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## Qualities Of A Leader Present In Malcolm X And Lao-tzu

The key to the most important qualities of a good leader lies in one's own self authenticity. Qualities of a leader is important to the ones that are being led. It could make or break an individual, community, or even an entire country. There are specific elements that separate good leadership from bad leadership, such as transparency, honesty, communication, integrity, confidence, and courage just to name a few. One who carries these qualities usually aims to make positive things happen and less of gaining personal benefits or control.

The most influential teachings of leadership come from Machiavelli and Lao-Tzu. Although the philosophy from the two are most certainly contrast there could be a good balance obtaining the two when it comes to great leadership in the modern world. On one hand you have Machiavelli, "Do whatever it takes for whatever the situation is called for" method. Then on the other hand you have Lao-Tzu the Father of Chinese Taoism, "Go with the flow" known author of the Tao-Te-Ching. Some of the world today can easily frown on either qualities of these leaders such as Machiavelli and Lao-Tzu, yet these teachings can hold and stand on much truth in today's time. We don't like to look at fearing someone as a good thing, but some cases you definitely need your enemies or people in general to fear you out of the understanding that there could be great punishment if ever crossed. One interesting quote from Machiavelli that bluntly says, "And a prince you lacks this lacks the most important quality in a leader" (87).

Malcolm X, one of the most influential leaders of the Nation of Islam as well as with Black Nationalism, was feared by many of his oppressors which were definitely Machiavellian in nature. Much like one of his own influencers, Jamaican born Marcus Garvey was a huge advocate for justice, freedom, equality, and the unification for blacks in the early 1900's. He believed that African-Americans should be in control and secure their own financial independence from white people. He was feared by followers within his own movement. Malcolm taught that if you are nonviolent with people in his movement they would be nonviolent back "Those days are over, they're gone, that's yesterday. The time for you and me to allow ourselves to be brutalized nonviolently is passé. Be nonviolent only with those who are nonviolent to you. And when you can bring me a nonviolent racist, bring me a nonviolent segregationist, then I'll get nonviolent" (1113). However, he stood for justice and fought for equality and freedom for black people by any means necessary. In 1964, Malcolm X delivered his first public address about self-defense at the founding rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU). Mr. X made powerful statements throughout his speech addressing self-defense during the fight for freedom and equality amongst African-Americans, "to fight whoever gets in our way, to bring about the complete independence of people of African descent here in the Western Hemisphere, and first here in the United States, and bring about the freedom of these people by any means necessary. That's our motto" (1109).

Malcolm X's leadership influenced many to take the stand for liberation just like him during and after the civil-rights movement. Until this day the qualities of Malcolm X is still alive in our young leaders as they continue to fight for equality, justice, and liberation.

Now here comes where the balance kicks in of having the qualities of Lao-Tzu's methods of leadership.

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There a time for being ahead,  
a time for being behind;  
a time for being in motion,  
a time for being at rest;  
a time for being vigorous,  
a time for being exhausted;  
a time for being safe,  
a time for being in danger (63).

Lao-Tzu's philosophy is more of a spiritual guide of how to become one with the universe and good will come to you. These teachings are more so ideal the leadership to Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. King was a man who fought for justice and freedom just like Malcolm X. However, his movement came from a nonviolent aspect even if violence was threatened against him and his family, Dr. King still stood firmly on the "turn the other cheek" philosophy. King couldn't preach the importance of nonviolence enough to his followers during times of the civil rights movement. King called the principle of nonviolent resistance the "guiding light of our movement. Christ furnished the spirit and motivation while Gandhi furnished the method" (86). Dr. King influenced many under his leadership with the message of love, good faith, equality, and non-violence during the civil rights movement. These qualities stand true today as they did then and still inspire young leaders to lead the same way. Like Lao-Tzu's philosophy, Dr. King knew when to push forward and when to fall back during the times of fighting for freedom. Coming from a religious background, King developed a lot of trust through love with the people who followed him.

Machiavelli and Lao-Tzu's philosophies are at most much contrasted yet both hold truth and beliefs of qualities of a great leader. Like Malcolm and King both influential leaders, the two's movements were led in different styles one yet one message to get across, "Freedom and Equality". They both carried the key qualities of transparency, honesty, communication, integrity, confidence, and courage that separated them from being a bad leader. It's just that one moved with violence if necessary and one on nonviolence. Dr. King might have been viewed as a weak leader as he approached the civil rights movement with his philosophy of "love thy neighbor" and nonviolence and Brother Malcolm X has an arrogant leader that was viewed as an agitator during the civil rights movement. The balance amongst the two still shifted the world we live in today far from the world it was back then. Malcom X has influenced many to strengthen their voice to empower movements that stand for justice and liberation. African Americans have the courage and power of faith to enforce their rights and challenge any mainstream civil right movement by any means necessary. Dr. King showed us how to recognize and call out social equality. He showed us how to form an organization to move on good faith for a positive outcome for the lives of many African Americans.

Although our work is still cut out for our nation, these key qualities of leadership proves that has long as you are authentic through love and of fear there can be change for a greater good

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whether dealing with an individual, community, or the entire country.

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