Assignment 5.1: Armored vs. Daring Leadership

The Assessment Activity

University
of San Diego®

	Armored Leadership	Total: 47	Daring Leadership
01.	Driving Perfectionism and Fostering Fear of Failure	1 2 ③ 4	Modeling and Encouraging Healthy Striving, Empathy, and Self-Compassion
02.	Working from Scarcity and Squandering Opportunities for Joy and Recognition	1 2 ③ 4	Practicing Gratitude and Celebrating Milestones and Victories
03.	Numbing	1 2 ③ 4	Setting Boundaries and Finding Real Comfort
04.	Propagating the False Dichotomy of Victim or Viking, Crush or Be Crushed	1 2 ③ 4	Practicing Integration— Strong Back, Soft Front, Wild Heart
05.	Being a Knower and Being Right	1 2 3 ④	Being a Learner and Getting It Right
06.	Hiding Behind Cynicism	1 ② 3 4	Modeling Clarity, Kindness, and Hope
07.	Using Criticism as Self-Protection	1 2 ③ 4	Making Contributions and Taking Risks
08.	Using Power Over	1 2 ③ 4	Using Power With, Power To, and Power Within
09.	Hustling for Our Worth	1 2 ③ 4	Knowing Our Value
10.	Leading for Compliance and Control	1 2 ③ 4	Cultivating Commitment and Shared Purpose
11.	Weaponizing Fear and Uncertainty	1 2 ③ 4	Acknowledging, Naming, and Normalizing Collective Fear and Uncertainty

	Armored Leadership		Daring Leadership
12.	Rewarding Exhaustion as a Status Symbol and Attaching Productivity to Self-Worth	1 ② 3 4	Modeling and Supporting Rest, Play, and Recovery
13.	Tolerating Discrimination, Echo Chambers, and a "Fitting In" Culture	1 2 ③ 4	Cultivating a Culture of Belonging, Inclusivity, and Diverse Perspectives
14.	Collecting Gold Stars	1 2 ③ 4	Giving Gold Stars
15.	Zigzagging and Avoiding	1 2 ③ 4	Straight Talking and Taking Action
16.	Leading from Hurt	1 2 ③ 4	Leading from Heart

39
8
―――
47

Cultural Norms Discussion

From a male's perspective, I can see how cultural norms impact specific aspects when "armoring up." The expectation I have experienced throughout life is for men to produce at all costs. This idea is what is respected – people idolize the accomplishment without asking, "At what cost?" This lack of questioning seems like anti-daring leadership because it removes the human and their humanity from the equation and situation. Effectively, idolizing the accomplishment, celebrating the exhaustion, and having that lead to a status symbol perpetuates a culture where nothing else matters except for what someone produces. I have heard opinions such as (not directed at me), "He should do more for our school because he doesn't have kids."

Armored leadership is common because it is easy and quick, and the rhetoric surrounding it is intoxicating and seductive. I think when most people think of what a leader looks like, they would use descriptors such as strong, powerful, charismatic, influential, etc. Although these descriptors are not unique to either leadership style, I think it is easy for people to associate these descriptors with the armored style. With that said, I believe there is a growing rejection of armored leadership as people begin identifying it and as more leaders embrace more effective strategies.

Areas of Growth

My two greatest growth areas are Hiding Behind Cynicism and Rewarding Exhaustion as a Status Symbol and Attaching Productivity to Self-Worth. I know these two things about me have improved over the years, and I still have much room left to round out my leadership skills.

Specifically, I know I can be as sarcastic as they come, and it was surprising to read about the root of the word "to tear flesh" because I have seen how sarcasm can instantly tear confidence and worthiness from someone. I have since changed my stance about incorporating sarcasm into anything – and nowadays, I try to steer clear of it in just about every situation.

However, I can improve by committing to clarity, kindness, and hope in my speech. For example (*and for the record, I would never say this in class or to a colleague as it pains me to type this*), instead of saying this to my class, "I could give you all seven minutes to discuss this question with each other, but what's the point, because most of you probably won't figure it out anyway," I could say, "I glanced at our exit tickets from yesterday and noticed a significant reasoning error on this problem. I know we don't like making mistakes, and that's okay; it's how we learn. Let's take two minutes to troubleshoot and identify where this error occurred. Then, we'll reason through the problem-solving process together."

Rewarding Exhaustion is challenging to reconcile because I was ignorant of every other leadership style. My growth in this aspect has revolved around setting clear time boundaries and giving myself the time to recharge. I still struggle with this, and I think it

will be a struggle for the rest of my career. However, I will appreciate rest, support, and play more as I build more robust boundaries. Teacher leadership is a marathon, not a sprint.

A Commitment to Becoming a Better Leader

A commitment I can make and that I know I will keep is to always be willing to abandon what is ineffective for what is effective. This requires being open to learning new things, even if it is uncomfortable or something I initially disagree with (or continue disagreeing with, even after I have learned more about it).