

Nurturing the Soul of Leadership: Leading and Flourishing in Difficult Times

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KERN NATIONAL NETWORK
FOR FLOURISHING IN MEDICINE
Character. Caring. Practical Wisdom.

Aims for Today's Session

- 1 Explore leadership paradigms from a transformative approach rooted in flourishing and relational leadership
- 2 Reflect on your values, identity, and purpose and articulate how they shape your practice as a leader
- 3 Identify practical strategies that support personal flourishing and leadership effectiveness to create more supportive, dynamic cultures



Why Flourishing?



What Does Flourishing Leadership Mean to You?

Free-write, draw or find an image or artifact as you consider:



What does flourishing leadership look like or mean to you?



Think of a leader who has supported your flourishing—what was it about their approach and impact?

Flourishing as Defined in KNN Framework

Flourishing refers to a wholeness—of being and doing, of realizing one's potential and helping others do the same.¹ It can be measured across domains of:

- Happiness and life satisfaction
- Physical and mental health
- Meaning and purpose
- Character and virtue
- Relationships

It is most commonly achieved through pathways of family, work, education and spiritual community.²

1. Su, F (2020)

2. VanderWeele, TJ (2017)

The KNN's North Star: A Framework for Flourishing



Practical Wisdom

Using acquired experience to discern the right way to do the right thing in a particular circumstance, with a particular person, at a particular time.²

Character

A constellation of characteristics—moral, civic, intellectual and performance—formed over time and manifest in dispositions and practices.³

Flourishing

Flourishing refers to a wholeness—of being and doing, of realizing one's potential and helping others do the same. It can be measured across the domains of happiness and life satisfaction, physical and mental health, meaning and purpose, character and virtue, and relationships, and it is most commonly achieved through pathways of family, work, education and spiritual community.¹

Individuals

Medical and Other Health Professions Education

Health Systems and Other Practice Environments

Society

Caring

A blend of practices, dispositions and motivations—attentiveness, responsibility, competency, responsiveness and engagement/citizenship—all aimed at ensuring that individuals and populations grow, develop and flourish as best they can.⁴

The Need for a New Leadership Paradigm

Traditional Leadership Development in Academic Medicine

- Drives organizational culture of production, transaction and efficiency
- Remains an identified gap despite ample programming
- Suggests typical approaches grounded in hierarchical power paradigms are not sufficient





A New Paradigm: Leadership for Flourishing

As we nurture our *roots* –
our *souls* – we are better
equipped to take care of
the *roots* – the *souls* – of
those that we lead.

Leaders' Mental Models Affect Culture

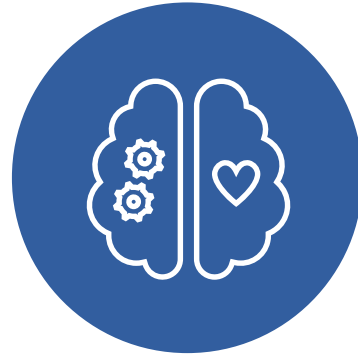


Leadership Through the Lens of FRT

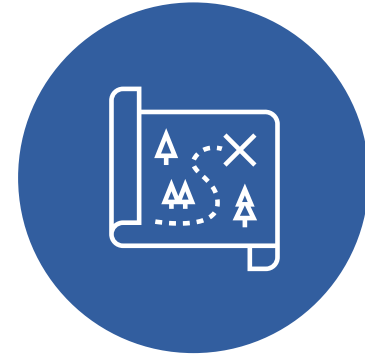
Selected Highlights of Feminist Relational Theory



**Co-creation of norms
through day-to-day
interactions**



**Welcomes multiple
frameworks and
ways of knowing**



**Roots itself in
non-ideal theory**



Non-Ideal Theory

The world is far from ideal, and change **can** and **should** occur within the current state — and not wait until a more idyllic reality emerges



Perceptions of Flourishing Leadership

Key Elements



Brings meaning and purpose
“inspiration”

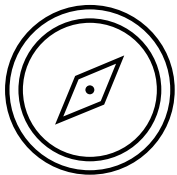


Is relational
“love”

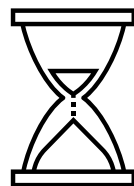


service
to others

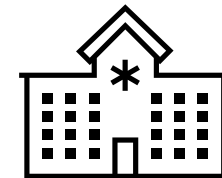
Systemic Barriers



lack of faculty
agency



time
constraints



misalignment with
institutional
values

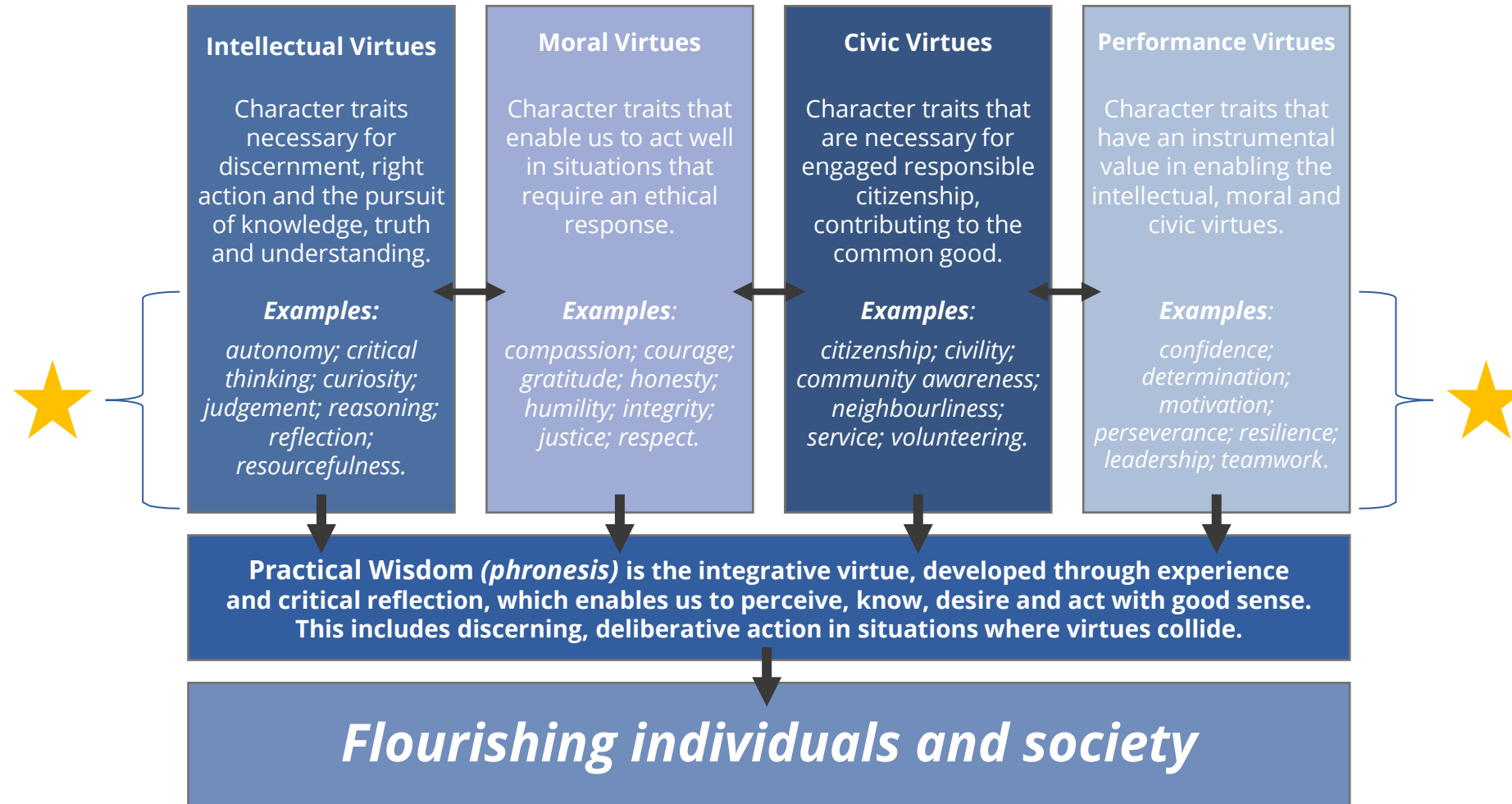
Connecting to our Purpose & Values

Living and Leading with Your Core Values

- Many potential values or concepts
- Narrowing and naming top values is centering in times of challenge, ambiguity and competing priorities
- Value conflict / incongruity connected to burnout and engagement levels
- Frequently cited by leaders as transformational for mental models



Cultivating the Building Blocks of Character



Expanded Practice: Broader Applications

Practical steps for identifying and honoring others' values:

- ❑ Use **core values exercise** with your team
- ❑ Discuss **how you might help** them stay true to those values day-to-day
- ❑ Write **"I see this in you" notes** to appreciate and recognize others

Expanded Practice: Broader Applications

How might these concepts be applied to...

- Policies?
- Practices?
- Organizing norms?



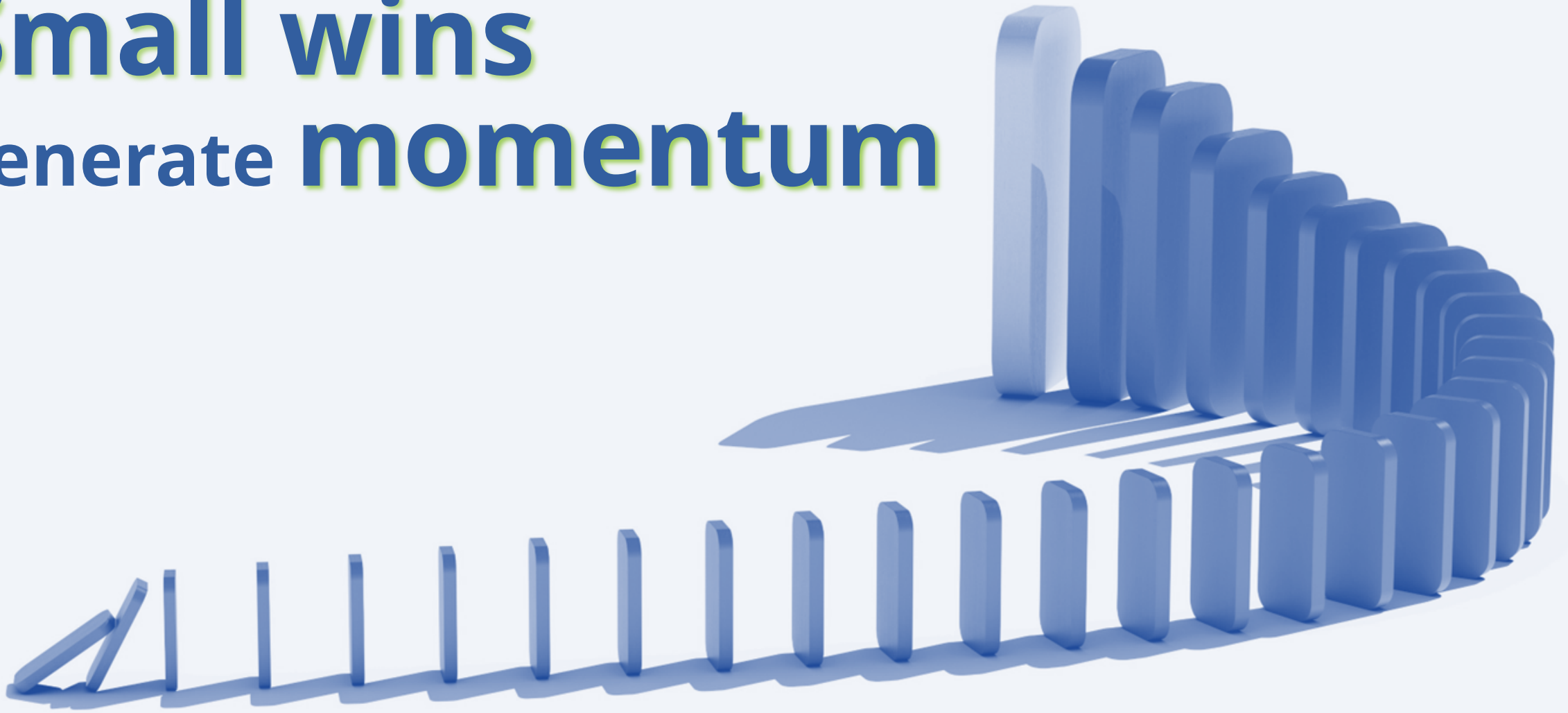
How Do We Stay Rooted?

Moment of Reflection

What will you do to advance flourishing in your sphere of influence?



Small wins generate momentum





Questions?

Thank You

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Appendix

Symbolic Significance of Framework Imagery

- **Blue concentric rings:**
show the levels of the ecosystem across which the elements of character, caring and practical wisdom operate to promote flourishing from the individual to society as a whole
- **Tree as a whole:**
represents flourishing through character, caring and practical wisdom
- **Tree trunk:**
depicts interrelationship of character and caring as a structure that supports and leads to flourishing
- **Branches:**
two main branches represent the different but related roles of character and caring; practical wisdom is represented by the off-shooting limbs from the main branches
- **Leaves:**
different leaf colors reflect that flourishing can ebb and flow

Definitions Informing the Framework

- 1) **Flourishing:** “A state in which all aspects of a person’s life are good; involves numerous domains of life, including happiness and life satisfaction, physical and mental health, meaning and purpose, character and virtue, and close social relationships.” (VanderWeele)

“Human flourishing refers to a wholeness — of being and doing, of realizing one’s potential and helping others do the same, of acting with honor and treating others with dignity, of living with integrity even in challenging circumstances. It is not the same as happiness, and it is not just a state of mind. The well-lived life is a life of human flourishing.” (Su)

- 2) **Practical Wisdom:** “Using acquired experience to discern the right way to do the right thing in a particular circumstance, with a particular person, at a particular time.” [One who:]

- “knows the proper aims of the activity she is engaged in, wants to do the right thing to achieve these aims, and wants to meet the needs of the people she is serving;
- knows how to improvise, balancing conflicting aims and interpreting rules and principles in light of the particularities of each context;
- is perceptive, reads social contexts, and [...] sees the gray in a situation;

- knows how to take on the perspective of another, [...] feels empathy and make decisions that serve others;
- knows how to make emotion an ally of reason, rely on emotion to signal what a situation calls for, and inform judgment without distorting it; and,
- is an experienced person.” (Schwartz and Sharpe)

- 3) **Character:** “The complex [constellation] of psychological characteristics that [motivates and] enables individuals to act as moral agents.” (Berkowitz and Bier)

These characteristics are developmentally dependent and contextually formed over time. Character manifests in dispositions and practices, which are influenced by situations and valued according to the sociocultural context.

- 4) **Caring:** “A blend of practices, dispositions and motivations all aimed at ensuring that individuals and populations grow, develop and flourish as best they can. Caring is:

- situated in the context of relationships and built on acceptance of interdependence;
- acknowledges inherent power imbalances but eschews dominance and seeks humility;
- reliant on trust as a precondition and is also generated in a reinforcing loop, and is mutually beneficial and rewarding.” (Tronto, Held, and Mayeroff)

References for Framework Components

Flourishing

- 1) VanderWeele, T.J. (2017). On the promotion of human flourishing. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 114(31), pp.8148-8156.
Su, F.E. (2020). *Mathematics for human flourishing*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Practical Wisdom

- 2) Schwartz, B., & Sharpe, K. (2010). *Practical wisdom: The right way to do the right thing*. New York, NY: Riverhead Books.

Character

- 3) Berkowitz, M.W. & Bier, M.C. (2004). Research-Based Character Education. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 591(1), pp. 72-85.
Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues (2022). *The Jubilee Centre Framework for Character Education in Schools*. Third Edition. Birmingham: University of Birmingham, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues.

In addition, this definition was adapted from and informed by the work of several other authors including Larry Nucci, PhD, and Philippa Foot, PhD.

Caring

- 4) Tronto, J.C. (2013). *Caring democracy: Markets, equality, and justice*. New York, NY: NYU Press.
Tronto, J.C. (1993). *Moral boundaries: a political argument for an ethic of care*. New York, NY: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.
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