

# Be the change

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Mohatma Gandhi once said, “ Be the change you want to see in the world.” Although many individuals find it easier to simply prescribe to an already-organized cause, this sometimes isn’t enough.

For those of us who are looking to make a change in the world, we have our predetermined standards and goals, whether we simply want to change the structure of a school classroom, or take the more daunting step of altering the society at large. When we first recognize a group or organization that seems to share our ideals, it seems like an effortless decision to enlist as a member; we feel accepted, and as if our voice is acknowledged, and meaningful. This is not to say that in many cases, this is not true. More often than not, we do find meaning in that certain structure, and, as time passes, we see the results of our endeavors as an alteration in the world around us. For example, those in the Occupy Movements occurring throughout the United States have had a visible impact upon the public, and their objective is being addressed, one day at a time.

Upon closer examination, however, there is a key aspect: There is no ‘ leader’ of the movement, in the static sense that Leader usually implies. There are historical figures—such as Guy Fawkes—that are sometimes represented as a model for this or that action, but a Revolution is an ageless concept. There is no one individual that every Occupier looks to—the person of the day changes by the moment, because the face and voice that moves their feet is that of the the oppressed, the silenced, the abused and unincluded. There are many faces. This, however, is not a speech in favor of, or against, the Occupy Movement—although I tip my head to their efforts—or, for that matter, any other movement in the United States. This is an address

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to the idea of Leadership, and why those who believe “ The only Leader you can trust is the one you become” are among the wise.

Leadership is a fragile and sometimes merciless task. To become a Leader, it is sometimes necessary to sacrifice some of yourself in the cause of something -larger- than yourself. Leaders, however-if history repeats itself-seem to reach a point when those sacrifices seem to become, instead, demands of sacrifice. Where once there was an altruistic dedication of time, time is now being asked of you, where time is not being repayed in turn. Where once the “ good of the people” thrived, all too often, “ the people’s good contributions to myself” arises. In other words, as author Mark Chadbourn’s character, Mallory, so artfully stated in his novel *The Devil In Green*: “.

.. You don’t put your trust in people who set themselves up as leaders, Miller. In religion, in politics, in the military, in business . . .

the simple act of seeking high office is a signifier of a peculiar, unreliable, controlling, unpleasant pathology that means they shouldn’t be allowed any kind of power. And I’ll keep saying that over and over again until everyone on this planet listens.” That is why the leaders who are to be trusted are not to be self-declared, but chosen. They are not to ‘ run’ for the office of Leader, to ask for a vote, to imply the ability to lead, but be leaders without being asked, and without the need to be one. A True Leader is an individual who takes a cause to heart, and follows through with the actions necessary to make that cause a reality, with or without a following. They are to carry-out those intentions in a setting that does not welcome their provocations and

advancements; on the contrary, their entire motivation to make change should come from the reality that change is not by any means easy to come by.

These leaders are to come of a cut of the people in which their hardships, suffering, and discontent inspire them to act. It is not the promise of political authority, nor the power of Office, that should convince a Leader to lead; these incentives are strictly ones of face-gain, and are obtained by means which can only be achieved through the immediate following of other people. These 'leaders' cannot make the rise to leadership of their own accord, and, therefore, having "set themselves up as leaders", are not to be trusted. When there is something to gain beside the knowledge that change will come of your actions, then your motivations are tainted. There is no need for campaigning, nor for tours.

When you are meant to lead, then those who support you will come when the time is right. To Be The Change is more than just a montra for the visionary to repeat. It is a figurative and literal direction from a man who did not ask for leadership. Making change is more than rallies and picketing and protesting. You are not a human holding a sign, declaring a demand; you are the sign, are the demand, and the voice, and the dream, and the result.

When you lead as a leader is meant to, you are not an individual seeking unquestioning support, are not seeking election and press-releases. You are a visionary seeking those who share your vision, and not 'enlisting' them, or binding others to your cause, but one who walks, undaunted, towards a future goal, and accepting, without exception, any who wish to walk beside

you. You are not seeking to set a pace to remain one step ahead of them, nor do you seek to fall back and be carried along. You seek to walk with those who see as you do, feel and think as you feel and think, and not be given blind obedience, but be questioned, critiqued, and challenged. You are open to-expect-discourse, and welcome debate. You question 'evident truths', and do not expect any of your own truths to be accepted as 'evident'.

You disturb age-old foundations in order to examine what lies beneath them, and do not ask for anyone to solidify your own foundations until they come to their own conclusion. Philosophy is not an answer, but a tool. Authorities are not a lifestyle, but a viewpoint. If you are an adamant believer in a faith, or an ideal, a religion, or a Party, let no one say to you, "If you find an authority on your cause who supports your ideals, then I shall accept you." Suffer no one to say this, for, when the first human decided to believe in One god, there was no authority to tell him the validity of his decision.

When the world was speculated to be round, there was no authority to 'support' the claim; on the contrary, all evidence and popular belief suggested the opposite. When Newton addressed the reality of Gravity, there was no 'resource' to support his claims. In other words, even 'authorities' were once individuals who were believed by no one, ridiculed by many, and only followed by some. All authority came of new roots. For this very reason, those who set themselves up as Leaders, declare themselves specialists, offer themselves as Philosophers', are anything but. A true cut of any of these things will not advertise as such, but answer as called upon.

This is why Socrates so wisely stated: " When I left him, I reasoned thus with myself: I am wiser than this man, for neither of us appears to know anything great and good; but he fancies he knows something, although he knows nothing; whereas I, as I do not know anything, so I do not fancy I do. In this trifling particular, then, I appear to be wiser than he, because I do not fancy I know what I do not know." Only foolish the foolish proclaim themselves as that which they wish to be. Teachers' who make of teaching a profession of monetary gain, do not have knowledge at heart. Combatants who do not fight with a complete devotion to the defense of what they cherish most, but instead subscribe to patriotism, have no cause for which to fight for. Leaders who seek to have placed upon them the stole of Leadership are unfit to lead.

Authorites who fancy themselves specialists of their knowledge lack humility, and know nothing of truth. The only leader you can trust is the one that you become. The only cause that you can dedicate yourself wholly to, is the one which you create. The only change that you can call your own, is the one you choose to be. All revolutionaries must find their bearings beneath some banner, but true growth and maturity of ideals only comes when they acknowledge that which they have gained from the progress of others, and inevitably make a new path on their mission to be the change that they want in the world.

I have been ' elected' as a leader, and have felt the emptiness of knowing that I was not that change, but placed into it. I have participated in those groups who have claimed their mission as one of change and action, but have realized that I can only make as much change as those around me are willing to make. I have followed those leaders who have asked for leadership, <https://assignbuster.com/be-the-change/>

who have asked for support, and who have only acted once they have gained that support, and realized that their success comes not from themselves, but from those who have supported them, and in that, I saw that the people, not the leader, were the change. Be the change that you want in the world, Gandhi said, and it was not until this moment that I realized that I had sought change in those collectives and groups which have stated that change is possible, but only after contributions, and freely given obedience. The tools of change are not Flags' and Office, are not Election and Campaign, but thought, knowledge, voice, action, and, most importantly, dreams. My dream is to see ethics, philosophy, morality, justice, equality, truth, and the challenge of static concepts reintroduced into the slowly stagnating generation of today.

Therefore, I shall not seek out those who have already begun this effort, but be the effort myself. In those same respects, I ask those who read this not to follow me out of the belief that, by doing so, you further my cause. I tell you, I shall forge ahead, with or without the support of others, for to stand alone in my beliefs is only further motivation as to why I must act. I ask you not to follow me because you believe this is the only way to make a change in the world, because, I tell you, if this is your reasoning, you shall not see the change you desire through my actions. The change I seek has been clearly stated, and no amount of followers shall cause me to deviate from that path.

I ask you not to follow me in order to elect me, or promote me, advertise my cause, nor advocate it, for, I tell you, my cause has been began and achieved from the moment I decided to follow it. I ask you not to follow me. I ask nothing. I say, walk beside me if and when you are willing. I ask you to <https://assignbuster.com/be-the-change/>

challenge me, question me, debate me, overcome me when I am unfit to fulfill that which I have begun, and carry on in that stead.

I ask you to walk with me, not because you trust me, but because you have put your trust in the need and possibility of change. Figures—real and fictional—have seen and addressed the simple reality that this world we all live upon is not perfect; it becomes more flawed everyday, even as we match its flaws with solutions. None of us have any unfaltering desire to use that which is broken; deep down, we always wish we can repair that which has been destroyed, even as we sweep away its parts. I tell you, unlike glass, this world is not beyond repair. The reconstruction will not come of legislation, law, politics, and government, but from the people, because we are the ones who walk upon the shards and fragments, we are the ones who suffer the scrapes of that which is broken, and as Time calls away those who have come before us, it is we, the youth, who must step up to inherit all of the pieces of the world that we did not create, nor shall complete.

This world is a tapestry with no foreseeable end in sight to its design. Each one of us is an artist that may contribute to the pattern that is even now being woven, and we are being handed the tools needed to add our thread to the weave. We hold the power to repair, to build, to create, and to destroy, and it is only through a mediation of each— to repair those necessities which have been broken, to build those things which need be built to progress, to create those ideals which have yet to be imagined, and to destroy those concepts which have become unjust, stagnant, outdated, or un-needed—, it is only through a balance of these things, that change will come about. I have come to distrust those who ask for Leadership, those who

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ask for others to make change for them, not because of a cynical nature, but because I crave so much more change. I am not naive enough to believe that the change I want to see in this world will come of its own accord; on the contrary, I see daily evidence of a slow decay of society and humanity which saddens my soul.

That is why I make this call to action, not to follow me on my path to make the change I wish to see, but a call to action for you all to think for yourselves, evaluate your dreams and what you want to see changed, and decide of your own free will how to bring it about. In this goal, walk beside me, and, if, along that path, our dreams take us in separate directions, I shall know that a kindred belief in the need and power to bring about change by our own voice and hands is what began us on the road to begin with, and, no matter the result—whether it be destruction or creation—in this way, shall we be the change we wish to see. Walk with me.