



Leading with integrity - *and walking the walk*



**6.00pm Monday, September 7 until
3.30pm Tuesday, September 8 2020**

Background Note and Agenda for our 48th Leadership Conversation

Society of Leadership Fellows, St George's House, Windsor Castle

This Leadership Conversation builds on our Leading with Integrity theme

A link to this Insights Report is on the final page.

In this Conversation we will be doing core St George's work - extracting wisdom from our experience. We will take a precious opportunity to step back and enquire into how our sense of integrity is both serving us and being developed, strengthened or challenged by the changes we find ourselves facing into as leaders in these times.

"We must adjust to changing times and still hold to unchanging principles..."

Jimmy Carter

"It takes courage to "join soul and role" in organizations that can make it unsafe to show up with integrity and act in alignment with it. But when we find that courage, our lives become more whole, our work reaches deeper, the people we serve are better served, and, in ways large and small, the world becomes a better place."

Parker J. Palmer

7 benefits from joining us in September

- 1 A chance to take stock and question ourselves on what it personally means for each of us to lead with integrity in these changing times. To strengthen our clarity on how we might lead with integrity, and "walk the walk", in ways that fit in with our own leadership styles
- 2 Some **practical tips** for how best to model high integrity leadership so as to encourage others to do the same
- 3 **Sharing of ideas** about how best to handle those situations where we feel that our integrity is challenged in the moment, and know that if we don't speak up immediately we will almost certainly have compromised our integrity in ways we will later regret
- 4 A chance to reflect on the crucial relationship between integrity, trust and courage and develop personal strategies for **drawing on our own courage** to keep ourselves within our integrity
- 5 The opportunity to seek feedback from other Fellows as the Conversation develops in an open, high-trust climate geared to our genuine self-improvement as leaders
- 6 Supportive follow-up through the **special WhatsApp group** that we will set up at the end of the Conversation
- 7 **Sharing of progress** in implementing resolves at our online follow-up at 2.00pm on November 13th.

***The more you put in
the more you take away!***



Our mission from 6.00pm on September 7th:



To enquire into what we have learned about leading with integrity in these challenging times and examine the standards of integrity that we expect of ourselves as leaders. Also to consider how we may inspire others to do the same.

We will ask:

- How, if at all, has our sense of what it means to lead with integrity broadened or deepened as a result of our recent experiences and insights as leaders in these times
- Of the various ways in which we seek to uphold our own integrity as leaders, which ones make us **most proud** and which ones give us **greatest cause for self-challenge?**
- Focusing on those areas where we challenge ourselves, what is the **one specific intention** that we could set that would make a difference in its own right and embolden us to assert our sense of integrity more strongly?
- How should we go about encouraging our team/s to agree a small number of principles and behaviours that enable them to walk the walk as **high integrity teams?**

During the final session we will each identify two or three stretching resolves to enable us to step forward more confidently as high integrity leaders over the coming weeks and months.

"This is me!"

"Tell us more"

"Yes I can!"



The three stages to our Conversation

We will structure our discussions around three stages:

1 "This is me!"

We put stage one under this heading because early on we want to encourage you to **share a story** that helps us understand better where you are coming from as a leader. To help us achieve strong connections across our group, please be up for sharing something about yourself in a way that helps others gain some sense of what high integrity leadership means to you personally.

2 "Tell us more"

Stage two is under this heading because we hope that by now we will all want to mobilise the power of questioning to draw each other out. We want to **get behind each other's stories** as we support each other in asking how we might each best ramp up the standard of integrity that we as leaders expect of ourselves and others.

3 "Yes I can!"

Our third and final stage is about each of us **stepping into a really empowered place** where we have a greater sense of all that we can achieve by being more thoughtful about how we walk the walk as high integrity leaders.

For every breakthrough in thinking during this third stage, we will be able to identify its origins in the stories that we have each shared and the curiosity that others have shown in response.

"This is me!"

From 6.00pm on Monday through to 10.00am on Tuesday

After agreeing our Guiding Principles for this Conversation, we will explore our first question in small groups.

A previous Conversation (page 37 of our Leading with Integrity Insights Report) concluded:

"In so many ways, the struggle for higher integrity organisations takes place in the 'shades of grey'. More of us need to take a stand more often in relation to the relatively small things that could well cost us 'small bits' and 'crumbs' of our integrity".

Our thinking at the moment is that in small groups we should ask you to share a personal story about:

(a) where you have recently found yourself sensing a need to take a stand (whether you did or not) on a question of integrity
or

(b) where you have found yourself rethinking what it means to lead with integrity in the light of things you are experiencing happening around you (for better or for worse).

Through your answers we should be able to focus our discussions and prioritise the key issues that we engage with in ways that match what **you** most want to take away from this Conversation.



"Tell us more"

From around 10.00am on Tuesday through to 12.45pm

By around 10.00am on Tuesday we hope that everyone will have had a chance to make a substantive contribution to our discussion. We are now ready to start probing our subject in greater depth - what are the real implications of the themes we have been highlighting for us as leaders and our own behaviour?

To help with this we may refer to the ten key behaviours and challenges in Chapter 3 of Leading with Integrity (link on the final page as useful building in this Conversation.)

We will also ask whether there are any other behaviours or challenges not in this list that we want to take on board at this stage to enable us better to "walk the walk" as high integrity leaders.

10 behaviours and challenges

- 1 I tell it straight
- 2 I never knowingly let a colleague fail
- 3 I ask pokey questions
- 4 I'm always up for challenging my own assumptions
- 5 I never undermine what's agreed in the room
- 6 I assume that others want to do the right thing too
- 7 How much of a people-pleaser am I?
- 8 Are we prepared to be vulnerable?
- 9 When will I know when my time is up?
- 10 How much am I up for renegotiating my boundaries?

"Yes I can!"

From 12.45 on Tuesday through to 3.30pm

Our discussion on the Tuesday morning should help us to sharpen up a small number of challenges that we regard as potentially high in impact, from the point of view of us seeking to create a **higher integrity culture** in our own organisations through the behaviours and habits that we adopt as leaders.

Being effective in challenging others

One thing we have reminded ourselves of in our three previous Conversations on leading with integrity is how **difficult** it is to challenge others in any way about their own integrity without this becoming instantly **terminal** for our relationship with them.

Hence the importance of using some word or phrase other than integrity, such as "*doing the right thing*".

There is an interesting insight on page 47 of the Insights report,

- *We can not expect to be effective in challenging others in relation to how they lead with integrity if we pretend that we never compromise our own.*
- **How do you respond to this?**

We plan to open up this discussion over lunch, and come up with **practical examples** of how vulnerability on our part is key if we are to challenge others effectively.

We want to be careful to focus on each of us in the room, rather than discussing colleagues who aren't with us!

Experience has taught us that the more prepared we are to be **tough on ourselves**, the greater our chances of everyone in the group coming up with our own **stretching and yet deliverable outcomes** by the end.

STRETCHING OUTCOMES

Integrity, trust and courage

Before ending this commentary, may we draw your attention to the thought at the end of the Insights Report about the powerful relationship between integrity, trust and courage.

In the past we have at times recognised how easy it can be to "over manage" and over-engineer our relationships with peers and senior leaders, in ways that compromise our integrity.

We then avoid facing this by looking the other way, so that even in a discussion about integrity we manage to duck the issue!

Are we expecting enough of ourselves?

This is why we are keen that we ask whether we are expecting enough of ourselves in our key relationships at work, where we feel that there is a pretty good foundation of integrity and trust.

- Is it now time to step forward more as leaders committed to showing greater courage in being **more open and truly authentic** than we tend to be at present, as a matter of integrity?
- Rather than seeking to change our behaviour unilaterally, should we **signal this** first in some relationships by saying that we would like to agree to be more trusting with each other, and lower our respective boundaries as a symbol of the integrity of the relationship?

Throughout our time together we hope to support each other in sharpening up some powerful resolves that we can draw on as we each seek to "walk the walk" more thoughtfully and confidently in leading with integrity.



Our hope and expectation in these Leadership Conversations is how a breakthrough on the part of one Fellow as we explore these questions for ourselves can trigger different but just as powerful breakthroughs and resolves on the part of others.

Agenda

Monday, September 7th 2020

2.30pm+	You are welcome to check into your room in St George's House
4.30pm	Tea in the House for those joining Evensong in the Chapel
5.05pm	Evensong (<i>optional</i>)
5.50pm	Vicars' Hall. Refreshments, then start of the Conversation at 6.00pm. Introduction to the Guiding Principles and then on to Stage One: <i>This is me!</i> We break for small groups and when we return we encourage you to share some aspect of your personal story that helps other Fellows gain a sense of what high integrity working means to you
7.40pm	Free time/ drinks in the Sitting Room of St George's House
8.15pm	Working dinner in the House Dining Room
9.30pm	We go through to the Sitting room for tea/coffee and after-dinner drinks
9.45pm	(Optional) Private floodlit tour of St George's Chapel, departing from the Sitting Room

Tuesday, September 8th

7.45am	Breakfast is served. Please clear your personal belongings from your room and bring them down to the Vicars' Hall, so that the domestic staff can prepare our rooms for the next group
8.45am	We start again promptly in the Vicars' Hall. At 10.00am or earlier we move on to Stage 2: <i>Tell us more</i> (page 7). We move in and out of small groups as we identify specific challenges that require quality thinking time. We capture key "take aways" as we go and at around 12.30 prepare for Stage 3: <i>Yes I can!</i> (page 8)
12.45pm	A hot buffet lunch is served in the Vicars' Hall and we work together in our groups. At 1.40 we have a team photo on the West steps of the Chapel (<i>weather permitting!</i>)
1.45pm	Back together as one group, we draw out the key outcomes of our lunchtime discussions. We prepare for our final round of small groups, after which we invite each of you to sharpen up your personal resolves to enable you to become more effective as leaders who make a point of "walking the walk" in leading with integrity. We close the Conversation promptly at 3.30pm .



Video link-up: November 13 2020

In the final minutes of the Conversation we will arrange a time for a follow-up video link-up in November to hear how much progress we have each made in taking forward our resolves.

The key to us making the best possible use of our time in November is for Fellows to share a brief email beforehand updating the rest of us on how you have acted on your resolves, and especially which one you found the most challenging. We then take it from there!

Suggested time for Video Link-up:
2.00 to 3.00pm on Friday, November 13th 2020

Please click the
cover to open
the report



Leading with integrity

*Insights from three
Leadership Conversations*

Society of Leadership Fellows
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"All this walking
the walk makes
you hungry!"

