



LEADERSHIP: THREE POINTS (RMS)

Address by Rayla Allertsen, Co-founder, I Am SAM Foundation

I. LEADERSHIP-FIRST POINT: TIMES THEY ARE A CHANGING

Let me share with you a bit of my childhood. I had a special and not so usual childhood. I attribute that to my two nerdy older brothers (not to mention, my dad from MIT and my mom from Cornell). It was my luck that my eldest brother had an IQ of 150, my second brother, an IQ of 155 and, mine was 141. So you can just imagine the dynamics of that. My 2 brothers referred to themselves as the 'cerebrum', what people most know as the 'brain' while I was the 'medulla oblongata', the connection of the brain to the body. We had classical music playing most of the time and most years, we speculated on who would land on the cover of TIME.

Charles Lindbergh was the very first TIME Man of the Year in 1927. His solo trans-atlantic flight from New York-Paris flight is his indelible feat; legendary as first and the youngest at 25. So 80 years it has been, from 1927 – 2007 and 80 TIME 'Person of the Year' covers. As I excitedly went through the years, personal contribution/praiseworthy achievement as a result of the individual's innate, inherent resource, of vision, intellect, intelligence, skill, conviction, passion, etc, was the common denominator that warranted the editor's choices. TIME has also recognized groups of people but their collective merit and achievement, still and all, stems from their collective skill and capability.

IT IS HOWEVER (AND PLEASANTLY), THE CHOICES OF 2005 AND 2006 THAT HAS ME THINKING ... TIMES, THEY ARE INDEED A CHANGING!

Allow me though to skim through history of really the 20th century and select a few, for their individual merit: U.S. Astronauts (Anders, Borman and Lovell) for 1968, a defining year, 'fly me to the moon'; Ted Turner (1991) whose Cable News Network (CNN) virtually revolutionized news coverage and perhaps without knowing it, made the world incredibly small; David Ho in 1996, *the* genius behind the research on the AIDS virus.

There were the world leaders and statesmen, charismatic visionaries who impacted, no, changed world order altogether: Mohandas Gandhi in 1930 whose pacifist, non-violent stance emancipated India from colonial rule of imperial Britain and thus an end to imperialism; Martin Luther King, Jr. (1963) who had a dream shared in splendid rhetoric and that dream of equality for all is now reality for us all; Deng Xiaoping (1985) who redefined China by boldly adopting the



West's free-market mindset, the demise of communism; Mikhael Gorbachev (1989), also "Man of the Decade", advocate of change with socialism and the Cold War, a thing of the past.

It is not difficult to see why 11 U.S. presidents were Persons of the Year, U.S. being a world power. These 11 are: FD Roosevelt (1932, 1934 & 1941), Eisenhower (1944 & 1959), Truman (1945 & 1948), JFK (1961), LB Johnson (1964 & 1967), Nixon (1971 & 1972), Carter (1976), Reagan (1980 & 1983), Bush (1990), Clinton (1992 & 1998), GW Bush (2000). It is easier though to comprehend some of these choices when seen from the perspective of simply being newsmakers.

Of the religious leaders, two popes made it: Pope John XXIII in 1962 whose revolutionary reform through Vatican II dispensed with archaic traditions for good and for better and Pope John Paul II (1994), very popular, globe trotting papal head who made the world his stage for his conservative views. TIMES' criteria for choice is newsworthiness so with virtue is vice: Adolf Hitler (1939) who needs no explanation, Joseph Stalin (1939 & 1942), Nikita Khrushchev (1957) & Ayatollah Khomeini (1979), also a religious leader.

Royalty, yes, Queen Elizabeth II was 1952's. Her ascension to the throne at 26 years young was so welcomed in her monarchy, a literal breath of fresh air with Britain still reeling from the ravages of war. 1986 is OUR year as a Filipino people with Corazon Aquino and the non-violent People Power Revolution with rosaries and prayers as her weapons and nuns as her shields. Hers was a peaceful take-over from years of the Marcos dictatorship and martial rule. Interestingly, only 4 women made it as Persons of the Year: Elizabeth II (1952), Corazon Aquino (1986), Madame Chiang Kai Shek (1937) in tandem with her husband, Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek as the Husband and Wife of the Year & near royalty Wallis Simpson (1936). I single out U.S. Women (1975) as Persons of the Year "for refusing to play second-fiddle and asserted their equality". Thank you, U.S. Women, in behalf of the rest of the women of the world.

TIME recognized the computer as "Machine of the Year" in 1982. "TIME anticipated a revolution" and what a revolution it was ... what a revolution it still is!



Winston Churchill (1940 & 1949) was named Man of the Half-Century and Person of the Century: Albert Einstein. (I have another one of those 'childhood' stories which has to do with Einstein and my brothers but that will need to wait lest you want to finish by breakfast tomorrow)

WHAT IS MY POINT? (I admit to being carried away). TIMES ... THEY HAVE CHANGED.

The Persons of the Year for 2005 were Melinda and Bill Gates and Bono but not because of Microsoft and music. They are Persons of the Year and I quote: "For being shrewd about doing good, for rewiring politics and re-engineering justice, for making mercy smarter and hope strategic and then daring the rest of us to follow." (I wish I had written this!)

Admittedly, I am not familiar with Bono and his music. Having read the article "The Good Samaritans" by Nancy Gibbs profiling TIMES' choice for 2005, I am now a certified fan. Bono brokered with the richest countries and banks the writing off of the US \$40 billion debt of the poorest countries. He had in mind that that amount should rather go to servicing health and education, instead of debt. Untypical, an Irish rocker of no small means, DATA, his organization, which stands for debt, AIDS, trade, Africa, spells out the immensity of his conviction and purpose. Evidently, Bono knows just how to elicit and solicit what it takes to get just about everyone -from President and politicians to Hollywood and his co-artists to preacher and church-goers, etc - involved in "making poverty history". And he is able because he is received as genuine, gaining nothing personally except perhaps for psychic income. Gibbs says, "In fact, he has opened himself to criticism because he has been willing to work with anyone to find help for these children who have taken his heart".

Of course I know Bill and Melinda Gates. Who doesn't? Bill and Melinda Gates chose international health. In 2005 alone, close to US\$ 500M went to Grand Challenges. Indeed, a grand challenge for the very brightest; their mandate was to eradicate malaria in 10 years with the invention of a vaccine that does not have to be injected or refrigerated. Melinda shared, "In the poorest countries, every day is as deadly as a hurricane*. Malaria kills two African children a minute, round the clock. In that minute a woman dies from complications during pregnancy, nine people get infected with HIV, three people die of TB. The task was too big, too complicated. There was no one in charge, no consensus about what to do first and never enough money to do it". They were appalled to witness that "lives were being treated as if they weren't valuable. We have to ensure that people have the opportunity to make the most of



their lives." Nancy Gibbs wrote: "That just about captures the larger mission she and her husband have embraced". It is no secret that the Gateses have the world's biggest charity with a US\$ 29B endowment.

**referring to Katrina*

Unmistakably, generosity in 2005 has been redefined. I quote the last paragraph of Gibb's article: "This is not about pity. It's more about passion. Pity sees suffering and wants to ease the pain; passion sees injustice and wants to settle the score. Pity implores the powerful to pay attention; passion warns them about what will happen if they don't. The risk of pity is that it kills with kindness; the promise of passion is that it builds on the hope that the poor are fully capable of helping themselves if given the chance. In 2005 the world's poor needed no more condolences; they needed people to get interested, get mad and then get to work."

The Person of the Year for 2006 was YOU!

You can not imagine my elation when I picked up the TIME Person of the Year 2006 issue and my face was reflected on the cover. Thank you very much! I humbly accept this honor. LOL! To date, this has been the most costly issue ever! 750,000 copies were expensively printed because of the mylar reflector-ized cover with strictest instructions to keep the issue totally under wraps because of its novelty. It was a double whammy I did not expect! And you will see why.

"You" By LEV GROSSMAN (Dec. 13, 2006), explains the novel choice for 2006. The first paragraph explains my point: "The "Great Man" theory of history is usually attributed to the Scottish philosopher Thomas Carlyle, who wrote that "the history of the world is but the biography of great men." He believed that it is the few, the powerful and the famous who shape our collective destiny as a species. That theory took a serious beating this year."

'You' was chosen as Person of the Year with strong reference (though) to the Web. I took several thoughts from Lev Grossman's You for my purposes: "It's a story about community and collaboration on a scale never seen before. It's about the cosmic compendium of knowledge Wikipedia and the million-channel people's network YouTube and the online metropolis MySpace. It's about the many wresting power from the few and helping one another for nothing and how that will not only change the world, but also change the way the world changes. And for seizing the reins of the global media, for founding and framing the new digital democracy, for working for nothing and beating the pros at their own game, TIME's Person of the Year for 2006 is you. This is an opportunity to build a new kind of international understanding, not politician to politician, great man to great man, but citizen to citizen, person to person".



Precisely, still and all, TIMES' choices for 2005 and 2006 are unprecedented. Highly unlikely, the general rule was: Thomas Carlyle's thinking, the "Great Man" theory. In the past, one did not get on the cover for simply doing good. It was for genius and not goodness. Surely, not Tom, Dick and Harry or to use local references, Juan or Juana de la Cruz. "The few, the powerful and the famous" ruled. But today, Bono, the Gateses and You (and I) rock !

TIMES' choices for 2005 and 2006 speak about Leadership in today's terms. For perspective, I would not ever have returned to education in 2006 had I not conceptualized McKinley Hill* as both an international school and a leadership academy. To briefly discuss the 'international school' side of it, it had to be international, with a very powerful curriculum, strong in the basic skills of reading, composition, language and math balanced with a broader complement of enrichment subjects: history, geography, science, art and literature to make the Renaissance man. You are experiencing this for the first time with your children in the Calvert Education System. As an educator, it is crystal clear to me that my mission is to prepare the child for life. And I can do that only if I had a leadership agenda and advocacy. The choice and grace, excitedly, for McKL's leadership agenda is: Stephen Covey's The Leader In Me Process.

Times they are a changing. The debunked notion of leadership is leaders are born. Today's view is leaders are made. John Maxwell is so clear about his view: "Leadership is not position; it is influence". Therefore, everyone can be a leader if one chooses to be one; therefore, leadership is a choice This changes the equation altogether. In McKinley, every child a leader. "Leadership is communicating people's worth and potential so clearly that they are inspired to see it in themselves." To bring Stephen Covey's definition up close and personal and closest to your hearts: "Leadership is communicating your child/children's worth and potential so clearly that they are inspired to see it in themselves". And with that worth and potential, a voice. Today's terms level the playing field..."the many wresting power from the few and helping one another for nothing and how that will not only change the world, but also change the way the world changes".

"For being shrewd about doing good, for rewiring politics and re-engineering justice, for making mercy smarter and hope strategic and then daring the rest of us to follow". "And then daring the rest of us to follow" is Stephen Covey's 8th Habit: finding your voice and influencing others to find theirs is leadership (2004).

Gibbs is so right: "It's more about passion". Bono is passion personified and 'operationalized', rabid passion. A bit calculated for Bill and Melinda but nonetheless, what blessing and bonus for us to have them as benchmarks and role models. "Finding your voice and influencing others to find theirs" is ADVOCACY and advocacy is leadership. Advocacy is love. Uncompromisingly, if we are to make leaders of your children, they will be exposed to advocacy from preschool like it was going out of style and out of their ears. Leaders see past their noses. McKinley exists not f



for itself but for others. "Love measures our stature: the more we love, the bigger we are. There is no smaller package in all the world than that of a man all wrapped up in himself" (William Sloane Coffin). McKinley's advocacy is: Rights of the Child.

*I have since gone public. There are 25M children in the public school system.



II. LEADERSHIP-SECOND POINT: LOVE IS THE ANSWER

In retrospect, leadership, at least the label, was of this decade and half of the last decade; 'LOVE' was from the beginning of my time as a teacher! LOL! The "sweetie" ...the "dearie" ... the HUGs and the kisses :)

Mush was my middle name. I couldn't be anything else; it couldn't be anything else. Much of what we learn of LOVE, we learn from home. Today , it is still the answer and how! McKinley is your child's second home.

However, LOVE is no longer contained in the home or the classroom/school. It is everywhere. In the board room and the most successful of governances.

From www.businessballs.com (what a name):

"Yes. However. As we know, things are changing.

People are most certainly now seeking more meaning from their work and from their lives.

People in far flung exploited parts of the world now have a voice, a stage, and an audience,



largely enabled by technology and the worldwide web.

Customers, informed by the increasing transparency and availability of information, are demanding that organisations behave more responsibly and sensitively.

Increasing numbers of people are fed up with the traditionally selfish character of corporations and organisations and the way they conduct themselves.

The growing transparency of corporate behaviour in the modern world is creating a new real accountability - for the organisations which hitherto have protected the self-interests of the few to the detriment of everyone and everything else.

Now, very many people - staff, customers, everyone - demand and expect change.

Leaders need now to care properly for people and the future of the planet, not just to make a profit and to extract personal gain.

And so businesses and corporations are beginning to realise that genuinely caring for people everywhere is actually quite a sensible thing to do.

It is now more than ever necessary for corporations to make room for love and spirituality - to care for people and the world - alongside the need to make a profit.

Love, compassion, and spirituality - consideration for people and the world we live in - whatever you choose to call it - is now a truly relevant ethos in business and organisations."

I see this validated in my other business. The founder and CEO and now friend, Ray Faltinsky, top of his class at Yale Law School, a member of the prestigious, rather elitist YPO (Young President's Organization) speaks it, means it and expresses it, recently writing an article. "It's All About Love".

I have chosen three pertinent McKinley quotes about LOVE:

"Everywhere, we learn only from those whom we love".

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832)

From Wikipedia: Goethe is "one of the giants of world literature and was perhaps the last European to attempt the mastery and many-sidedness of the great Renaissance personalities: critic, journalist, painter, theatre manager, statesman, educationalist, natural philosopher. He is



widely considered to be one of the most important thinkers in Western culture, and is often cited as one of history's greatest geniuses" . (Goethe, Retrieved 19 January 2007)

How could Goethe get this mushy? I did try to go through some of his work to get the context in which he wrote this sweeping line but sadly, couldn't find it. I shouldn't however be questioning Goethe when Einstein wondered: "How on earth are you ever going to explain in terms of chemistry and physics so important a biological phenomenon as first love?".

Oh, 'Goethe' was another part of my childhood because of my nerdy older brothers. We lived in New Manila and Goethe House or the German Cultural Center, two blocks away from home, was one place they honestly relished and relished to frequent. My childhood almost sounds so painful, doesn't it? LOL!

Second quote on Love: "***Love and meaning are the highest sources of human motivation and will always produce the greatest and most enduring achievements***". (Stephen Covey, 2004)

I remember when I read this for the first time I thought how true, how absolutely true. Admittedly, I brushed the word 'meaning' aside, even disregarded and deleted it at times because 'Love' seemed enough as in "*Love is the highest source of human motivation and will always produce the greatest and most enduring achievements*". "Love lifts us where we belong" (Joe Cocker). "Love can move mountains" (sang by Celine Dion); "it conquers all" (Virgil, 70-19 BC). "It makes the world go round" (An American proverb, Charles Dickens and Lewis Carroll) or am I confusing it with money? LOL! "One word frees us of all the weight and pain of life: that word is love", Sophocles (496 BC – 406 BC). "Eventually you will come to understand that love heals everything, and love is all there is" (Gary Zukav).

But I was wrong and stand corrected. In no uncertain terms, do I now realize what Stephen Covey meant, to use a pun. I had rushed to Google to find:

"In existentialism, meaning is understood as the worth of life"; "the symbolic value of something; The significance of a thing, as "the meaning of life". Meaning is sense or significance, even inner significance" (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language).

Of course, there has got to be sense. There has got to be significance. There has got to be value and worth. There has got to be meaning. Otherwise, we go through the motions of life. Empty and wasted.

"LOVE AND MEANING are the highest sources of human motivation and will always produce the greatest and most enduring achievements". (Stephen Covey, 2004)



My third McKinley 'Love' quote is a no-brainer: **"Children will go where there is excitement; children stay, where there is love."** - Zig Ziglar. Love is indeed, the answer.

III. LEADERSHIP-THIRD POINT: FIRST AMONGST FIRSTS

Lee Kuan Yew is someone I admire. For many reasons. I admire him for what he has done for, rather, what he has done *to* his country. In 1959, Mr Lee became prime minister of Singapore when the city-state, part of the Federation of Malaysia won its independence from Britain. Then, it had zero resources and using 'third world' as reference to depict it would be an English understatement. A NY Times writer described it then as "malarial". By 1994, it had the world's busiest port, was the third-largest oil refiner and was a major center of global manufacturing and service industries. From less than \$ 100M in its coffers, it is today one of the world's economic powers with US \$ 200-300B in sovereign wealth funds (2009). How enviable as a neighbor in the ASEAN region. Not without his critics who have lambasted and lampooned him for his micro-management, curtailment of civil liberties, laws banning chewing gum and spitting, lack of entrepreneurship, among others, the social order he conceptualized and imposed to create world class citizens within world class infrastructure, has translated into material well-being enjoyed by his people. When questioned, Minister Lee replied: "These are my choices. I go by what is good governance. What are the things I aim to do ? We have now a healthy society that gives everybody the chance to achieve his maximum". Many times I have thought, we (the Philippines) need a Lee Kuan Yew. I personally experienced a thin slice of life in Singapore. During a respite from education for the stretch from 2002 -2005, I made a few visits to Singapore and my business then exposed me to entrepreneurship and Singaporean entrepreneurs. I want to say, "*What are they talking about?*".

I admire him for what he has done for and to education. Again, it needs to be appreciated in context, of Singapore as a backward and remote 700 sq mile fishing village and a populace born and raised in this meager setting composed of multiracial and multicultural Chinese, Malays and Indians. In 1995, Singapore placed No. 1 in math and sciences in the celebrated and reliable TIMSS or Trends in Math and Science Study (www.nces.ed.gov/timss/) and has stayed consistently on top of the world till today. As he has brought Singapore to first-world status, he is steadfast and mindful, constant in reminding us of the Confucian values of discipline and hard work, perseverance, value for learning and scholarship, thrift and the deferment of present enjoyment for future gain.

I admire him for his razor sharp mind then and now in his eighties. Though undoubtedly, The Father of Singapore, Mr. Lee still officially part of the cabinet as Mentor Minister since 1994, is less 'father' and more 'grandfather' enjoying a relished and revered role in geopolitics, as



thinker, analyst and unquestionably, master. It is in this phase and arena that I am in awe how he perceives, responds to and connects personalities and events and scenarios in current events and in history. Why do I even wonder? Why of course, leaders see, must see connections. He too has an astute and honest ability and disposition to tweak when tweaking is called for.

The leader's leader; the statemen's stateman. First amongst firsts. From Fareed Zakaria of CNN, I learned Richard Nixon once compared him to legendary statesmen Disraeli, Bismarck and Churchill. President George Bush enthused: "Mentor Minister Lee Kuan Yew is one of the brightest, ablest men I have ever met. All of us who have worked with him have benefitted from his wisdom, insight and dedication." From Margaret Thatcher: "He was never wrong." Quite recently in October 2009, Minister Lee received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the US ASEAN Business Council attended by top US foreign policy bigwigs. As one of these bigwigs, Henry Kissinger, Nobel Peace Prize recipient in 1973 and 56th Secretary of State of the US paid tribute to Minister Lee: "He is a seminal figure for all of us. As I have said I have known him for 40 years. I have not learned as much from anybody as I have learned from Lee Kuan Yew".

On a personal note, I have loved ones and family very close to my heart in his Singapore. I have a niece, Lorie, the eldest daughter of my eldest brother taking her doctorate in NUS (National University of Singapore). Lorie is married to her classmate in UP, Nathan Cruz, a certified nerd who gave the valedictory address for the university, also taking up his doctorate in NUS. I have a nephew, Red, the eldest son of my second brother, a Computer Engineering honor graduate also from UP with his fiancé in IT in Singapore. Also and not incidentally, part of the pioneer mentoring team of my 2 schools: sweetest Teacher Jeannie and feisty Alex Festin and industrious Teacher Mickie Sangalang, all quite dear to me, are in international schools in Singapore.

I can be hilarious and strange at the same time: hilariously strange or strangely hilarious. I was tickled with childlike affectation (so do forgive me) to read that Minister Lee and I share at least two words in our vocabulary: riff-raff and first-rate*, two words that can sometimes label us perhaps as intellectually arrogant at least when I choose to be. He does have an influence on me. I borrowed 'mentor' from him for use in the school. He was Senior Mentor (from 1990-1997) and now, Mentor Minister (from 2004 to present); I sign report cards as Mentor Director :) When I read that he was reading Miguel Cervantes' "Don Quixote", I ran to PowerBooks. I had to read it as well. "To dream the impossible dream" (Man from La Mancha)...

All these said, nothing impressed me more than an answer of his during one interview. The interviewer clearly 'starstruck', asked him: So Minister Mentor, is there anyone in this world that you look up to? I am certain that the interviewer actually meant: "Being Lee Kuan Yew, is it at all possible that you can even look up to someone?". His answer was: "Yes, Deng Xiao Ping".



Quizzical, the interviewer retorted: "But what about the Tiananmen Incident of 1989?" The image of this lone man, slight in physique undaunted by a column of formidable tanks, flashed back. Still indelible in my mind and perhaps in the minds of millions all over the world witnessed through CNN, this scene is now immortalized in LIFE** for what it is, a photograph that changed the world.

Minister Lee replied: "I cannot judge, because I did not have his information." I can not start to explain why his answer 'blew my mind' but it did and my feeling, my instinct, my emotion then, albeit not totally devoid of reason, was: "That is a leader".

First amongst firsts. Not riff-raff. First rate (mind). In a class all his own. A cut above the rest. S, for sterling. "I cannot judge, because I did not have his information". Gosh ! if I could teach that to your children and some friends! LOL!

May I end with these words, words that have been comfort and companion in many a dark night and day:

**"People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered;
forgive them anyway.**

**If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;
be kind anyway.**

**If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true friends;
succeed anyway.**

**If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;
be honest and frank anyway.**

**What you spend years building,
someone could destroy overnight;
build anyway.**

**If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;
be happy anyway.**

**The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;
do good anyway.**

Give the world your best anyway.

**You see, in the final analysis,
it is between you and God;**

**It was never between you and them,
anyway".**

Mother Teresa (1910-1997)

Lee Kuan Yew. Mother Teresa. First amongst firsts.



* interchangeably, world-class, first rate, first class :)

** LIFE's 100 Photographs That Changed The World

WORKS CITED: to follow



June 10, 2017

DR. DOMINICO C. IDANAN
Superintendent,
DepEd Makati Division Office,
Guadalupe Nuevo, Makati City

Dear Dr. Idanan,

May this find you in the best of health and spirits, as we request for your generosity of spirit to host the “Presentation of the Plan of Action and Resolutions of 2017 UN Student Leadership Conference on Development (UNSLCD)” on June 12, 2017 from 8 pm – 12 midnight at the DepEd Makati Division Office Conference Hall. Chosen student leader delegates of the various UN conferences will represent the Philippines via video conferencing when the US-based delegates present the document to the office of the Secretary General, particularly the OIC, Envoy on Youth, at the United Nations HQ in New York City on June 12, 2017 from 9:30 am – 12 noon, Eastern Standard Time. These chosen student leaders are from Makati Science High School, other Makati high schools and the University of Makati.

Tashi Deley, Doctor Idanan!

We honor the greatness in you for supporting youth participation in the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Every best wish and prayer,

Sam
Rayla Melchor Santos
President and Co-founder,
IAMSAM