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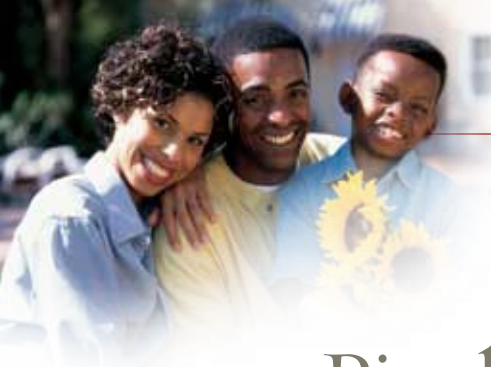


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Pipelines and Perseverance

BY SUSAN E. MURRAY

And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. —Luke 2:52 NIV

In a recent blog, Tim Elmore* shared that he and his team had assessed 8,500 students from 29 public high schools. While they discovered a low view of morality, assumptions about leadership, and how much students' aspirations and goals played a role in the graduation rate and their life after high school, the researchers discovered something more. As teens began to emerge as leaders, there were four paths they seemed to take en route. "In other words," he stated, "we found four pipelines that repeatedly produced leaders who gained influence among peers."

The P.I.P.E. Line

People: The students who became natural leaders were "others-minded." Yes, they showed common courtesies toward peers, but they also saw a world outside themselves. They were mindful of the needs and wants of others and acted in light of this.

Ideas: A second path toward leadership began in some students who simply had ideas and weren't afraid to share them. The teen with the idea soon became the teen with the influence among his/her peers. It had more to do with having a voice and being heard than it did about having good or not-so-good ideas.

Planning: Some students found their way into leadership because they thought ahead and could see what had to happen to pull off an idea. Even if they didn't come up with the idea, they knew how to implement it. "It proved the man with the plan is the man with the power," said Tim.

Energy: The fourth pipeline was pure energy. These students emerged as natural leaders because they possessed passion and energy, and it was contagious. Even though they weren't necessarily the best and brightest, they moved and inspired others through their sheer vigor.



We each have an important role in encouraging our youth and helping them identify and find the ways they can and do lead others — be it by being inclusive of others and others-minded, gaining influence by sharing ideas, being a source of creativity and thinking ahead, or an ability to motivate peers by their own passion and energy.

There's another pressing need today, and that is to assist our youth in increasing their capacity to persevere through distraction and difficulty to accomplish challenging tasks at school, home and in their church. It's about teaching, involving them in activities that strengthen their habits of motivation, leadership and persistence, and by celebrating with them as they grow in wisdom and stature.

How about having conversations about pipelines and perseverance with youth you know?!

Susan E. Murray is a professor emerita of behavioral sciences at Andrews University, certified family life educator, and licensed marriage and family therapist.

*Tim Elmore is the founder and president of Growing Leaders, an Atlanta-based nonprofit organization created to develop emerging leaders. See <http://www.GrowingLeaders.com>.