as a tool to integrate heart, mind, and soul? If so, what if anything may be lost? What, if anything, is gained?
<b>Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam:</b> “For the greater glory of god.”	How do various faith traditions view community engagement? Can it be used for God’s glory?
<b>Forming and educating agents of change:</b> Teaching critical thought and responsible action on moral and ethical issues.	Is it possible for community engagement to serve as a guide for critical thought and responsible action? If so, what if anything is lost? What, if anything, is gained?

Like the Jesuit value of *Magis*, contributors of this edited volume “do more” by moving the theoretical to the practical and in so doing, exemplify excellence in and utility of scholarship and its application. This collaboration is a welcome addition to the field and counters the contemporary social climate, where political apathy has grown, and as traditional moral and ethical compasses rooted in Judeo-Christian principles are poorly adhered to or grossly ignored. Chapters within this volume exemplify these values in multifaceted ways. This volume, centered on servant leadership in education, illustrates commitment, compassion, as well as being leaders “for and with others.” It promises to not only inform, but to inspire and offer models of practice for both seasoned and novice leaders. This is particularly critical and needed given the increase in both administrators and teachers leaving K-12 education in the United States. “Leading With Soul” is a timely guide as educational leaders navigate the future of education.

## REFERENCE

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# FOREWORD

In an age marked by rapid change and relentless challenges, the need for authentic leadership has never been more pressing. In navigating the complexities of the modern world—where the lines between personal values and professional responsibilities often blur a different kind of leadership is needed, as opposed to the old, traditional, and expected models of leadership. Additionally, in the ever-evolving landscape of education, we find that the role of a school leader is both a profound privilege and a tremendous responsibility. As stewards of learning, school leaders have the unique opportunity to shape not only the academic experiences of students but also the culture and ethos of their institutions. This text is a compilation of insights on spiritual leadership, critical servant leadership, and leading with soul that invites us to delve deeper into the essence of what it means to lead with integrity, compassion, and purpose.

In this book, we are introduced to the transformative power of critical servant leadership—a philosophy and way of leading that is connected to marginalized communities and people; it is the willingness and commitment to care and promote equity, fairness, and justice (Alston & McClellan, 2011). It is the construction of an individual's type of leadership based on their individual and collective epistemologies and ontologies. Critical servant leadership goes beyond servant leadership by taking it a step further, challenging us to examine the systems and structures that shape our organizations and communities. It compels leaders to be not only servants to their teams but also advocates for justice and equity. This approach encourages us to confront uncomfortable truths and to engage in honest dialogue about power dynamics and societal inequities. It is a call to action, urging leaders to leverage their positions for the greater good and to uplift those who have been marginalized or overlooked. It is also a call for leadership from deep within, leadership from the spirit.

At its core, spiritual leadership transcends the conventional metrics of success. It calls on leaders to foster a sense of meaning and interconnectedness, to inspire those around them not just through words, but through the very essence of their being. This form of leadership recognizes that every individual possesses inherent worth and potential, and it seeks to cultivate environments where people can flourish both personally and professionally. In a world often driven by profit margins and performance metrics, spiritual leadership reminds us that true success is measured by the positive impact we have on others.

Within spiritual leadership is leading with soul. Leading with soul is about infusing our leadership practice with authenticity and passion. It is an invitation to bring our whole selves to our roles, embracing vulnerability and empathy as essential components of effective leadership. When we lead with soul, we create spaces where creativity thrives, where individuals feel valued, and where collaboration flourishes. This type of leadership resonates deeply, fostering loyal relationships and inspiring others to embark on their own journeys of growth and self-discovery.

As you reflect on the profound wisdom contained within these pages, remember the words of an old gospel song: “May the works that I have done speak for me...may the life that I have lived speak for me.” This sentiment encapsulates the essence of critical servant leadership, spiritual leadership, and leading with soul. It is not merely about the titles we hold or the accolades we receive but about the legacy we leave behind—how we have touched the lives of others, how we have stood for justice, and how we have inspired love and connection in a fragmented world. Thus, this text, *Leading with Soul: Examining the Praxis of Critical Servant Leadership Theory and Spiritual Leadership for School Administrators*, invites us to explore an approach to leadership that is deeply rooted in service, empathy, and a commitment to the holistic development of every individual within the school community. As you embark on the journey of this text, may you find inspiration to cultivate your own unique voice and approach. May you be empowered to lead not only with your mind, but with your heart and spirit, creating a ripple effect that transforms individuals, organizations, and communities.

Finally, as you immerse yourself in these pages, you are invited to reflect on your own leadership journey and consider how you can embody the principles of critical servant leadership, spiritual leadership, and leading with soul in your daily practice. Let this book serve as a beacon, illuminating the path toward a more compassionate and effective approach to leading our schools. In the end, may your work indeed speak for you—echoing the values of integrity, service, and a relentless dedication to the success and well-being of every student, teacher, and family in your care.

Welcome to this important journey of leadership and to a transformative exploration of leadership that speaks to the soul.

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## **REFERENCE**

Alston, J. A., & McClellan, P. A. (2011). *Herstories: Leading with the lessons of the lives of Black women activists*. Peter Lang Publishers.

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# PROLOGUE

This book was born from a desire to challenge and expand the often superficial understanding of servant leadership in PreK-12 educational settings. It critiques the ways in which servant leadership has been misinterpreted and misapplied, arguing that such misuse has led to a lack of true moral and spiritual leadership within schools. By focusing on the spiritual dimensions of leadership, this book invites educators and leaders to reflect deeply on how their personal beliefs and values shape their actions and decisions in the school community.

The discussions throughout this volume are both timely and necessary. In a moment where schools continue to grapple with racial and social inequities, there is an urgent need for leaders who not only recognize but actively combat these injustices. With critical servant leadership as a guiding framework, we argue for leadership that transcends traditional professional development strategies, advocating for an approach that is reflective, spiritual, and centered on equity.

As highlighted in the chapters, the current educational landscape demands leaders who are willing to engage with their own biases, challenge systemic inequities, and prioritize the well-being of all students, particularly those from minoritized groups. The overrepresentation of Black students in special education, remedial courses, and disciplinary actions, as well as the disproportionate impact of inequitable policies on Black communities, underscores the need for a moral and spiritual shift in leadership practice.

This book has also sought to contextualize critical servant leadership as a lived experience, with contributions from educators and researchers alike offering real-world examples of how this form of leadership manifests in diverse school settings. From rural superintendents who draw strength from their spirituality to school leaders who embody care and humanity in their daily work, the chapters illustrate the profound impact of servant leadership when it is deeply rooted in moral and spiritual principles.

Ultimately, this book is a call to action. It is a call for educators and school leaders to move beyond surface-level leadership strategies and engage with the deeper, more complex aspects of what it means to lead with morality, equity, and spirituality at the core. By embracing the principles of critical servant leadership, we believe leaders can create school environments that are not only inclusive and supportive but also transformative for students, teachers, and communities alike.

As we conclude *Leading with Soul: Examining the Praxis of Critical Servant Leadership Theory and Spiritual Leadership for School Administrators*, we return to the central theme that resonates throughout: leadership grounded in spirituality is not only essential but transformative for school communities. This perspective aligns with the idea that inclusion and equity are not merely policies but moral imperatives, driven by ethical commitments to social justice. In practice, such leadership demands a deep, soul-centered approach, transcending conventional boundaries to foster environments where both students and staff can thrive holistically. This reinforces the necessity for school leaders to embody critical servant leadership, where actions are informed by the principles of care, compassion, and a steadfast dedication to social justice.

It is the contributors' hope that the ideas presented here will inspire a new generation of leaders—leaders who are committed to nurturing the soul of education, addressing the needs of all students, and promoting justice, compassion, and humanity in our schools. The future of servant leadership lies not in a checklist of strategies but in the ongoing commitment to being morally grounded, spiritually attuned, and critically reflective leaders.

Dr. Yvette C. Latunde

## CHAPTER 1

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# NURTURING AND LEADING THE SOUL OF TEACHING FOR STUDENT TEACHERS WITH SERVANT LEADERSHIP

**Kathleen I. Harris**  
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### ABSTRACT

In order to promote servant leadership and a culture of service in a school community, this chapter explores servant leadership through the lens of *Seven Stages of Enlightened Teaching*. The exploratory study examines student teachers as servant leaders using the seven stages of enlightened teaching. By way of a learning community, student teachers share individual stages of enlightened teaching stages practiced during student teaching. As student teachers discovered stages of enlightened teaching in their own teaching, they identified strengths of servant leadership, and awakened holistic teaching, for the whole child in classrooms and the entire school community. The full chapter will include discussions and reflections from early childhood students regarding their vision of servant leadership during student teaching and the mindful connections with embracing the *Seven Stages of Enlightened Teaching*. By reflecting on the seven stages of enlightened teaching, student teachers improved an awareness of servant leadership through critical thinking, reflection, and commitment to their call and vocation of teaching and leadership.

*Keywords:* Inspirational teaching; teacher identity; ethical leadership; empathy in education; mentorship; guidance

## INTRODUCTION

In order to promote servant leadership and a culture of service in a school community, this chapter explores servant leadership through the lens of *Seven Stages of Enlightened Teaching*. This exploratory study examines student teachers as servant leaders using the seven stages of enlightened teaching. By way of a learning community, student teachers share individual stages of enlightened teaching stages practiced during student teaching. As student teachers discovered stages of enlightened teaching in their own teaching, they identified strengths of servant leadership, and awakened holistic teaching, for the whole child in classrooms and the entire school community. The full chapter will include discussions and reflections from early childhood students regarding their vision of servant leadership during student teaching and the mindful connections with embracing the *Seven Stages of Enlightened Teaching*. By reflecting on the seven stages of enlightened teaching, student teachers improved an awareness of servant leadership through critical thinking, reflection, and commitment to their call and vocation of teaching and leadership.

## TEACHER IDENTITY

Student teachers' identities have the potential to impact all aspects of pre-service teachers' work in field experiences, including what ideas and concepts they choose to accept or reject and how they teach (Pinnegar et al., 2011). Teachers' identities can influence teachers' beliefs, or visions, function as understandings that impact planning for teaching as well as teacher interactions and actions with children, families, and colleagues in and outside the classroom (Hammerness et al., 2005). Teachers' perceptions, attitudes, dispositions, and beliefs change, and potential changes play a role in how beginning early childhood educators shape the roles they adopt and the professional development of their identities (Kesen, 2013). Teacher identity is a socially constructed view of self (Dolloff, 1999). Identity is related to competence and connectedness, which are both important aspects of the dispositions of holistic early childhood teachers and essential in the ability to move forward successfully into the chosen vocation (Juselsson, 1996).

Opportunities in studying academic subjects can awaken a sense of self and yield clues to one's identity, but the call to teach comes not only from external encounters. Ultimately, the authentic call comes from the voice of the teacher within, the voice that invites and honors teaching as a calling and vocation (Palmer, 2003). The inner voice, the teacher within, is the voice of dignity and integrity. Listening and paying attention offers an

answer to the question, “Who am I as a teacher?” How does an early childhood education student, just starting his or her professional journey into student teaching attend to identity and address the voice of the teacher within? Hoffman-Kipp (2008) states teacher identity is the intersection of personal, pedagogical, and political participation and reflection with a community. Teacher identity is also dynamic, and part of an active process of learning to teach (Trent, 2010). Several variables influence teacher identity including prior experiences motivation and emotions (Findlay, 2006; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Teacher identity may play a key role in decisions teachers make about teaching practices, the content they teach, and how they seek professional development opportunities (Hammerness et al., 2005). Teaching is simply not only a profession (Durka, 2002). Teaching recognizes a sense of adventure to engage the world (Durka, 2002). Teaching embraces the essence of holistic teaching by being compassionate, caring, selfless and compelling. Each teaching vocation is unique; each teacher dwells in the identity in a unique way (Durka, 2002). Palmer (1998) states that teaching, like other human activities, emerges from one’s inwardness, for better or for worse.

### **SPIRITUAL AWARENESS**

Our spiritual lives consist of participating with a community with a set of rituals that identify and express our values and beliefs (Yust, 2004). Spirituality involves extending beyond the self in search of purpose, meaning, connectedness and contribution (Benson, et al. 2003). Spirituality accentuates the personal faith journey we take in life (Friesen, 2000). Spirituality embraces empathy, compassion, connectedness, creativity, and holistic seeing. Defining spirituality is more a matter of recognizing a dynamic and emerging process, than looking at a static set of beliefs and practices (Craigie, 2010). Spirituality can be described as a personal search for deep inner understanding and purpose (Lin, 2006). The synergy we receive from spiritual awareness may lead to fulfillment and happiness (Gill, 2022). Spirituality in the teaching life is the unmistakable spark that makes a teacher joyful, wise, and fully alive; it’s an invitation to a journey of the heart (Paris, 2016). Spirituality involves going beyond the self in search of meaning, purpose, and connectedness (Benson, et al. 2003). Spiritual journeys are very personal. The eminence of our inner lives—the ability to give and receive given gracefully to student teachers when practicing servant leadership during student teaching, inevitably influences students. Spirituality links brain, mind, body, and soul (Miller, 2016). Schools are now highlighting more spiritual values among their faculty to reveal their strengths and full potential to teaching and leadership in teaching. Student teachers have the potential to acquire

spiritual awareness when they encounter their own depths, fears, and desires (Lichtmann, 2005).

## TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Real teaching is leadership. Leadership in schools consists of holding fast to a vision of democratic learning communities and taking actions, both small and large, to disrupt equity and inclusion (Callay, 2016). Teacher leadership happens every day for teachers. Student teachers begin this journey by asking questions, taking risks, and being open to new collaborations both inside and outside the classroom. Each new day during student teaching, they are collaborating with others, conducting well-designed inquiry, and forming new partnerships. Teaching leadership means embracing the tensions and stress of being in relationships with students, cooperating teachers, families, and school colleagues (Gergen, 2009). At times, student teaching can be very stressful with responds to the ups and down of the school day. During these stressful times, it takes the courage of student teachers to trust their instincts, and interpretations and to take action. During these times, the characteristics and qualities of servant leadership such as integrity, respect, empathy, and authentic awareness can support student teachers with new opportunities to embrace leadership roles in schools and also culturally responsive practices to transform themselves, their students, and families. Leadership is problematic to understand and it is even more difficult to practice as a new teacher, and so further insights into the theory and practice of servant leadership should be considered and welcomed in student teacher seminars (Prosser, 2007). Leadership is an ongoing process for new student teachers that continues to grow and encounter new experiences and opportunities. Leadership is more than a mere title; leadership is a way of being (Scott, 2005). One of the ways student teachers can grow throughout their student teaching is integrating their gifts of servant leadership with others.

## SERVANT LEADERSHIP

In the 1970s, Robert Greenleaf published an essay titled *The Servant as Leader*. Greenleaf's concept of servant leadership integrated with leadership of the visionary, teacher, and shepherd. The servant leader is servant first. Great leaders are seen as servants first (Prosser, 2007). It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first (Greenleaf, 1977, 1956). This essay was inspired by Herman Heese's book, *Journey to the East* (1956). This book reminded Greenleaf of the role of prophecy in Christianity. As a

result, the role of servant leadership has grown into many workplace environments including educational settings. The virtue of generosity as unique in servant leadership reflects the virtue of altruistic love, the basis of all other virtues (Bocarnea et al., 2018). A combination of personal traits, motivation to lead, and a need to serve others characterizes servant leaders (van Dierendonck, 2011). A servant leader is sincerely concerned with serving followers (Greenleaf, 1977). Servant leadership serves the definitive source of significance and value (Zohar & Marshall, 2001). Examples of servant leaders include Dalai Lama, Nelson Mandela, Mother Theresa, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Understanding of servant leadership has increased in several years (Gill, 2022). Servant leadership changes the focus of leadership theories by emphasizing the ideal of service in the leader-follower relationship. Therefore, this could be a leadership theory with great potential (van Dierendonck, 2011).

Servant leadership is a philosophy of service first (Terrell, 2018). The servant leader shares power and very attentive on the development of those the leader serves. The desired outcome of the people and community and that those served will, in turn, will also serve and build a stronger community (Terrell, 2018). Servant leaders many times leads from a place of purpose and passion. Adopting servant leadership into a classroom or a professional development meeting does not automatically insure student teachers will become servant leaders. Student teachers need to practice and reflect on the characteristics of servant leadership first; for example, exercise care as well as lead, a teacher who will protect as well as guide. The servant leader will look to leadership as a form of service to other students, families, and colleagues, and undertake responsibilities willingly. As a student teacher commented during a student teaching seminar,

To me, being a servant leader is to serve a specific population to one's highest ability. By leading, I hope to offer motivation to others, which will fuel their willingness to also lead and move forward with our center's vision. I want to protect children from current and future issues that may arise whether it be a peer issue or societal issue. I will always strive for betterment/growth of self, professionals, and for my students.

Servant leaders do not ponder the position of leader to be a reason to assume a higher attitude to those being led (Prosser, 2007). Greenleaf (1977) reminds us that it is the seeker who may down the journey become the prophet.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Great leaders are seen as servants first (Prosser, 2007). Servant leadership is similar to transformational leadership in that both put emphasis on, escalate, and empower followers (Dhiman, 2017). Servant leadership emphasizes service to others, a holistic approach to work, promoting a sense of community and collaboration in decision-making (Spears, 2004). There are ten characteristics of the servant leader. These are (1) listening; the servant leader is committed to intentionally listening to children, families, administrators, colleagues; (2) empathy; the servant leader is authentic and committed not only to listening to others but also emphasizes with students and families; (3) healing; the servant leader will offer support, warm care and encourages personal growth; (4) awareness of being 'awake' and seeing the whole picture; the servant leader is always awake to new ideas (5) persuasion; the servant leader has the strengths, communication skills, and collaboration skills to build consensus with groups; (6) conceptualization; the servant leader understands the important of keeping balance; (7) foresight, a visionary; the servant leader will share a clear sense of vision for short-and-long-term goals; (8) stewardship; the servant leader has a commitment to serving the needs of others. The servant leader is entrusted and serves other using openness and persuasion, rather than control; (9) commitment to the growth of students and families by nurturing the personal, professional, and spiritual of others; the servant leader works hard for positive outcomes for children's success with academic subjects; (10) building community; the servant leader believes in developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive teaching practices by building relationships with families and building a strong classroom community where every child's voice and experiences are honored. The servant leader believes in equity and inclusion for all young children and understands the importance that every child and family are visible in the classroom community.

## ENLIGHTENED SERVANT LEADERS

Characteristics of the enlightened servant leader include leading by example and inspiring others into servant leaders. These student teachers practice servant leadership daily through role modeling characteristics of servant leadership to their students and collaborating as a school community with colleagues and administrators. They also listen to intuition and reflect on personal thoughts, beliefs, bias, and actions as their identity strengthens with intentional listening, compassionate empathy, stewardship, and mindful awareness. Enlightened student teachers integrates the

mind, body, emotions, and spirituality by feeling more valued in a servant leader environment. They approach leadership with a humble and serving attitude. They lead by example and turn others into leaders in the classroom. Enlightened teachers believe seeing is believing and not seeing is believing. Student teachers who embraced enlightened teaching approach children with kindness and behave ethically. Many continue their education by applying to graduate school. The fundamental mind-set of a servant leader is a strong desire to contribute. Stephen Covey (2004) states within each of us there is a zest and inner longing to live a life of magnitude and contribution to make a difference.

### SEVEN STAGES OF ENLIGHTENED TEACHING

The *Seven Stages of an Enlightened Teacher*, written by Dr. Christine Jax (2011), presents holistic teaching, demonstrating why teaching is a vocation and a special calling. The *Seven Stages of Enlightened Teaching* is a special resource for new student teachers because the message from each stage reminds us of that teaching is for a special few. The messages in each stage of enlightened teaching discovers our humanity and the commonalities we share with others, including those we teach and those we lead (Jax, 2011). The book is grounded in theory that the education of another person is a spiritual endeavor that improves at the inner life of the teacher.

Stages of the enlightened teacher focus on holistic teaching and provides student teachers ways to grow spiritually, while focusing on their strengths and characteristics of servant leadership. The seven stages of enlightened teaching are evolutionary and accumulative (Jax, 2011). There is commitment to the heart, spirit, and soul of teaching rather than just student content. Through strategies, inspirations, meditations, and mindful practices, the seven stages of enlightened teaching supports teachers to go through stages (for example: searcher, protector, competitor, mentor, leader, creator, and healer) in order to become energized, fulfilled, and successful at increasing professionalism and servant leadership. Table 1.1 list the seven stages of enlightened teaching with characteristics of each stage. Every stage of enlightened teaching can be an aspect of a teacher's life (Jax, 2011).

The seven stages of enlightened teaching reminds student teachers they have the ability to understand challenges, increase control of situations, make improvements to their teaching and leadership style, and also be truly happy and joyful in their vocation of teaching. This book can be used in three ways. First, it is a guide to find out and assess at which stage the student teacher is currently experiencing. Second, the book provides a

**TABLE 1.1 Seven Stages of Enlightened Teaching**

Enlightened Stage of Teaching	Strengths and Characteristics
Searcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of newness and freshness</li> <li>• Loyal</li> <li>• Dependable</li> <li>• Benefits from modest improvements to physical health and strengths</li> <li>• Clear view of their surroundings</li> </ul>
Competitor Protector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deserving of success</li> <li>• Problem solver</li> <li>• Coaching</li> <li>• Enjoys being around others who are active</li> <li>• Enjoys what you can learn from other people</li> <li>• Appreciate human-made systems; fit well with strong hierarchical</li> <li>• Caring</li> <li>• Kind</li> <li>• Responsible, nurturing</li> <li>• Content, comfortable</li> <li>• Overly protective at times</li> <li>• Fearful at times of change could be a weakness</li> <li>• Optimistic</li> <li>• Wants to make life better for others</li> </ul>
Mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets clear boundaries for self and others</li> <li>• Kind, attentive, and empathic</li> <li>• Guiding</li> <li>• Teach others how to improve their lives</li> <li>• Generous, secure, trusting</li> </ul>
Creator Leader Healer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intuitive</li> <li>• Balanced</li> <li>• Everyone is a friend or a potential friend</li> <li>• Creates harmony</li> <li>• Motivated by self-expression and guided by faith</li> <li>• Generous</li> <li>• Easy going</li> <li>• Wise</li> <li>• Inspirational</li> <li>• Truthful</li> <li>• Lives in the now</li> <li>• Peaceful</li> <li>• Spiritual</li> <li>• Non-judgmental</li> <li>• Always on a journey</li> <li>• Operates on faith and love</li> <li>• Service-oriented</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Jax, (2011).