

PRAYER LEADERSHIP

The greatest (Christian) leaders are universally marked by deep empathy, compassion, deep sensitivity to the hearts of others, EQ over IQ.

Without empathy we become tyrants. Control freaks. With it we listen. We love. We are prepared to change and remain willing to make sacrifices. When we empathize we cannot help but pray and when we pray - 'with' and not just 'about' people - we become more compassionate.

Henri Nouwen identifies compassion as the meeting place of contemplation and intercession. It is here, in quiet identification with the pain & predicament of others, that our hearts are softened and we are rescued, day by day, from the deadening creep of compassion fatigue.

"Often I have said to people, 'I will pray for you,' but how often did I really enter into the full reality of what that means," admits Henri Nouwen. But he continues:

"I now see how indeed I can enter deeply into the other and pray to God from his center. When I really bring my friends and the many I pray for into my innermost being and feel their pains, their struggles, their cries in my own soul, then I leave myself, so to speak, and become them, then I have compassion. Compassion lies at the heart of our prayers for our fellow human beings."

[THE GENESEE DIARY]

The biggest enemy of compassion is stress.. It is somehow scary how stress has the capacity of destroying empathy and compassion and people under stress are lead by stress and are not intentional anymore..