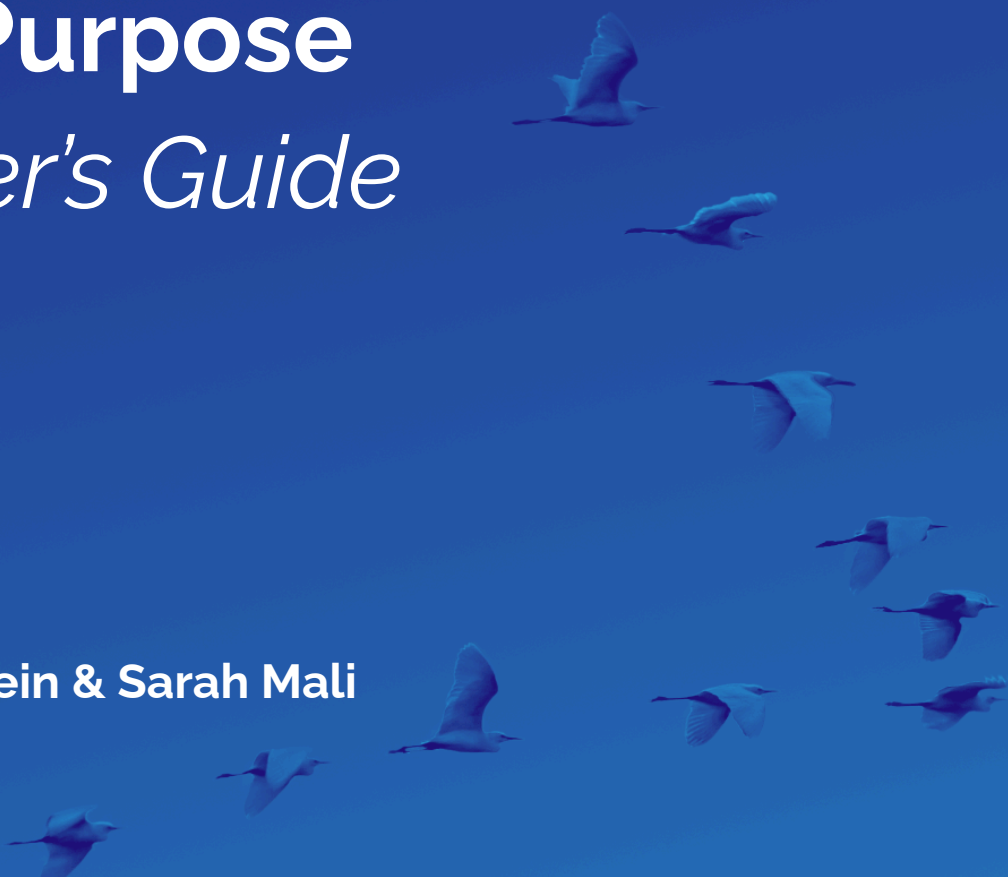


Unit 9

Grow your Range: Deploy Yourself with Agility to Achieve Your Purpose *Learner's Guide*

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SYNOPSIS

Grow Your Range: Deploy Yourself with Agility to Achieve your Purpose

Good leadership necessitates having a diverse range of tools and approaches to avoid becoming predictable and engaging the diverse people around us on their terms. When the Biblical Jacob is called upon to become Israel, he must grow his range and expand beyond the second-born twin identity with which he is so familiar. In this module, we study the mysterious Biblical episode of Jacob's nighttime wrestle with the 'angel' to uncover the struggle and the beauty that is leading with agility.

...So long as there is a conflict within us, there will be a conflict around us. We have to resolve the tension in ourselves before we can do so for others. We have to be at peace with ourselves before we can be at peace with the world.

Rabbi Sacks
(Lessons in Leadership, p. 38)

This unit aims to explore the question: How do we stay true to ourselves, to our own identity and nature, while simultaneously deploying a range of creative ways of being that meet the demands of diverse leadership challenges and people we will need to work with to make progress on the issues we care deeply about?

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Learners will emerge from this session with the following enduring understandings:

1. Different leadership challenges require us to show different parts of ourselves and use a range of skills; leaders must learn how to expand their range and grow their capacities
2. Sticking to our usual roles, scripts and responses, makes us predictable and limits our engagement with those different to us
3. Developing our ability to play multiple roles depending on the leadership need will allow us to be more effective and successful leaders

INTRODUCTION

In this charming vignette, we see a different identity of Rabbi Sacks, namely, that of the avid soccer supporter. Read the text with a partner, and reflect on the story. What's surprising about it? Is it consistent with your image of Rabbi Sacks?

The truth is that I've been reluctant to talk about football ever since an episode that happened more than twenty years ago. George Carey had just been chosen as Archbishop of Canterbury, and I'd just been elected Chief Rabbi, when someone discovered that we had one major passion in common. We were both great Arsenal fans. So he wondered whether we might like to have our first ecumenical gathering in his box at Highbury stadium, then Arsenal's home ground: a midweek match for obvious religious reasons.

We both enthusiastically agreed, and the great night came. Before the start of the match we were taken out onto the sacred turf itself where we presented a cheque to charity. The public address system announced who we were, and you could hear the buzz go around the ground. Whichever way you played the theological wager, that night Arsenal had friends in high places. They could not possibly lose.

That night Arsenal went down to their worst home defeat in more than sixty years. They lost 6-2 to Manchester United. The next day a national newspaper reported the story and said, if the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chief Rabbi between them can't bring about a win for Arsenal, does this not finally prove that God does not exist?

My reply was simple. I said, to the contrary. It proves that God exists. It's just that he supports Manchester United.

Broadcast on BBC Radio 4's Thought for the Day, 13th June 2014

Reflection Questions:

1. List as many of your roles that you can think of. First try to get to ten and then perhaps twenty? You may have a role as a doting older sibling and another role as a competitive younger one! You may have a role as a best friend and a role as a yogi. You may have a role as a mother and a role as a daughter. As a boss and as a beginner at something.

2. Turn to a partner and choose three of the roles on your list. Talk through the question: If an alien were to come from Outer Space and see me in role A, how would my behavior be similar and different from how it is in role B or C? Take 10 minutes to share and listen to one another.

FRAMING

Groups of all kinds (families, teams, departments, factions, companies) create clarity and order by assigning roles to members, usually implicitly. For example, in your family, perhaps you were assigned the role of mediator when conflicts broke out and people looked to you to solve them; or counselor when any family member needed advice; or nurturer when someone was hurt...however, you are more than any role assigned to you. And you have some freedom, but not complete freedom, to choose whether and how to play any assigned role...

Ronald A. Heifetz (The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World, p. 210-211)

A crucial distinction to make in our leadership work is the one between “self” and “role.” Often, we search for our “authentic selves,” and strive to sift through the various parts of ourselves that feel forced or artificial, in order to arrive at our one true self, and enact it at all times. We would like to encourage you to think slightly differently about your leadership work. Ultimately, the focus must be on the work at the center: what is your purpose? What change are you trying to inspire people to make? Why is it necessary? What is preventing people from making that change? What losses will they need to sustain in order to achieve the change? Depending on your relationship to the people and the issue, you may be more effective if you are less predictable, and you may be more successful if you can move between multiple roles and expectations, all for the sake of advancing the cause.

We do need to first know ourselves - to identify our de-facto roles, the roles we play to please others, the roles we play because we've been pigeon-holed by others. It is important and healthy to find our inner voice, the role that feels most honest and true, and nurture that self. Once we have a solid foundation that is secure, we can begin to learn to shift and play with our various roles when needed.

It may be helpful to think about leadership work as theater. What is the play we are stepping into? Who are the cast of characters? What is the script? And how can you learn to play multiple roles in the production, put on various costumes, various accents, take on various perspectives, in order to help influence others, without denying your moral core and your commitment to the cause?

When we understand how diverse we are, we can liberate ourselves from the labels and the subsequent predictability attributed to us by those who care for us and those who may want to trip us up. In the text you'll read below, Jacob becomes Israel when he plays out his different parts. He becomes a full aggregate of them and then he becomes a nation. In some ways, he becomes a people, a symbol of diversity and multitudes.

Indeed, the more roles you can play, the more effective you will be. As with bandwidth, you will have a wider repertoire to draw from in different situations, and you will be less predictable and thus less readily pigeonholed. And the more roles you play, the more factions in which you will be a part, and the more people with whom you will have connections as you try to make progress on tough issues.

Ronald A. Heifetz (The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World, p. 210-211)

HEVRUTA LEARNING & REFLECTION

Find a learning partner, a Hevruta.

Spend 15 minutes reading and discussing each text cluster.



Text Cluster I

In our learning together, we will explore the different roles that Jacob plays. He begins, in his early family life, being assigned to roles vis a vis his brother and his mother: the "tent dweller" vs Esau's "man of the fields," and passive and obedient to his mother. Jacob experiments with trying on a new role by listening to his mother and lying to his father, literally dressing up as his brother; this is harmful and leads to his fleeing and to a rupture in the family. As he matures, his roles complexify, and he is able to deploy himself differently in different situations depending on the need.

Genesis 25: 22-28

וַיִּתְרָצְצוּ הַבְּנִים בְּקֶרֶבָּהּ וַתֹּאמֶר אִם־כֵּן לִמָּה זֶה אֲנֹכִי וַתִּלְלֶךְ לִדְרֹשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לָהּ שְׁנֵי (גִּיּוֹם) בְּבֶטְנָךְ וּשְׁנֵי לְאֻמִּים מִמֶּעֶד: פִּרְדּוּ וּלְאֻם מִלֵּאם יֵאָמֵץ וְרַב יַעֲבֹד צָעִיר: וַיִּמָּלְאוּ יָמֶיהָ לִלְדֹת וְהִנֵּה תוֹמָם בְּבֶטְנָהּ: וַיֵּצֵא הָרָאוּשׁוֹן אֶדְמוֹנִי כֹלֹ כְּאֹדֶרֶת שָׁעָר וַיִּקְרְאוּ שְׁמוֹ עֵשָׂו: וְאֶחָד־יָכֵן יֵצֵא אַחִיו וַיְדֹ אַחֲזֵת בְּעֶקֶב עֵשָׂו וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיִּצְחָק בֶּן־שָׁשִׁים שָׁנָה בְּלֶדֶת אֹתָם: וַיְגִדְלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו אִישׁ יָדָע צֹיד אִישׁ שֶׂדֶה וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ תָּם יֹשֵׁב אֹהֲלִים: וַיֹּאֲהֵב יִצְחָק אֶת־עֵשָׂו כִּי־צֹיד בְּפִיּוֹ וּרְבִיקָה אֹהֶבֶת אֶת־יַעֲקֹב:

But the children struggled in her womb, and she said, "If so, why do I exist?" She went to inquire of God and God answered her, "Two nations are in your womb, Two separate peoples shall issue from your body; One people shall be mightier than the other, And the older shall serve the younger." When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. The first one emerged red, like a hairy mantle all over; so they named him Esau. Then his brother emerged, holding on to the heel of Esau; so they named him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born. When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the outdoors; but Jacob became a mild man, raising livestock. Isaac favored Esau because he had a taste for game; but Rebekah favored Jacob.

Rashi

איש שדה. כְּמִשְׁמָעוֹ, אָדָם בָּטֵל וְצוּדָה בְּקִשְׁתּוֹ חַיּוֹת וְעוֹפוֹת:

A MAN OF THE FIELD — Explain it literally (i.e., not in a Midrashic manner): a man without regular occupation, hunting beasts and birds with his bow.

ידע ציד. לְצוּד וּלְרִמּוֹת אֶת אָבִיו בְּפִיּוֹ וּשְׁוֹאָלוֹ אָבִא, הָאִיד מְעַשְׂרִין אֶת הַמֶּלֶח וְאֶת הַתְּבֵן? כְּסָבוֹר אָבִיו שֶׁהוּא מְדַקְדֵּק בְּמִצְוֹת (תַּנְחוּמָא):

A CUNNING HUNTER literally, understanding hunting — understanding how to entrap and deceive his father with his mouth. He would ask him, "Father how should salt and straw be tithed"? (Genesis Rabbah 63:10) (although he knew full well that these are not subject to the law of tithe). Consequently his father believed him to be very punctilious in observing the divine ordinances.

תם. אִינוּ בָקִי בְּכָל אֵלֶּה, כְּלָבוֹ כֵּן פִּיּוֹ, מִי שֶׁאִינוּ חֲרִיף לְרִמּוֹת קְרוֹי תָם:

PLAIN MAN — not expert in all these things: as his heart was his mouth (his thoughts and his words tallied). One who is not ingenious in deceiving people is called תָם plain, simple.

ישב אהלים. אָהֳלוֹ שֶׁל שֵׁם וְאָהֳלוֹ שֶׁל עֵבֶר:

DWELLING IN TENTS — the tent of Shem and the tent of Eber (Genesis Rabbah 63:10)

Genesis 27: 6-20

וּרְבֵקָה אִמּוֹהָ אֶל־יַעֲקֹב בְּנֶה לְאִמֶּר הִנֵּה שְׂמַעְתִּי אֶת־אָבִיךָ מְדַבֵּר אֶל־עֲשׂוֹ אָחִיךָ לֵאמֹר: הַבִּיאָה לִי צִיד וְעֲשֵׂה־לִּי מִטְעָמִים וְאֶכְלָה וְאִבְרַכְכָּה לְפָנַי יְהוָה לְפָנַי מוֹתִי: וְעַתָּה בְּנִי שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלִי לְאָשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצֹוָה אֹתָךְ: לֵךְ־נָא אֶל־הֶצֶאֱנָן וְקַח־לִי מִשָּׁם שְׁנֵי גְדֵי עִזִּים טֹבִים וְאָעֲשֵׂה אֹתָם מִטְעָמִים לְאָבִיךָ כְּאֲשֶׁר אָהֵב: וְהִבֵּאתָ לְאָבִיךָ וְאָכַל בְּעֶבֶר אֲשֶׁר יְבָרַכְךָ לְפָנַי מוֹתִי: וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־רְבֵקָה אִמּוֹ הֵן עָשׂוֹ אָחִי אִישׁ שָׂעִר וְאֲנֹכִי אִישׁ חָלָק: אוּלִי יִמְשְׁנִי אָבִי וְהִיִּיתִי בְּעֵינָיו כְּמִתְעַתֵּעַ וְהִבֵּאתִי עָלַי קִלְלָה וְלֹא בְרָכָה: וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִמּוֹ עָלַי קִלְלָתְךָ בְּנִי אָךְ שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלִי וְלֵךְ קַח־לִי: וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקָּח וַיָּבֵא לְאִמּוֹ וַתַּעַשׂ אִמּוֹ מִטְעָמִים כְּאֲשֶׁר אָהֵב אָבִיו: וַתִּקַּח רְבֵקָה אֶת־בְּגָדֵי עֲשׂוֹ בְנֶה הַגָּדֹל הַחֲמֹדֶת אֲשֶׁר אֶתָּה בְּבֵית וַתִּלְבַּשׂ אֶת־יַעֲקֹב בְּנֶה הַקָּטָן: וְאֵת עֹרֹת גְּדֵי הָעִזִּים הִלְבִּישָׁה עָלֵיהֶם וְעַל חֻלְקֹת צֹואָרָיו: וַתִּתֵּן אֶת־הַמִּטְעָמִים וְאֶת־הַלֶּחֶם אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂתָה בְּיָד יַעֲקֹב בְּנֶה: וַיָּבֵא אֶל־אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִי מִי אַתָּה בְּנִי: וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־אָבִיו אֲנֹכִי עָשׂוֹ בְּכֹרֶךָ עֲשִׂיתִי כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ אֵלַי קוּם־נָא שָׁבָה וְאֶכְלָה מִצִּידִי בְּעֶבֶר וַתְּבָרַכְנִי נְפֹשְׁךָ: וַיֹּאמֶר יַצְחָק אֶל־בָּנוּ מִהֲזֶה מַהֲרַת לְמַצֵּא בְנִי וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי הִקְרָה יְהוָה אֶל־יָדְךָ לְפָנַי:

Rebecca said to her son Jacob, "I overheard your father speaking to your brother Esau, saying 'Bring me some game and prepare a dish for me to eat, that I may bless you, with יהוה's approval, before I die.' Now, my son, listen carefully as I instruct you. Go to the flock and fetch me two choice kids, and I will make of them a dish for your father, such as he likes. Then take it to your father to eat, in order that he may bless you before he dies." Jacob answered his mother Rebekah, "But my brother Esau is a hairy man and I am smooth-skinned. If my father touches me, I shall appear to him as a trickster and bring upon myself a curse, not a blessing." But his mother said to him, "Your curse, my son, be upon me! Just do as I say and go fetch them for me." He got them and brought them to his mother, and his mother prepared a dish such as his father liked. Rebekah then took the best clothes of her older son Esau, which were there in the house, and had her younger son Jacob put them on; and she covered his hands and the hairless part of his neck with the skins of the kids. Then she put in the hands of her son Jacob the dish and the bread that she had prepared. He went to his father and said, "Father." And he said, "Yes, which of my sons are you?" Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau, your first-born; I have done as you told me. Pray sit up and eat of my game, that you may give me your innermost blessing."

Genesis 27: 6-20

וּרְבֵקָה אִמּוֹתָהּ אֶל־יַעֲקֹב בְּנֶה לְאִמֶּר הִנֵּה שְׂמַעְתִּי אֶת־אָבִיךָ מְדַבֵּר אֶל־עֲשׂוֹ אָחִיךָ לֵאמֹר: הַבִּיאָה לִי צִיד וְעָשֵׂה־לִּי מִטְעָמִים וְאֶכְלָה וְאֶבְרַכְּךָ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לִפְנֵי מוֹתִי: וְעַתָּה בְּנִי שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלִי לְאֲשֹׁר אֲנִי מְצוּהָ אֹתְךָ: לִךְ־נָא אֶל־הֶצֶאֱן וְקַח־לִי מִשָּׁם שְׁנֵי גְדֵי עִזִּים טֹבִים וְאָעֲשֵׂהָ אֹתָם מִטְעָמִים לְאָבִיךָ כַּאֲשֹׁר אָהֵב: וְהִבֵּאתָ לְאָבִיךָ וְאֶכְלָ בַּעֲבֹר אֲשֶׁר יְבָרַכְךָ לִפְנֵי מוֹתִי: וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־רְבֵקָה אִמּוֹ הֵן עָשׂוֹ אָחִי אִישׁ שָׂעִר וְאֲנֹכִי אִישׁ חָלָק: אוֹלִי יִמְשְׁנִי אָבִי וְהִיָּיתִי בְּעֵינָיו כְּמִתְעַתֵּשׁ וְהִבֵּאתִי עָלַי קִלְלָה וְלֹא בְרָכָה: וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִמּוֹ עָלַי קִלְלָתְךָ בְּנִי אֵךְ שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלִי וְלֹךְ קַח־לִי: וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקָּח וַיָּבֵא לְאִמּוֹ וַתַּעַשׂ אִמּוֹ מִטְעָמִים כַּאֲשֹׁר אָהֵב אָבִיו: וַתִּקַּח רְבֵקָה אֶת־בְּגָדֵי עֲשׂוֹ בְנֶה הַגָּדֹל הַחֲמֹדֹת אֲשֶׁר אֵתָהּ בִּבְיָתָהּ וַתִּלְבַּשׁ אֶת־יַעֲקֹב בְּנֶה הַקָּטָן: וְאֵת עֹרֹת גְּדֵי הָעִזִּים הִלְבִּישָׁה עָלֵיהֶן וְעַל חֻלְתָּתָהּ צִוּאָרֶיהָ: וַתִּתֵּן אֶת־הַמִּטְעָמִים וְאֶת־הַלֶּחֶם אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂתָה בְּיָד יַעֲקֹב בְּנֶה: וַיָּבֵא אֶל־אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִי מִי אֹתָהּ בְּנִי: וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־אָבִיו אֲנֹכִי עָשׂוֹ בְּכֹךְךָ עָשִׂיתִי כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ אֵלַי קוֹם־נָא שְׁבֹה וְאֶכְלָה מִצִּידִי בַּעֲבֹר תְּבָרַכְנִי נִפְשֶׁךָ: וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל־בָּנוֹ מִהֲזֶה מִהֲרַת לְמַצָּא בְּנִי וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי הִקְרָה יְהוָה אֶל־יָדְךָ לִפְנֵי:

Rebecca said to her son Jacob, "I overheard your father speaking to your brother Esau, saying 'Bring me some game and prepare a dish for me to eat, that I may bless you, with יהוה's approval, before I die.' Now, my son, listen carefully as I instruct you. Go to the flock and fetch me two choice kids, and I will make of them a dish for your father, such as he likes. Then take it to your father to eat, in order that he may bless you before he dies." Jacob answered his mother Rebekah, "But my brother Esau is a hairy man and I am smooth-skinned. If my father touches me, I shall appear to him as a trickster and bring upon myself a curse, not a blessing." But his mother said to him, "Your curse, my son, be upon me! Just do as I say and go fetch them for me." He got them and brought them to his mother, and his mother prepared a dish such as his father liked. Rebekah then took the best clothes of her older son Esau, which were there in the house, and had her younger son Jacob put them on; and she covered his hands and the hairless part of his neck with the skins of the kids. Then she put in the hands of her son Jacob the dish and the bread that she had prepared. He went to his father and said, "Father." And he said, "Yes, which of my sons are you?" Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau, your first-born; I have done as you told me. Pray sit up and eat of my game, that you may give me your innermost blessing."

Genesis 27: 20-38

וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל־בָּנוֹ מִהֲזֶה מִהֲרַת לְמַצָּא בְּנִי וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי הִקְרָה יְהוָה אֶל־יָדְךָ לִפְנֵי: וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל־יַעֲקֹב גִּשְׁה־נָּא וְאָמַשְׁךָ בְּנִי הָאֵתָהּ זֶה בְּנִי עָשׂוֹ אִם־לֹא: וַיִּגַּשׁ יַעֲקֹב אֶל־יִצְחָק אָבִיו וַיִּמְשָׁהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר הִקֵּל קוֹל יַעֲקֹב וְהִדִּים יָדַי עָשׂוֹ: לֹא הִכִּירוֹ כִּי־הָיוּ יָדָיו כִּיָּדֵי עָשׂוֹ אָחִיו שְׂעִרָהּ וַיְבָרַכְהוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֹתָהּ זֶה בְּנִי עָשׂוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אָנִי: וַיֹּאמֶר הִגֵּשָׁה לִי וְאֶכְלָה מִצִּידִי בְנִי לְמַעַן תְּבָרַכְךָ נַפְשִׁי וַיִּגְשֵׁהוּ וַיֹּאכְלֵהוּ וַיָּבֵא לוֹ זֵינ וַיִּשְׁתָּ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו

יצחק אביו גִּשְׁה־נָא וּשְׁקָה־לִּי בְּנִי: וַיִּגַּשׁ וַיִּשְׁק־לוֹ וַיֵּרַח אֶת־רִיחַ בְּגָדָיו וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר רֵאֵה רִיחַ בְּנִי כְּרִיחַ
 שְׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר בָּרַכְוּ יְהוָה: וַיִּתֵּן־לֶךְ הָאֱלֹהִים מִטֵּל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאֶרֶץ וְרֹב דָּגָן וְתִירָשׁ: יַעֲבֹדוּךָ עַמִּים
 (וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ) [וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ] לְךָ לְאֲמִים הָיָה גִבּוֹר לְאֲחִיךָ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ לְךָ בְּנִי אִמָּךְ אֲרִיכֶיךָ אֲדוֹר וּמְבָרְכֶיךָ בְּרוּךְ: וַיְהִי
 כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּלָה יִצְחָק לִבְרֹךְ אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וַיְהִי אֵךְ יֵצֵא יַעֲקֹב מֵאֵת פָּנָי יִצְחָק אֲבִיו וְעָשׂוּ אֲחָיו בָּא מִצִּידוֹ:
 וַיַּעַשׂ גַּם־הוּא מִטַּעַמִּים וַיָּבֵא לְאֲבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר לְאֲבִיו יָקָם אֲבִי וַיֹּאכַל מִצִּיד בָּנוֹ בַּעֲבֹר תְּבָרַכְנִי נִפְשֶׁךָ: וַיֹּאמֶר
 לוֹ יִצְחָק אֲבִיו מִי־אַתָּה וַיֹּאמֶר אָנִי בְנֶךָ בְּכֹרֶךָ עָשׂוּ: וַיַּחֲרֹד יִצְחָק חֲרָדָה גְּדוֹלָה עַד־מָאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר מִי־אֲפֹא
 הוּא הִצֵּד־צִיד וַיָּבֵא לִי וְאֲכַל מִכָּל בְּטָרָם תְּבֹא וַאֲבָרְכֵהוּ גַם־בְּרוּךְ יְהִיָּה: כִּשְׁמַע עָשׂוּ אֶת־דְּבָרֵי אֲבִיו וַיִּצְעַק
 צָעָקָה גְּדוֹלָה וּמְרָה עַד־מָאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר לְאֲבִיו בְּרַכְנִי גַם־אֲנִי אָבִי: וַיֹּאמֶר בָּא אֲחִיךָ בְּמִרְמָה וַיִּקַּח בְּרַכְתְּךָ
 וַיֹּאמֶר הֲכִי קָרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹבֵנִי זֶה פַעַמִּים אֶת־בְּכֹרְתִי לָקַח וְהִנֵּה עֹתָה לָקַח בְּרַכְתִּי וַיֹּאמֶר
 הַלֹּא־אַצְלֶלֶת לִי בְּרַכָּה: וַיַּעַן יִצְחָק וַיֹּאמֶר לַעֲשׂוֹ הֵן גִּבּוֹר שְׁמַתִּיו לְךָ וְאַתָּה אֶל־אֲחָיו נָתַתִּי לוֹ לַעֲבָדִים וְדָגָן
 וְתִירָשׁ סִמְכַתִּיו וְלָכֶּה אֲפֹא מֶה אַעֲשֶׂה בְּנִי: וַיֹּאמֶר עָשׂוּ אֶל־אֲבִיו הַבְּרַכָּה אַחַת הוּא־לְךָ אָבִי בְּרַכְנִי גַם־אֲנִי
 אָבִי וַיִּשָּׂא עָשׂוּ קִלּוֹ וַיָּבֹד:

Isaac said to his son, "How did you succeed so quickly, my son?" And he said, "Because your God יְהוָה granted me good fortune." Isaac said to Jacob, "Come closer that I may feel you, my son—whether you are really my son Esau or not." So Jacob drew close to his father Isaac, who felt him and wondered. "The voice is the voice of Jacob, yet the hands are the hands of Esau." He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau; and so he blessed him. He asked, "Are you really my son Esau?" And when he said, "I am," he said, "Serve me and let me eat of my son's game so that I may give you my innermost blessing." So he served him and he ate, and he brought him wine and he drank. Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come close and kiss me, my son"; and he went up and kissed him. And he smelled his clothes and he blessed him, saying, "Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of the fields that יְהוָה has blessed. "May God give you Of the dew of heaven and the fat of the earth, Abundance of new grain and wine. Let peoples serve you. And nations bow to you; Be master over your brothers, And let your mother's sons bow to you. Cursed be they who curse you, Blessed they who bless you." No sooner had Jacob left the presence of his father Isaac—after Isaac had finished blessing Jacob—than his brother Esau came back from his hunt. He too prepared a dish and brought it to his father. And he said to his father, "Let my father sit up and eat of his son's game, so that you may give me your innermost blessing." His father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?" And he said, "I am your son, Esau, your first-born!" Isaac was seized with very violent trembling. "Who was it then," he demanded, "that hunted game and brought it to me? Moreover, I ate of it before you came, and I blessed him; now he must remain blessed!" When Esau heard his father's words, he burst into wild and bitter sobbing, and said to his father, "Bless me too, Father!" But he answered, "Your brother came with guile and took away your blessing." [Esau] said,

"Was he, then, named Jacob that he might supplant me these two times? First he took away my birthright and now he has taken away my blessing!" And he added, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" Isaac answered, saying to Esau, "But I have made him master over you: I have given him all his brothers for servants, and sustained him with grain and wine. What, then, can I still do for you, my son?" And Esau said to his father, "Have you but one blessing, Father? Bless me too, Father!" And Esau wept aloud.

Reflection Questions:

1. What role was Jacob "assigned to" in his birth family? How does that role serve him? How does it hinder him?
2. What role was Esau "assigned to" in his birth family? How does it serve him? How does it hinder him?
3. When his mother pushes him to pretend to be Esau, Jacob literally pretends to be his brother, leading to his stealing the firstborn blessing, to Esau's pain, and then murderous desires, and to Jacob's having to flee his family. What is the difference between "pretending" / "lying" / and playing a role that is not necessarily your "true self" but is part of you, something you can step in and out of, and is strategic and productive for the leadership work?
4. Was Rebecca exerting leadership in this scenario? Was Jacob? How would you determine when it is better to play your "authentic self" vs playing a role in order to make progress on your challenge?

Text Cluster II

Genesis 32: 24-32

After taking them across the stream, he sent across all his possessions.

וַיִּקְחֵם וַיַּעְבְּרֵם אֶת־הַנָּחַל וַיַּעְבֵּר
אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ:

Jacob was left alone. And a figure wrestled with him until the break of dawn.

וַיּוֹתֵר יַעֲקֹב לְבַדּוֹ וַיֵּאָבֶק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ
עַד עֲלוֹת הַשָּׁחַר:

When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he wrenched Jacob's hip at its socket, so that the socket of his hip was strained as he wrestled with him.

וַיֵּרָא כִּי לֹא יָכֹל לִוּי וַיִּנָּע בְּכַף־יָרְכּוֹ
וַתִּקַּע כַּף־יָרֵךְ יַעֲקֹב בְּהֶאָבְקוֹ עִמּוֹ:

Then he said, "Let me go, for dawn is breaking." But he answered, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me."

וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלַחֲנִי כִּי עֹלָה הַשָּׁחַר
וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֶשְׁלַחְךָ כִּי אִם־בֵּרַכְתָּנִי:

Said the other, "What is your name?" He replied, "Jacob."

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מִה־שֵּׁמְךָ וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב:

Said he, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven and have prevailed."

וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יַעֲקֹב יֵאָמֵר עוֹד שֵׁמְךָ כִּי
אִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־שָׁרִיתָ עִם־אֱלֹהִים
וְעִם־אֲנָשִׁים וַתּוֹכֵל:

Jacob asked, "Pray tell me your name." But he said, "You must not ask my name!" And he took leave of him there.

וַיִּשְׁאַל יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר הַגִּיד־הֲנָא
שִׁמְךָ וַיֹּאמֶר לָמָּה זֶה תִּשְׁאַל לְשִׁמִּי
וַיִּבָּרֶךְ אֹתוֹ שָׁם:

So Jacob named the place Peniel

וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם פְּנִיאֵל
כִּי־רָאִיתִי אֱלֹהִים פָּנִים אֶל־פָּנִים
וַתִּנָּצַל נַפְשִׁי:

The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping on his hip.

וַיַּזְרַח־לוֹ הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר עָבַר
אֶת־פְּנוּאֵל וְהוּא צָלַע עַל־יָרְכּוֹ:

Rabbi Sacks (Lessons in Leadership, p. 35-36)

Jacob was born holding onto Esau's heel. He bought Esau's birthright. He stole Esau's blessing. When his blind father asked him who he was, he replied, "I am Esau your firstborn (Gen. 27:19). Jacob was the child who wanted to be Esau. [...]

As long as Jacob sought to be Esau, there was tension, conflict, rivalry. Esau felt cheated; Jacob felt fear. That night, about to meet Esau again after an absence of twenty-two years, Jacob wrestles with himself; finally, he throws off the image of Esau, the person he wants to be, which he has carried with him all these years. This is the critical moment in Jacob's life.

Rabbi Sacks (Lessons in Leadership, p. 36-37)

As long as Jacob sought to be Esau there was tension, conflict, rivalry. Esau felt cheated; Jacob felt fear. That night, about to meet Esau again after an absence of twenty-two years, Jacob wrestles with himself; finally, he throws off the image of Esau, the person he wants to be, which he has carried with him all these years. This is the critical moment in Jacob's life. From now on, he is content to be himself. And it is only when he stops wanting to be someone else (in Shakespeare's words, "desiring this man's art, and that man's scope, With what I most enjoy contented least" (Sonnet 29) that we can be at peace with ourselves and with the world.

This is one of the great challenges of leadership. It is all too easy for a leader to pursue popularity by being what people want him or her to be - a liberal to liberals, a conservative to conservatives, taking decisions that win temporary acclaim rather than flowing from principle and conviction.

Reflection Questions:

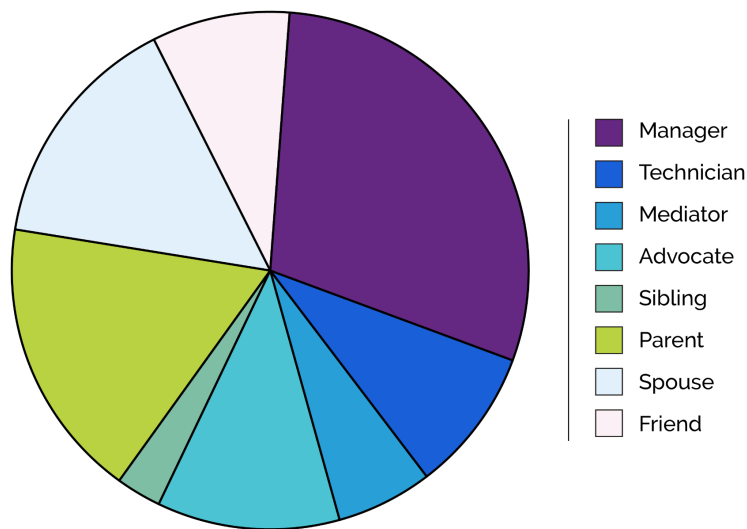
1. Who does the angel represent and what is the angel trying to achieve in the altercation with Jacob in the depths of the night?
2. What identity or role balance might Jacob require in order to merit the name Israel?
3. Jacob emerges from the struggle limping and with a new name. How might you understand that?
4. What does this story imply about what is lost and what is gained when we build the capacity to deepen our identities and navigate multiple roles in our lives?
5. What is the difference between Jacob trying to be Esau and Jacob becoming Israel?
6. What is the difference between playing different roles to achieve a leadership purpose, and seeking popularity? How can we avoid a lack of integrity while also deploying ourselves with range and flexibility?

INTEGRATION & PRACTICE

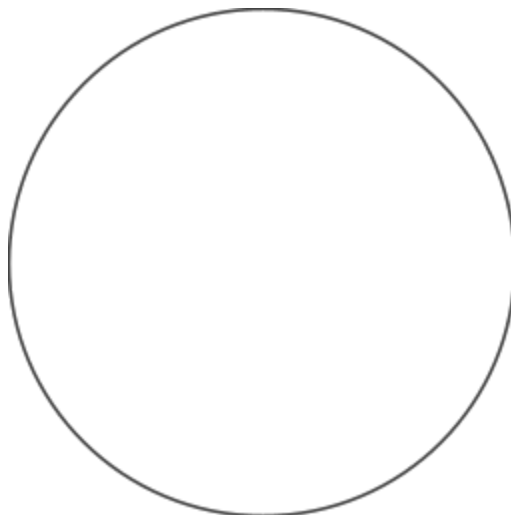
Leadership Exercise

Think about a leadership challenge you are facing.

What roles has your group or organization assigned to you? How have these roles been assigned and how have you accepted them - consciously? Spoken? Unconsciously? Implied? Are those roles the most effective ones for you to be playing to advance the leadership challenge? Are there other roles you can imagine that might be more helpful? How does it feel to think about trying to play other roles in your group or organization?



Draw a pie chart, similar to the one above, from *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*. The first should reflect the roles you play in your group, vis a vis your leadership challenge, and the percentage of time you spend playing each of those roles. Examples might include: nurturer, mediator, good cop, bad cop, organizer, manager, comforter, etc. Mark your satisfaction with those roles next to each piece of the pie chart. What role are you over-using? What role are you under-using?



Closing Circle

- What role have you been playing in this group, during this learning experience?
- Can you identify roles others have been playing? How has that helped the learning? How has it hindered it?
- What role feels risky to play in this group? What might you try to expand your range in this learning environment?

TAKE-AWAY EXERCISE

The truth with which Jacob spent much of his life wrestling was quite different. It was a truth about identity. Central to it are the words face (in which mirror do I look to see who I am?), name (by which term do I know myself?) and blessing (to what destiny am I called?).

The face we bear is the image we see reflected in the face of God when we wrestle with Him and refuse to let go.

Rabbi Sacks (Vayishlach 5768: Jacob Wrestling, Covenant & Conversation 5768)

What role must you stop playing in order to become more fully yourself?

Can you ask yourself, and try to sit with possible answers, to these questions that Rabbi Sacks poses:

- In which mirror do you look to see who you are?
- By which term do you know yourself?
- To what destiny are you called?

UNIT LESSON SUMMARY:

When we appreciate and cultivate our own ability to play multiple roles, we can engage others in fresh ways, ways that can help lead to meaningful progress and change.