

# INFLUENCING WITH COMPASSION

## A BUILDING COALITIONS

When compassionate leaders articulate their inclusive visions that include the entirety of their constituents, they provide a moral framework that allows various groups to find meaning and recognize the interconnectedness of today's complex public challenges.

This understanding necessitates compromises and enables these leaders to effectively inspire and coordinate broad cooperative coalitions. These coalitions counteract the fragmentation caused by factionalism.

In contrast to competing interest groups solely seeking political advantage, compassionate leadership emphasizes accountability for negative externalities burdening marginalized communities.

Wise policymaking, guided by enduring human values, requires the appreciation and synthesis of varied viewpoints through patient and respectful dialogue. This approach allows allies to discover shared purposes, appealing to compassion and conscience rather than resorting to conflict. This style of leadership gains allies by stirring emotions and convictions, placing authentic connection above the manipulation of anxieties and frustrations.



## B COMMUNICATING WITH COMPASSION

Experience shows we cannot spark deep, enduring social and environmental movements by appealing to people's fear, greed or egoism. Such messaging tends to yield only superficial, fleeting activism based more on anxiety than resolve.

Worse, these fear-based negative appeals often backfire by reinforcing values of self-interest that undermine collective wellbeing.

Well-intentioned leaders often mistakenly believe that stark warnings about threats will compel individuals into action.

**However, in practice, such alarming messaging usually breeds dismissal or anger except among those already converted.**

Without offering hope, vision and agency, fear-based messaging divides more than unites.

To create transformational movements, leaders must inspire through moral courage, not dread. We need communication grounded in compassion - lifting up our common hopes rather than highlighting differences. This means:

- Appealing to universally shared values of human dignity, justice and potential for progress when channeled through empathy, integrity and peaceful means. This ethic transcends narrow identities.
- Consistently emphasizing our common humanity while avoiding messages that feed tribalism, prejudice or marginalization of any groups.
- Advocating for the systemic change required to secure wellbeing and opportunity for all citizens - especially those suffering most.
- Sharing relatable stories that convey the tangible lived experiences of those you represent.

In summary, compassionate communication builds resonant messaging that transforms both hearts and minds rather than forcing change through fear or shame. It pulls people in rather than shutting them out. Leaders must harness compassion's power to spark social movements that get us all moving collectively in the direction of justice.

