

Leadership through service is a theme throughout my life and the counseling profession. I model my leadership style in the way articulated by Robert Greenleaf in his seminal essay *The Servant As Leader* (1970). I strive to cultivate awareness of the needs for individuals and communities with whom I have contact by listening to understand before speaking to be understood and by mindfully training to recognize injustice and need, tolerate discomfort, and work as necessary to ease suffering and promote wellbeing. I measure my effectiveness as a leader not by positions held, but by the degree to which those in my care are developing. Have they “become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to be servants” (Greenleaf, 1970)? My leadership influences prior to beginning my doctoral journey were my great grandfather, my grandmother, my mother, my primary residency supervisor, Gretchen Wilhelm, Buddhist author Pema Chödrön, and Jesus Christ. As I have begun my doctoral journey, I have been introduced to more heroes of the profession and look forward to learning from the legacies of Jane Myers, Courtland Lee, Don Locke, and Mary Thomas Burke, among others. As such, I propose the following leadership action plan for myself with proximal and distal goals and objectives.

➤ **Action Domain: Leadership and contributions to professional organizations.**

- Since May of 2013 I have been a member of national, state, and local professional organizations. I joined the American Counseling Association (ACA) in May of 2013. I joined the Virginia Counseling Association (VCA) and the Central Valley Counselors Association (CVCA) in 2014, the Virginia Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling (VA-ALGBTIC) in 2015 and the Virginia

Associations for Couples and Family Counseling (VACFC) in 2017. I joined ACA, VCA, and CVCA at first in order to reap the benefits of membership, such as discounts on liability insurance, ethical and risk-management consultation, and peer consultation. I joined VA-ALGBTIC and VACFC because these were associations of like-minded counselors. However, I have done little to participate in the processes of these organizations or to contribute to them.

- **Goal:** Improve my identity as a leader in the field of professional counseling through organizational leadership, management, and administration.
  - **Objective 1:** Join the Virginia Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (VASERVIC). I recently learned about the existence of this organization at the state and national levels. I plan to interview a past president of this organization for a class assignment and seek out connections with other members prior to and at the VCA conference in November of 2017.
  - **Objective 2:** Explore leadership or administrative options through my membership organizations and take at least one option if available by the end of 2017.
  - **Objective 3:** Take up membership of my current state-level organizations at the national level by the beginning of Fall Semester 2018.

- **Objective 4:** Become a National Certified Counselor (NCC).
- **Objective 5:** Earn an invitation to Chi Sigma Iota and accept the invitation by Spring of 2018.

➤ **Action Domain: Identity development as a researcher**

- I hope to contribute to the field through adding to the research, especially regarding the relationship between sexuality and spirituality and the role counselors can develop in service to neurodiverse populations. However, my training as a researcher is very limited to this point.
- **Goal:** Begin to cultivate identity as a researcher.
  - **Objective 1:** Take and succeed in doctoral-level research statistics by the end of 2017.
  - **Objective 2:** Explore options to assist professors and/or other counseling researchers on current projects. Take at least one opportunity if offered.

➤ **Action Domain: Identity development as a scholar**

- I believe one of my great strengths is as a writer, and I look forward to contributing to the field of counseling as a scholar. Furthermore, I have training and experience as an editor that is not directly being used or developed in counseling-specific ways.
- **Goal:** Further develop my identity as a scholar.
  - **Objective 1:** Submit at least one article for publication per semester through Spring of 2018.

- **Objective 2:** Explore opportunities to edit professional publications. Take one opportunity if offered.

➤ **Action Domain: Identity development as a counselor educator**

- To this point in my career, I have had extensive opportunities to offer brief clinical trainings for new staff. I have offered a guest lecture and taught a counseling techniques class at the undergraduate level. I found the role of counselor educator fulfilling, and I'm relishing the opportunity to develop a unique pedagogy during my doctoral journey. Furthermore, there is a trend for more and more teaching opportunities to be offered online, and it seems responsible to develop online teaching skills even if my preference is to teach on campus.
- **Goal:** Improve my identity as a counselor educator beyond planned course work.
  - **Objective 1:** Explore options to teach (or co-teach) an on-campus course and take at least one opportunity if offered.
  - **Objective 2:** Explore options to teach (or co-teach) on online course and take at least one opportunity if offered.

➤ **Action Domain: Identity development as an advocate**

- I feel energized by opportunities to lend my voice in the service of those who are unheard or voiceless. To this point, however, my advocacy efforts have been relatively undefined and unorganized.

- **Goal:** Develop opportunities to advocate that represent the needs of my clients and community within the scope of my personal and professional values.
  - **Objective 1:** Develop an advocacy action plan regarding improve access to quality mental health services for those in poverty.
  - **Objective 2:** Develop an advocacy action plan regarding improved access to support services for LGBT-plus-identified youth in my home county.

➤ **Action Domain: Continued development as a clinician**

- One of the great discoveries and joys of my life has been the opportunity to serve individuals, families, and communities as clinician. May my skills always be sharpened through clinical practice at some level throughout my career.
- **Goal:** Continue to practice as a clinician at Augusta Psychological Associates.
  - **Objective 1:** See between 10 to 25 clients per week.
  - **Objective 2:** Seek opportunities to develop video recording opportunities and video supervision for myself.