

What Betrayal Taught Me

Leadership is about justice, and justice is using your influence as a leader for the good of others. This has been my leadership methodology for years, and it has been tested in the fire!

Years ago, I was grieving over being taken advantage of over and over again. I hurt because I was surrounded by takers who were self-absorbed in their own needs and never genuinely cared for me. I would trust their words of loyalty, commitment and partnership until I was slapped in the face with sudden, heartbreaking betrayal. The end goal for their validating and honoring words was to take what they could get from me and to manipulate me for their gain. When I had served their purpose, I was dropped like a hot potato. Even though I don't believe most of these individuals lived with any conscious malicious intent or even an initial awareness of their manipulation, this reality was still a difficult and painful pill to swallow.

Even so, I have learned so much through these experiences. Even in betrayals—though I would not wish this pain on anyone—we have choices to make for ourselves. Will we grow bitter or better? Hard and untrusting, or resilient and wise?

What I Learned Through Betrayal

- 1. While not always valued by others, I know that I still hold value.** I know that I cannot stop bringing that value to the table. The world needs what I carry—and the world needs what you carry.
- 2. My continued contribution to others raised my personal leadership bar.** Experience is one of the greatest teachers.
- 3. Through the heartache of betrayal, I was able to clearly define my calling.** I knew even through pain, my purpose must

be lived out. This continues to hold me steady to my course. You learn what matters most to you when you are challenged.

4. I learned what not to do, so those things do not sabotage what I was called to do. Learn from your present for a better future.

5. I was able to discern my personal saboteurs. This alone was worth the arduous journey. We are always works in progress.

6. I extracted good from negative and learned when and where to make investments of my life, energy. and time.

7. I have learned that I am powerless to change another human being. I cannot work harder on someone's growth than they are willing to do for themselves. Assess your investments and see where the scales are wrongfully tipped and adjust.

8. It is not a win-win partnership if one is doing the majority of the work and the other getting the greatest benefits. This has helped me to evaluate my levels of investment moving forward.

9. Trust must be built over the long haul. It's not what is said but what is done that confirms the trustworthy.

10. It is always good to discern when and where I should give, knowing there will never be a return, a partnership or any personal benefit. This keeps my heart pure and promotes a generous lifestyle.

Where will we invest our emotional energies?

I am sure that you have experienced usury and have felt the sting of flattery, deception and manipulation. You, however, also hold the personal power to respond rather than react, learn rather than attack, and establish healthy boundaries. It is not what happens to us but what happens in us that shapes the trajectory of our lives.

We have a daily choice to either focus on the betrayal, hurt and disappointment or to focus on what can mature, advance and bring greater levels of wisdom to our leadership.

Do not give your power to the past. Instead, become the best version of yourself today!

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