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Designing and Field-Testing a Model for Managing Leadership Fears

A Thesis
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by

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ABSTRACT

This project designed, field-tested, and assessed a model called *Adaptive Courage* to guide the process of managing leadership fears. The research methodologies used in assessment were evaluative, phenomenological, and pedagogical while the method was interview. Ten leaders constituting a broad demographic participated in two, one-on-one sessions. The first session assessed each participant's top leadership fears and its related intensities, determined the extent to which each participant's valuing of spirituality played a role in managing fears, and explained the *Adaptive Courage* model. Each leader then implemented the steps of the *Adaptive Courage* approach for an average of four weeks followed by a second session designed to debrief the subject and the therapeutic model's effectiveness. Although the types of fears were different among the leaders, the fear experience itself was common and potentially disruptive to their effectiveness. Understanding and applying the *Adaptive Courage* model proved to positively impact most of the individuals and provided a structured, cognitive framework that could be applied in a broad context of situational challenges. The positive value of spirituality among participants, though diverse in practices, was confirmed.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this project was to support individuals in developing as courageous leaders by addressing fears associated with leadership. When leaders hesitate or fail to take courageous action and become paralyzed by personal leadership fears, the organizations they lead are likely to suffer. It is of individual, ministry and organizational importance for leaders to not only identify personal leadership fears but also to learn how to constructively manage them. To that end, I designed, field-tested, and assessed a model called *Adaptive Courage* to guide the process of managing leadership fears. The project also explored the relationships to which a person's value of spirituality plays a role in managing his or her leadership fears.

Ten leaders representing diverse demographics participated in the field-testing. My purpose was to investigate their top leadership fears and related intensities, as well as to explore the circumstances that lead to their fears. I asked participants to apply the principles of *Adaptive Courage* to their leadership fears and later to assess the tool's effectiveness. I also encouraged the leaders to combine spiritual practices with *Adaptive Courage* to evaluate the degree to which this approach helps leaders in the midst of their fears.

Having described the purpose of the project, the following is an outline of my ministry context, project-related opportunity, associated research question and the *Adaptive Courage* model. Key terms are then defined along with an overview of the subsequent chapters at the end.

Context

The context for this project is first rooted at a personal level. I have experienced my own moments of leadership fears and failures. I noticed at times these private fears have been barriers that prevented me from leading to my fullest potential. As such, my personal learning journey through *Adaptive Courage* stems from a desire to have a better response to fears so that I can continue to lead effectively in the years ahead. This model was developed and shaped in large part through the lens of my previous educational experience in psychology, physiology and theology.

I undertook this project with my ministry context in mind. After providing pastoral leadership at a church for eight years, in 2010 my wife and I launched a not-for-profit organization called *Thinking Forward* that later received charitable status in 2012. Our vision at *Thinking Forward* is “to help people of all ages make choices that develop character to build stronger communities in Toronto.” One of *Thinking Forward’s* programs offers character-based leadership training called *Everyday Leaders*. The purpose of this program is to empower leaders to their fullest potential and to engage social needs. *Everyday Leaders* is offered as a six-week training curriculum, which includes themes such as: purpose, character,

emotional intelligence, courage, priorities, collaboration, communication, compassion, vision, strategy, results, and mentoring (Leung 2011, 10-11). Our clients have included: the staff and managers of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Toronto, members of the Toronto Forest Hill Rotary Club, volunteer youth leaders at Yonge Street Mission in Toronto, high school teachers at the Toronto District School Board, and staff executives at Providence Healthcare.

As founders we believe that an essential aspect of developing strong character attributes involves making good life choices; choices that help make a positive difference in others' lives. As such, we express *Thinking Forward*'s organizational values in the acronym C.H.O.I.C.E.S. (Leung 2011, 139), as shown below:

OUR VALUES:

the development of good CHARACTER,
HELPING others,
OWNERSHIP of our actions,
being a positive INFLUENCE,
showing COMPASSION,
EDUCATION as a key to growth,
SUSTAINABILITY of our resources.

Figure 1: Organizational Values - Choices

We have approximately forty volunteer team members including our Board of Directors, our Board of Advisors, and our Operations Team. *Thinking Forward* serves diverse groups of people and is open to those of different cultures and backgrounds.

My personal faith journey is grounded in Jesus Christ and the educational institution for this doctoral degree is Christian-based. Yet, because my ministry

context serves a broad range of people from all walks of life, this has shaped the *Adaptive Courage* model which provides a multi-faith approach that is designed to help a variety of leaders.

Opportunity

A leader's fears present a significant barrier to reaching his or her potential. Townsend (2010) and Lerner (2004) outline various barriers that inhibit an individual's potential when fear overcomes them. Adams (2009) expresses the importance of re-framing negative thoughts and emotions more positively to also help individuals reach their potential. When a leader fails to take courageous action because of paralysis caused by fears, the church or organization he or she serves could suffer. It is essential for leaders to identify what their personal leadership fears are and how to constructively manage them.

Throughout the Christian Scriptures there are examples of leaders such as Moses, Gideon and Elijah that struggled with some type of leadership fear. They hesitated to move forward with a leadership task because of some apprehension. These biblical leaders wrestled with overcoming leadership fears, so individuals today may also grapple with similar challenges. *Adaptive Courage* provides a conceptual and procedural model that helps guide leaders through these fear challenges.

Research Question

Leadership fears adversely impacts a leader's effectiveness. Hence, the primary research question that underpins this study is, "Would applying the *Adaptive Courage* model help leaders manage their fears so they could be more effective in their leadership role?"

Responding to this research question fulfills the purpose of this project which is to support individuals in developing as courageous leaders by addressing fears associated with their leadership. If leaders are permitting their fears to become barriers from moving forward, they are not maximizing their leadership potential nor advancing the vision of their enterprise optimally. There is too much at stake for leaders and organizations to allow this to happen. Hence, the implication that having a reliable fear management model that would guide leaders through their fears would be of tremendous value both to the leaders and to the organizations they serve.

An Introduction to *Adaptive Courage*

As an introductory framework of the model, *Adaptive Courage* is made up of five core components derived from the literature, each addressing a different aspect of fear that leaders might experience. Figure 2 illustrates the areas that leadership fear causes as well as the respective *Adaptive Courage* components that address these symptoms.

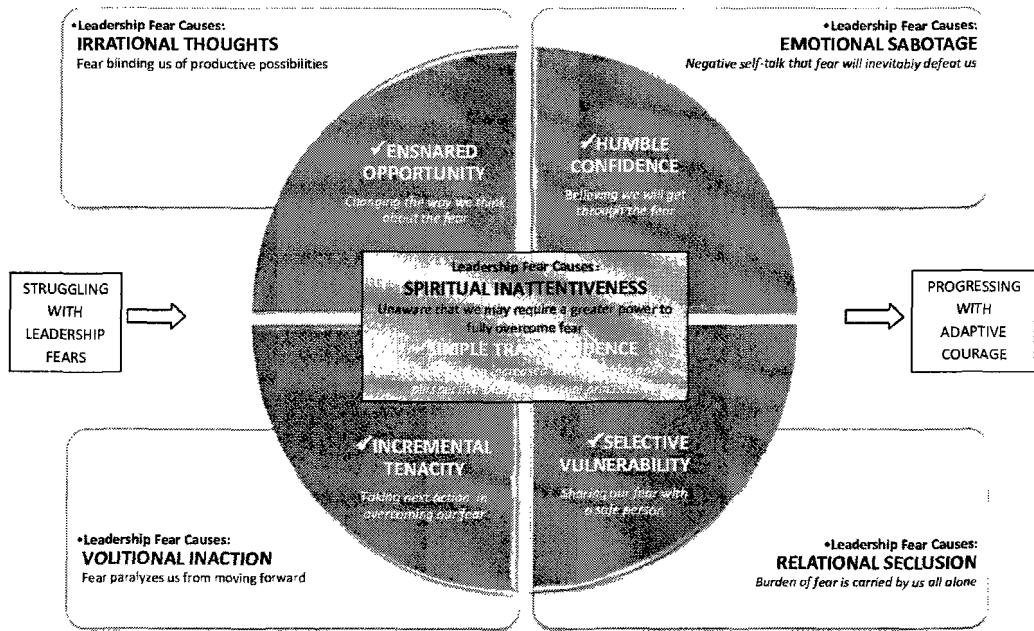


Figure 2: Components of *Adaptive Courage*

When leaders experience fear, at times it causes them to have irrational thoughts that blind them of productive possibilities. Hence, the first component of *Adaptive Courage* is Ensnared Opportunity that helps leaders change the way they think about the fear. Leaders might also sabotage themselves emotionally as they engage in negative self-talk regarding their ability to overcome the fear. To address this, the second component is Humble Confidence that encourages leaders to believe they will eventually persevere through the fear. In the midst of their fears, leaders may also seclude themselves relationally and feel as though they need to carry their burdens all alone. For this reason, the next component of

Adaptive Courage is Selective Vulnerability that reminds leaders of the perspective gained when having a few safe people to share their fears. Due to the overwhelming nature of the fear, leaders may also become volitionally inactive and feel paralyzed about moving forward. To combat this tendency, *Adaptive Courage* incorporates a principle called Incremental Tenacity that helps leaders identify the next tangible action step in managing their fear. Finally, leaders may be inattentive to the need for a greater spiritual power in helping them fully overcome their fears. To address this, *Adaptive Courage* involves Simple Transcendence which supports leaders in rising above their circumstances to experience a greater sense of calm through spiritual practices.

The basis for *Adaptive Courage* will be explored further in the Theological Rationale and Literature Review chapters. The *Adaptive Courage* model and strategy will be explained in greater detail in the Research Methodology chapter. That chapter will also discuss the two interview sessions conducted for each participant in relation to *Adaptive Courage*. The first interview included a training process of learning the model of *Adaptive Courage*, and the second interview debriefed and assessed the model.

Defining Key Terms

For the purposes of this project, I define a *leader* as a person who is responsible to give guidance, direction, or instruction to a particular group or task. I define *leadership* as the ability to give guidance, direction, or instruction to a particular group or task. I use the word *spirituality* to describe a sense of

transcendence in everyday life. *Transcendence* is the “quality or state of being transcendent” which is further defined as “being above material existence” or “something beyond the limits of experience and knowledge” (Webster’s New International Dictionary, 3rd ed., s.v. “Transcendent”). Leaders may discover that their own ability to manage fear can only take them so far. Beyond that, they may require a greater power that is outside of their control. Leaders might possibly need a supernatural intervention that is “not realizable in human experience” (Webster’s College Dictionary 2nd ed., s.v. “Transcendent”). Leaders may notice they require this sense of spirituality to help fully navigate through their fears.

It is also important to distinguish between fear and leadership fear. Fear is an intense feeling of dread or trepidation, triggered by the perception of a threat that is either real or imagined. For instance, seeing a snake or walking on a high and shaky bridge evokes fear. A *leadership fear* is an intense feeling of dread or trepidation arising from a real or imagined threat that occurs within the context of giving guidance, direction or instruction to a particular group or task.

There is certainly a relationship between fear and stress that needs to be noted and it is at times difficult to clearly delineate between the two. Yet, there are two distinguishing characteristics of stress to emphasize. The first relates to a response. Stress is defined as “a specific response by the body to a stimulus, as fear or pain, that disturbs or interferes with the normal physiological equilibrium” (Webster’s College Dictionary 2nd ed., s.v. “Stress”). So stress is the actual response that the human body produces in relation to some sort of emotional trigger such as fear or pain. The second differentiation relates to intensity. Stress

is also characterized as a “state of mental or emotional strain” (Oxford Canadian Dictionary of Current English, s.v. “Stress”). For the purposes of this project, the intense feelings of dread produced through fear will be considered of higher intensity than the lower-grade strain produced through stress.

Fear is a hard-wired, built in emotional and physiological mechanism. As such, fear may sometimes be helpful in certain circumstances. For instance, fear may help an individual respond appropriately to life-threatening situations. Yet, within the context of this project, I develop my thesis with an *assumption* that fear, specifically leadership fear, is generally unproductive and diminishes a leader’s ability to give full guidance, direction, or instruction to their particular responsibility. Townsend (2010) supports this assumption by describing various barriers that fear produces which is explained further in Literature Review.

Overview

This chapter introduced my project’s purpose, context, opportunity and research question. The remaining chapters explore: the theology that lays the foundation for the concepts of fear and courage, the literature that expands the theories of fear and courage while developing the basis for the *Adaptive Courage* design, the research methodologies, method and model of *Adaptive Courage*, the project findings and analysis of both pre- and post-application of *Adaptive Courage*, and my conclusions along with considerations for future exploration.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE

The focus of this research study was to identify how to help leaders manage their leadership fears through a practical application model known as *Adaptive Courage*. In this chapter I emphasize the theology that lays the foundation for the concepts of fear and courage. The first part of the chapter examines the Biblical account of fear, particularly considering how the consequences of sin created fear. I proceed to offer reasoning through which sin has been radically redeemed in our lives. The third part of this chapter provides specific case studies of biblical leaders who have struggled with fear. The final part of the chapter deals with strengthening courage through the assurance of God's presence and infusion of his resources.

The Origin of Fear

My thesis project focuses on overcoming leadership fears. Given this focus, it is first essential to determine fear's origins. The first appearance of a word associated with fear takes place in the initial chapters of the creation story.

The Experience of Fear through the Entrance of Sin

After God had formed man from dust and breathed life into him, God created a garden in Eden where he placed the man there to oversee it (Genesis 3:8 NLT - All Bible references are from the New Living Translation unless otherwise noted). God made many varieties of trees. In the middle of the garden God placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He explained to the man, Adam, that he may eat fruit from any tree but cautioned that if the man ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil the man would surely die. God placed the tree there “to test man’s obedience and free decision to follow his Creator...it simply stood for the possibility of man’s rebellion against the simple word of God” (Kaiser 1978, 77). Then, God created a woman, from the man’s rib to be his partner. God named the woman Eve. To this point in the Genesis account, fear had not yet come into existence. Fear seemed to be an element that lay outside of God’s purpose and plan thus far.

Yet, the story begins to shift as the next series of events unfolds. The serpent craftily asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?” (Genesis 3:1). The woman replied that in fact they could eat from the trees in the garden. She clarified that it was only the tree in the middle of the garden that God told them not to eat or touch as they would surely die. With that response, the serpent cunningly said, “You won’t die! God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil” (Genesis 3:4-5). The woman was persuaded and “deception worked its trick...and the woman succumbed to the

heavy pressure and cunning argumentation of the tempter himself” (Kaiser 1978, 78). The thought of enjoying some delicious fruit and the prospect of gaining more wisdom was irresistible. So, Eve ate the fruit and gave some to Adam to eat as well. It was “at that moment, their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they strung fig leaves together around their hips to cover themselves” (Genesis 3:7). Their defiance against God’s directive caused the first-ever sin to penetrate human history. That evening as the Lord was walking in the garden, the man and woman hid in the trees. When the Lord inquired where Adam was, he sheepishly responded, “I heard you, so I hid. I was *afraid* because I was naked” (Genesis 3:10). The word *afraid* comes from the root ‘to fear’ (Strong 1894). This is the first occurrence of the concept of fear in Scripture. It was in that instant within the Garden of Eden that fear became a human reality. It needs to be noted that fear does not equate to sin. Fear itself is not sin. Yet, it was the entrance of sin into humankind that produced fear. The first sin resulted in the first recorded fear.

In tracing the details that eventually led to fear, the serpent’s lure began with planting a doubt. “Did God really say?” was how the scheming serpent deposited a seed of doubt in the woman’s mind. Even among leaders, fear originates with an inkling of doubt. The serpent then moved from a doubt to an absolute lie. “You won’t die!” the devious serpent claims. The claim is in direct opposition to God’s command. The serpent is “subtle, crafty and verbally combative” and “represents interests diametrically opposed to those stated by God in Genesis 2:16-17” (House 1998, 64). Smith and Leicester (1996) offer a

description of fear as false evidence appearing real. A major component of fear—particularly true of leadership fears—is having false or partially false inner beliefs of oneself or about a particular challenge. When a person accepts lies or misguided distortions that are negative as truth, the result is fear. The serpent’s words were deceitful and caused doubt. Biblical scholar Campbell Morgan describes how fear came into existence beginning with the serpent’s appeal:

The appeal, in the last analysis, is a questioning of the goodness and moral integrity of God. The fall of man consisted in consent to listen to any such appeal and in the consequent failure of faith, which issued in definite breaking of the law. At once fear in the human soul is manifested. Faith and fear are mutually exclusive. So long as faith governs, fear is impossible. (Morgan 1959, 12)

The temptation by the serpent coupled with Adam’s and Eve’s lack of obedience in God. The enticement by the serpent initially caused Eve and eventually Adam to violate God’s command. More specifically, it was the man’s and woman’s now damaged relationship with God that gave birth to fear. In the end, “their communion with God is broken, and they hide from the One who created them in His image” (House 1998, 65). Ultimately, fear began in the Garden, resulting from the man’s and woman’s shattered friendship with God their Maker.

The Shaping of Fear through the Repercussions of Sin

This fractured relationship with God came as a result of the man’s and woman’s rebellion, which then piloted fear into human existence. The renowned philosopher Soren Kierkegaard notes, “All sin begins with fear” (Kierkegaard 1980, 170). An individual who steals money may be fearful of not having enough financial security. An individual who lies will be fearful of being exposed by the

truth. Some aspects of fear may indeed instigate a pathway to sin. However, in the story of the Garden, it was sin that lead to fear. The humans' ensuing fear was a consequence of missing the mark of God's holy decree. Up to that point, God had created everything to be good, without sin. However, through the deceptiveness of the serpent along with the misdeed of the woman and man, evil entered the human race. We recognize the interwoven nature of sin and evil.

Sin was the original evil. Before it entered the universe there was no evil: "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31). Sin is the greatest of all evils. There is nothing in it but evil, nor can it produce anything but evil—now, in the future, forever. As soon as sin was conceived, all other evils followed. (Pink 1969, 106)

As sin entered the world, a number of negative implications resulted for mankind. It is important to identify the ramifications of sin. Ultimately the consequences of sin shape our outlook of fear. Sin pervades every facet of a person's being. Fear is no exception. Although fear itself is not sin, sin has shaped humankind's experience of that fear. In light of that, in order for leaders to overcome their fears, they must take into account the various aspects of the human experience that sin has stained. The influential biblical scholar A. W. Pink outlines several consequences of sin: blindness of the mind, blindness of the heart, disordered affections, corrupted conscience, and disabled will.

First, he discusses the *blindness of the mind* in which he described "the mind as the faculty of the soul by which objects and things are first known and apprehended" (Pink 1969, 137). He argues that sin has affected man's cognitive ability. Scripture describes how "people's minds were hardened" (2 Corinthians 3:14) and that "their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God

gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him” (Ephesians 4:18). It is essential to realize that due to sin, “corrupt reasoning and false judgment are the prime motivations of all our sinning” (Pink 1969, 139). Sin affects every aspect of the human condition including leadership. Hence, in managing leadership fears, an individual needs to be aware of the significance of addressing the component of their mind and thoughts.

Secondly, sin has caused *blindness of the heart* in which we understand the heart as “the center of our moral being, out of which flow the issues of life” (Pink 1969, 141). Scripture explains how people have “made their hearts as hard as stone” (Zechariah 7:12) and that they have a “stony, stubborn heart” (Ezekiel 11:19). Unfortunately due to the fall of man, “sin has so calloused man’s heart that Godward, it is loveless and lifeless, cold and insensible” (Pink 1969, 141). As an individual contemplates their leadership fears and ways to overcome them, they need to be attentive to addressing fearful aspects deep within their heart as well.

The third area that sin has adversely affected is *disordered affections*. Pink defines these affections as:

... the sensitive faculty of the soul. As the understanding discerns and judges things, so the affections allure and dispose the soul to or against the objects contemplated. By the affections the soul becomes pleased or displeased with what is known by the bodily senses or contemplated by the mind, and thus it is moved to approve or reject. (Pink 1969, 142)

In leadership terms, we may translate these affections as a leader’s values. A leader whose personal values run counter to an organization’s values will increasingly produce friction that may interfere with the enterprise’s long-term

health. Scripture expresses how people “all turn to their own way, they seek their own gain” (Isaiah 56:11 [NIV]). Leaders who allow their fear to selfishly protect their own personal interests will eventually harm the overall vision of their church or organization.

The fourth area that sin impinges on is the *corrupted conscience*. Pink points out that:

While it is true that fallen [people] possesses a general notion of right and wrong, and is able in some instances to distinguish between good and evil, yet while [they] remain unregenerate that moral instinct never causes [them] to truly delight in the former or to really abhor the latter. In whatever measure [they] may approve of good or disapprove of evil, it is from no consideration for God. (Pink 1969, 149)

Various Scripture passages describe this as a “weak conscience” (1 Corinthians 8:12) or “guilty conscience” (Hebrews 10:22). Leaders must be aware that their integrity and character are fundamental leadership attributes. Without these crucial attributes, leaders will never achieve trust among their leadership relationships. Leaders need to consider how their fear might influence these aspects of their leadership.

The final area that sin has damaged is a person’s *disabled will*. A person’s will ultimately serves the other faculties and “executes the final decision of the mind or the strongest desire of the affections, carrying it into action” (Pink 1969, 142). Scripture describes how “all have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one” (Romans 3:12). In the end, a leader’s actions will define them. Their inner processing of thoughts and emotions of a particular leadership challenge will sooner or later bring them to a decision junction where

they will need to act. Leaders need to realize the magnitude of this leadership factor and not allow fear to be a hindrance to it. Therefore, as sin entered into existence, it drastically altered humankind's mind, heart, affections, conscience and will. These implications of sin have shaped the entire human experience—including fears—so leaders need to be conscious of attending to these particular faculties in the process of coping with their fears. The *Adaptive Courage* model seeks to attend to these range of faculties such as addressing a leader's mind through Ensnared Opportunity, a leader's heart through Humble Confidence, and a leader's will through Incremental Tenacity.

The Redemption from Sin

The following section provides a theological rationale for humankind's redemption from sin and holistic restoration to the various faculties impacted by sin.

Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength

Sin profoundly affects both an individual's psyche and one's relationship to God (Ramm 1985). This rupturing of friendship in the Garden between humankind and God gave a foothold for both sin along with fear to burst forth into actuality. As noted previously, sin caused negative ramifications to ripple through various aspects of humanity. Sin's ripple effects have shaped the outlook of humankind's fear experience. Yet, beyond all sin and fear, Jesus Christ's redemptive activity gives hope. As the Lamb of God, Jesus washed away sins

(John 1:29), overpowered death (Revelation 1:17-18), and offered forgiveness for all transgressions (Colossians 1:14). In the perspective of eternity Jesus dealt forever with sin and fear. Yet, on the earthly side of heaven, sin, along with fear remains a raw and painful aspect of humankind. In order to bring holistic restoration to the various faculties impacted by sin, God commanded individuals to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength. The second is equally important: Love your neighbour as yourself. No other commandment is greater than these” (Mark 12:30-31). In understanding this passage further, note that the:

Heart, soul, mind, and strength must co-operate in loving God. The *heart* is the hub of the wheel of [humankind’s] existence, the mainspring of all [their] thoughts, words and deeds. The *soul*—the word used in the original has a variety of meanings—is here probably the seat of [humankind’s] emotional activity; the *mind* is not only the seat and center of [their] purely intellectual life but also of [their] dispositions and attitudes. (Hendriksen 1975, 493)

As for the remaining characteristic of *strength* in this passage, Strong (1894) notes that the Greek root for this word related to the terms “boisterous, mighty, powerful, strong, and valiant.” John MacArthur speaks of the parallel passage in Matthew 22:37-40 and describes the heart as “the core of one’s personal being”, the soul is “closest to what we would call emotion” and the mind as the “intellectual, willful vigor and determination, carrying both the meaning of mental endeavor and strength” (MacArthur 1988, 339). Yet, despite the differentiations, the principle underlying this passage is to love God with all of one’s being. Having said that, the “genuine love of the Lord is intelligent, feeling, willing, and serving. It involves thought, sensitivity, intent, and even action where that is

possible and appropriate” (MacArthur 1988, 339). As fear remains a part of a genuine journey for persons in this sin-plagued world, we must give purposeful attention to applying this God-given mandate as it allows one to live beyond sin and fear in a holistic manner. The model of *Adaptive Courage* aims to address this by including a component that focuses on spirituality, Simple Transcendence.

Relationships

Having identified the importance of incorporating an inclusive approach to addressing fear by trusting God with all of one’s heart, soul, mind and strength, there is another crucial aspect to round off this holistic approach. It occurs in the second half of that commandment to “love your neighbour as yourself” (Mark 12:31a). Zodhiates (1992) delineated that neighbour generally meant “a fellow [person]” or “any other member of the human family.” It indicates the idea of someone that is near or close by. Biblical commentator C.S. Mann suggests that:

At the very least, therefore, we have enlightened self-interest in the sense of regard and concern for one’s fellow in not wishing for him or her what we would not wish for ourselves. Perhaps the best translation of agape (given the current debasing of the word ‘love’ in contemporary English) is ‘sacrificial compassion.’ (Mann 1986, 481)

The last element of living a holistic approach to fear involves our relationships. In essence, it requires that we would treat others in the manner we would like to be treated. Yet, in order for leaders to live beyond fear in this sin-stained planet, they need to go even deeper when it comes to their relationships. The greater risk leaders need to embrace is the area of vulnerability and transparency. Leaders must attend to Ogilvie’s words:

There are times when we must be alone to gain perspective and insight as well as wisdom and strength, but this is always for the purpose of involvement with others. The ‘leave me alone’ attitude of contemporary life is dangerous because it contradicts the essential nature of the Christian as a [person] for others. When we begin to care about people, we sacrifice a private life, the fortress is impregnated, and we no longer belong to ourselves. Beware, that will cost...The gift which costs most of all is the gift of being personal with another...It is a costly gift to give to another—to let down the mask and allow another person to know us as we are.

When we share with another what we have been through, we give him a valued gift. Jesus warns that this is not for swine—the casual observer or the seeker after the spectacular. When, in the context of trust, we share how we have found the secret of God’s power in weakness and difficulty, we open ourselves to two frightening possibilities: we may be misused and exposed; and we can never again live on a superficial level of life with that person. We must trust that we will be respected and loved as fallible persons who have found life out of weakness. (Ogilvie 1975, 234-235)

For leaders to overcome their fears, they need to be willing to be vulnerable with others. However, as outlined in the quote above this is not just for anyone in the leader’s network. For example, the casual follower who may not have the capacity to understand or grasp the full extent of struggle the leader has with a particular fear is not a suitable recipient of unguarded transparency. Yet, leaders are still wise to find an inner circle of relationships where they can be open about their private battles with fears. As leaders share transparently these very things, they may soon realize that they are not alone in their worry and may even gain greater perspective in their anxiety. As they do, this will indeed be a cherished gift for not only the other persons, but a gift to the leaders themselves.

In connection with *Adaptive Courage*, the component of the model that focuses on this relational aspect is Selective Vulnerability.

Biblical Case Studies in Leadership Fears

Throughout biblical history, God called various individuals to take on a mantle of leadership. Yet, at least initially many effective biblical leaders still struggled with some leadership fears. Though God called these individuals to lead in a particular realm of responsibility, many hesitated and refused because they were afraid. These characters in the Bible needed to depend upon God at a deeper level to conquer their leadership fear and move forward.

The Bible is filled with hundreds of references to some variation of the expression of “fear not” in the Bible. The Gospels reveal twenty-one Christ-issued imperatives that:

Urge us to “not be afraid” or “not fear” or “have courage” or “take heart” or “be of good cheer.” The second most common command, to love God and neighbour, appears on only eight occasions. If quantity is any indicator, Jesus takes our fears seriously. The one statement he made more than any other was this: don’t be afraid. (Lucado 2009, 10-11)

It is clear that God commands all individuals and leaders to not be afraid. Yet, despite the clarity of the command, examples of leaders who responded otherwise fill the Scripture. The following case studies reveal biblical leaders who struggled with fear. The identified fear may not have been the only fear each character wrestled with and may represent only the predominant fear in that situation. The particular ordering of the case studies corresponds to the emergence of these characters in the books of the Bible from Old to New Testament.

Fear of Ineffectiveness: Moses

For instance, when God called Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, Moses initially responded with a *fear of ineffectiveness*. He protested to God and said, “Look, they won’t believe me! They won’t do what I tell them. They’ll just say, ‘The Lord never appeared to you’” (Exodus 4:1). Moses hesitated and objected “that in all probability the people would not hearken to his voice, that is, they would not take his bare word” (Henry 1960, 76). Moses feared that his effort would not produce the desired result. He was afraid that his leadership would be ineffective for the required task.

Fear of Incompetence: Moses

Moses also struggled with a *fear of incompetence* particularly in the realm of public speaking. He continued to plead with God, “O Lord, I’m just not a good speaker. I never have been, and I’m not now, even after you have spoken to me. I’m clumsy with words” (Exodus 4:10). Other versions indicate how Moses was not an eloquent speaker and “thought himself unfit to speak before great men and about great affairs” (Wesley 1987, 68). Moses felt he lacked the ability to carry out this leadership mission. He was afraid that he did not have the verbal skills to do what God required of him:

God called Moses to *be who he was*, but he was also calling him to become something that *he was not yet*—a leader who would bring God’s people out of bondage. Moses *did not yet see himself* as the kind of leader God knew him to be. It is possible that he thought of himself more as a [person] of action than as someone with the kind of verbal prowess and persuasiveness that this particular calling would require. (Barton 2008, 77)

The fears that Moses might have experienced can also be true of leaders today. Those in leadership roles may at times fear that they are unable to produce good results or feel unqualified for a lack of required skills.

Fear of Loneliness: Joshua

Despite the fears that Moses had to overcome, people generally remember Moses as a heroic biblical leader. No one knew this better than Joshua. God said to him, “Now that my servant Moses is dead, you must lead my people across the Jordan River into the land I am giving them” (Joshua 1:2). God was making it clear that when he “has work to do, He will either find or make instruments fit to carry it on” (Wesley 1987, 152). Yet, for Joshua, God was asking him to step into a role that seemed daunting. For the next number of verses, we know nothing from Scripture of Joshua’s response; yet, God’s continued use of certain phrases implied Joshua might have been fearful. Phrases such as “Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9). The Hebrew root for *afraid* means *to dread* or *shake terribly* (Strong 1894). Joshua’s larger-than-life mentor, Moses, had helped deliver Israel out of Egyptian bondage. Moses was now dead, so Joshua might have encountered dismay at being alone to face such a massive leadership undertaking. Joshua experienced the *fear of loneliness*. God gently reminded and promised Joshua saying, “I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not fail you or abandon you” (Joshua 1:5). Leaders of churches and organizations today

may also feel that they are all alone to bear the weight of their decisions and responsibilities.

Fear of Insignificance: Gideon

Another example is Gideon. When approached by God with the leadership task of rescuing Israel from the Midianites, Gideon hesitated and replied, “How can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my entire family!” (Judges 6:15). Gideon struggled with feelings of worthlessness and was “not conscious to himself of anything great or encouraging in his own spirit” (Henry 1960, 250). He experienced the *fear of insignificance* that initially caused him to hesitate in his leadership calling. Gideon experienced “the consciousness of his own lowliness and insufficiency...” (Morgan 1959, 104). Author David Hubbard observes that a feeling of insignificance drives us in one of two directions:

We *overcompensate* by running hard and driving fast. We cover our feelings of insignificance by high achievements. We push our way through life, competing with everyone in sight. We may develop a brassy exterior to protect our inner tenderness. We may gesture grandly and talk loudly to mask our fearful shyness. We may become arrogant and insolent in our desperate attempt to hide what we really are. Or we may *withdraw*. Convinced that we have nothing to contribute, we keep to ourselves. Our opinions are not worth sharing...we find convenient excuses not to accept invitations; we back away from added responsibilities at work; we graciously decline assignments at church, knowing that almost everybody else has more talent for that job than we do. (Hubbard 1972, 46)

Gideon’s inner struggle may also be true of leaders today. Leaders might grapple with self-esteem issues, feeling unimportant in whom they are, thereby

diminishing to a certain degree reasonable self-confidence they need for leadership.

Fear of Conflict: David

King David was a person who daringly stood against the giant Goliath and gained victory for the Israelites over the Philistines. David was the epitome of courage. Nevertheless, this great leader of God was not a stranger to fear. One afternoon, when the Israelite army was waging war against the Ammonites, David stayed behind in Jerusalem even though “it was the time of war, and his place was with the army. Instead of being there, he had remained behind, in the sphere of temptation” (Morgan 1959, 131). This temptation eventually caused David to commit adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. When David’s plans to cover up his infidelity failed, one sin followed another and in due course, David arranged for Uriah’s death by ordering that Uriah be stationed “on the front lines where the battle is fiercest. Then pull back so that he will be killed” (2 Samuel 12:15). David did everything in his kingly power to avoid detection of his sin. He tried to prevent others from uncovering his affair. A possible reason for David’s uncharacteristic behaviour was the anticipation that since Uriah “could not prosecute David by law for an offence of this nature he would take his revenge another way, and raise a rebellion against him” (Henry 1960, 340). This suggests that David might have had a *fear of conflict* in this situation. The king did not wish anyone to expose him due to the potential discord that would instigate with Uriah possibly leading to an uprising among his own people. Leaders today may

not go to the extreme that David did in assassinating one of his own to avoid their fear. Yet, leaders need to be sensitive to other expressions of how they may seek to evade conflict instead of facing critical issues with courage.

Fear of Intimidation: Elijah

Elijah is another leader who suffered from fear. After he demonstrated incredible courage in confronting the prophets of Baal and Asherah, King Ahab's wife, Jezebel threatened Elijah's life and frightened him. Scripture described how "Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. He went to Beersheba, a town in Judah, and he left his servant there. Then he went on alone into the desert, traveling all day. He sat down under a solitary broom tree and prayed that he might die (1 Kings 19:3-4). Jezebel terrorized Elijah. He seemed to struggle with the *fear of intimidation*. This prophet of God was also a "fearful servant" and though he "had stood erect in the presence of tremendous odds now fled for his life" (Morgan 1959, 144). Elijah was essentially afraid of how this authority figure would harm him. Author John Bevere describes how:

The objective of intimidation is to restrain you from action, and coerce or force you into submission...Once you've retreated into submission, either knowingly or unknowingly, you are a servant of the intimidator. You are no longer free to fulfill the will of God but are subject to the desires of your intimidating captor. (Bevere 2006, 46)

Elijah's blend of leadership experience was peppered with a courage-fear mix evident in many leaders today. At times, leaders will exhibit energetic courage in carrying out their responsibilities. However, the truth is that leaders are

not perfect and there will be other leadership circumstances that can strike fear deep into the very hearts of them as well.

Fear of Uncertainty: Esther

Today we know Queen Esther for her courage in saving the Jewish nation from eradication. Yet, her courageous journey was not completely absent of fear at the outset. When Mordecai urged her to approach the king and plead for mercy of the Jewish people, she vacillated. Esther responded to Mordecai saying “The whole world knows that anyone who appears before the king in his inner court without being invited is doomed to die unless the king holds out his gold scepter. And the king has not called for me to come to him in more than a month” (Esther 4:11). Esther was afraid of what might happen to herself because “the custom and law forbade her to approach her lord save at his command” (Morgan 1959, 198). Esther experienced the *fear of uncertainty*. She had significant doubt as to how the king would respond and whether she would be safe. Although “Mordecai urges her to intercede with the king for a revocation of the edict, Esther objects the danger of addressing the king uncalled” (Henry 1960, 507). Yet, even in the midst of an uncertain future, Esther is eventually convinced to proceed with valour saying “I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I am willing to die” (Esther 4:16b). Leaders experience a calling to lead their ministries with a vision of the future. No leader has the ability to guarantee the future and there certainly will be times when leaders are afraid of future outcomes. Yet, even in those

instances, leaders can learn from the example of Esther and move forward with bravery.

Fear of Inexperience: Jeremiah

God called Jeremiah to lead Israel by warning them of their sins and the coming judgment that would result. Jeremiah responded by saying, “I can’t speak for you! I’m too young!” (Jeremiah 1:6). Jeremiah had a *fear of inexperience*. Fear hampered Jeremiah. He feared that his age disqualified him from his leadership calling. Another paraphrase of Jeremiah’s response was “Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak to great men and multitudes, as prophets must; I cannot speak fluently; I cannot speak with any authority, for I am a child and my youth will be despised” (Henry 1960, 936). He felt like he was too green to have any impact. The passage clearly revealed God’s call and at the same time Jeremiah’s “shrinking from the great work. With great patience Jehovah bore with Jeremiah’s fear” (Morgan 1959, 321). Despite Jeremiah’s fear, God still used this prophet to lead God’s people. Emerging leaders today may have the same thoughts as Jeremiah and may feel they lack sufficient experience to make a difference as a leader.

Fear of Failure: Jonah

Failure is a natural part of life and is no different in the arena of leadership. Any individual that has been in any kind of leadership capacity will experience times when things do not go the way they hoped and planned. As a result, the next time a leader receives a new assignment, they may waver due to a

fear of failure. Even biblical leaders such as the prophet Jonah messed up at certain points in their leadership. God had asked Jonah to go and announce judgment upon the wicked nation of Nineveh.

However, “Jonah got up and went in the opposite direction in order to get away from the Lord” (Jonah 1:3). This prophet botched God’s directive by his noncompliance. Jonah’s “attempt to escape was an act of wilful disobedience” (Morgan 1989, 385). Yet, leaders who struggle with this area of fear should also be encouraged as it can channel them towards something positive.

A legitimate fear of failure can be a creative emotion. No one wants to do a sloppy job or have his achievement viewed with scorn by others. Our own sense of values should be enough to prevent us from doing a second-rate job when we are capable of much more. It is only when the desire for excellence becomes obsessive that we err, or when we outreach ourselves, striving for goals beyond our abilities. (Osborne 1976, 101)

The important thing for leaders to remember is not to let their fear of failure become a roadblock that stops them from moving forward in their leadership initiative.

Fear of Unpopularity: Peter

Scholars often refer to the apostle Peter as one of the pioneers of the early church. Yet, despite this great achievement, he was a leader weighed down at times with fear. In the hours leading up to the trial and crucifixion of Christ, Peter experienced fear first hand. Peter followed the action from a distance. It was evident that he was “agitated by conflicting passions: love constrained him to follow his Master; fear made him follow afar off” (Wesley 1987, 423). While Peter was waiting outside the courtyard, by-standers accused Peter three times of

being associated with Jesus and the disciples. Yet, each time Peter denied the accusations. On the last occasion, Peter responded saying “I swear by God, I don’t know the man” (Matthew 26:74). The individuals spoke of Peter sneeringly “as if they thought it a reproach to them to have such a [person] in their company...When he was charged as one of Christ’s disciples, he denied it, was ashamed and afraid to own himself so” (Henry 1960, 146). Peter’s denial began when he placed himself in an environment where the wrong crowd surrounded him. Biblical scholar and minister Matthew Henry offered this insight about Peter in relation to the individuals around him:

Bad company is to many an occasion of sin; and those who needlessly thrust themselves into it, go upon the devil’s ground; they scarcely can come out of such company, without guilt or grief, or both. The temptation came, when he was challenged as a retainer to Jesus the Galilee. (Henry 1960, 145)

Peter may have struggled here with the *fear of unpopularity*. As others pointed the finger at him for belonging to Jesus, he was reluctant to make the right but difficult stand as it would have set him apart from the rest. Peter was afraid to be different from those around him. Leaders today can learn a hard lesson from Peter. There will be times when leaders need to make courageous decisions that others will not like. The leader’s good choice may cause the leader disapproval. Yet, leaders need to focus on doing what is right and that which is best for their organization no matter the falling out they may receive from their followers.

This is certainly not an exhaustive list of the various fears experienced by biblical leaders. Yet, these examples offer compelling evidence that even strong and successful leaders in Scripture struggled to overcome their leadership

apprehensions. If these great leaders of God had fears, then surely, leaders today must also wrestle with these very same difficulties to some degree.

Courage and God

The following section describes the biblical connection between courage and God. In particular, how courage relates to the infusion of God's resources and the assurance of his presence.

Courage and the Infusion of God's Resources

In light of these examples of biblical leaders who struggled with leadership fears, it is important to remember the incredible resources God provides every leader in the midst of their fears. A wise mentor can aid awareness of God's available resources for fearful leaders.

The Apostle Paul filled this very role in the life of his apprentice, Timothy. Timothy was leading the church in Ephesus and was encouraged by Paul to teach (Brown 1997). Paul urged Timothy by saying, “Don’t let anyone think less of you because you are young” (1 Timothy 4:12). Paul identified exactly the leadership fear that Timothy was afraid of. He called out the particular fear Timothy tussled with—being too young.

...compare his age to Paul’s, or to that of older people in the church over whom he would exercise delegated apostolic authority. Each possibility would apply, as well as the simple fact that he was standing in for Paul in a situation where anti-Pauline sentiments might have been on the increase. In any case, if the noun translated ‘youth, state of youthfulness’ is a reference to an age group, Timothy would probably have been less than forty years old. (Towner 2006, 314)

This novice biblical leader laboured with what Jeremiah had also grappled against—the fear of inexperience. Being that age may not seem young in today’s culture, but was “still considered young by the standards of Greek culture” (MacArthur 1995, 173). By challenging Timothy in this way, Paul was essentially warning Timothy “that because he had no long record to establish credibility, he would have to earn the respect of his people. The Greeks, as did most cultures, subordinated youth to age. If a [person] did not have age, he [or she] would have to earn respect” (MacArthur 1995, 172). Yet, this caution by Paul didn’t end there, as he encouraged Timothy to live a worthy life that would be a great testament for others to model. He was to be an example to all believers despite his fears of youth and inexperience. Leaders can learn from Paul’s example of helping others identify their fears along with providing support and direction in working through them. The *Adaptive Courage* model is designed to do exactly that. To help leaders identify their fears and then to provide a logical structure to help navigate through those fears.

Paul continued to challenge Timothy later saying that “God has not given a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love and self-discipline” (2 Timothy 1:7). The Greek root for *fear* used here means *cowardice* or *reticence*. The word always connotes a bad sense (Zodhiates 1992, 401). Leaders need to be attentive to the principle that “any spirit of timidity we might have is not from God...The Lord is never responsible for our cowardice, our lack of confidence, or our being shameful of Him” (MacArthur 1995, 17). When leaders feel tentative and

apprehensive, they should realize that this is not part of heaven's purpose but rather stems from their very own character.

In contrast, God provides power, love and discipline. The meaning of *power* is that it "denotes great force, or energy, and is the term from which we get the words dynamic and dynamite. It also carries the connotation of effective, productive energy, rather than that which is raw and unbridled. God provides us with his power in order for us to be effective for His service" (MacArthur 1995, 18). Paul exhorted Timothy not to live in fear or cowardice but to lead the church with an explosive courage that God promises to supply. Leaders should be encouraged that one of the resources God provides is this type of vibrant influence that will empower them to lead their churches and organizations forward. The source of this power is "the Holy Spirit expressing itself in courage" within the individual (Johnson 2001, 345). The significance of *love* is an agape love, "the volitional and selfless love that desires and works for the best interests of others" (MacArthur 1995, 18). Paul reminded Timothy that instead of thinking self-centredly about his own fears, Timothy needed to have compassionate and selfless love for the church. This is a reminder for all leaders that they must always look to serve the best interests of their team or ministry. The primary role of leaders is one of servant leadership, not self-serving leadership. Leaders should be mindful of the notion that "the journey of life is to move from a self-serving heart to a serving heart. You finally become an adult when you realize that life is about what you give, rather than what you get" (Blanchard and Hodges 2003, 22).

Finally, the concept of *discipline* or *sound mind* as translated in some biblical versions:

Has the literal meaning of a secure and sound mind, but it also carries the additional idea of a self-controlled, disciplined, and properly prioritized mind. God-given discipline allows believers to control every element of their lives, whether positive or negative. It allows them to experience success without becoming proud and to suffer failure without becoming bitter or hopeless. The disciplined life is the divinely ordered life, in which godly wisdom is applied to every situation. (MacArthur 1995, 19)

Paul encouraged Timothy to not lead with an unsettled mind or wishy-washy behaviour that comes from fear and timidity. Instead he was to be a leader of great focus and purpose. Leaders should be heartened as well that another incredible resource God promises to impart is this aspect of a sound mind that will be essential for all leaders in their individual context.

Paul firmly but graciously insisted Timothy “take courage and comfort from the fact that he is not called to suffer helplessly but will face it by the power of God, that is, the power that comes from God” (Ngewa 2009, 190). Paul was a mentor to Timothy through his leadership fear. Biehl defines mentoring as “a lifelong relationship, in which a mentor helps a protégé reach her or his God-given potential” (Biehl 1996, 19). For obvious constraints, mentoring related to this project will not span lifelong relationships. However, the fundamental purpose of this thesis is about supporting others in managing their leadership fears thereby helping them reach their God-given potential. Like Paul to Timothy, mentorship should support individuals in becoming more effective leaders in their particular calling.

Courage and the Assurance of God's Presence

As leaders strain to preside over fears associated with their leadership responsibilities, God infuses his resources to enable them and assures his presence to empower them. Groeschel points out that "what you fear reveals what you value the most" (Groeschel 2012, 147). Leaders who fear conflict may value harmony and peace in their relationships. Leaders who fear uncertainty might feel having a good grasp of future plans is important. Yet this author continues to challenge saying that "what you fear reveals where you trust God the least" (Groeschel 2012, 148). Leaders who fear ineffectiveness may not rely on God sufficiently to help them produce good results. Or leaders who fear conflict may not trust in God to divinely intervene in restoring relationships. Before a leader can surrender his or her fears to God, it is important that they name their fears.

You must first identify what you're afraid of. You can't know where to start to address it if you're still pretending it doesn't exist. So admit it. Identify it clearly. Until you do, it will continue to be that elephant in the room, that huge dark cloud hovering over you that you're not willing to talk about. So do some name calling. Check the label and see the brand of fear you're wearing. Once you identify it, then you can surrender it to God. You can commit to trust him to give you the power to overcome your fear once and for all. (Groeschel 2012, 152)

As leaders label their fears, they need to relinquish these fears to God. The Psalms are replete with verses that encourage this fear releasing orientation towards God. A couple of Scripture passages written by King David illustrate this. In one verse, David exclaims that "I prayed to the Lord, and He answered me, freeing me from all my fears" (Psalm 34:4). In another passage, David vows to God, "But when I am afraid, I put my trust in You. O God, I praise Your Word. I

trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me?” (Psalm 56:3). Ironically, we recognize David from his youth for his astonishing courage especially in light of his victorious encounter with Goliath. Yet, even this heroic warrior was at times fearful which all leaders can certainly relate to (Wiersbe 1991).

The reason leaders can surrender their fears to God is because He promises to be with them. God guarantees His presence. Moses reminded Joshua, “Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord is the one who goes before you. He will be *with* you; He will neither fail you nor forsake you” (Deuteronomy 31:8). Moses gives Joshua the “same assurances of the divine presence, and consequently of a glorious success, that he had given the people” (Henry 1960, 201). God pledges to be with Joshua in his leadership capacity and will not disappoint or desert him. Similarly, the angel of the Lord repeatedly told Gideon; “Mighty hero, the Lord is *with* you” and “I will be *with* you” (Judges 6:12, 16). This angel emphasized and “assured him of the presence of God with him” (Henry 1960, 250). Though Gideon struggled with a fear of inadequacy, he “knew that success did not depend on what he was but on what God was” (Morgan 1959, 104). God’s partnership with Gideon would be sufficient to help him overcome any leadership challenge or difficulty he was to face. Leaders need to be encouraged that in the midst of their fears, God gives his eternally faithful word that he will be with them through it. Leaders need to take heart that “God has not given you a spirit of fear. If you’re feeling afraid, that’s not from him. Don’t accept it. Don’t give in to it. What God has given you is a spirit of power, of love,

and a sound mind. Seek him. Fear not, for the Lord is with you” (Groeschel 2012, 157). God promises to infuse leaders with extraordinary resources to enable them in their leadership capacity, along with the assurance that His presence will be with them no matter what fears they may face. This underscores the importance of Simple Transcendence, the component situated at the very centre of the *Adaptive Courage* model which addresses the value of spirituality in helping leaders manage their fears.

In this chapter, we have outlined a theological foundation for the concepts of fear and courage. The next chapter expands these concepts of fear and courage by reviewing selected social science literature.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

This purpose of this project was to support individuals in developing as courageous leaders by addressing leadership-associated fears. Specifically, this project develops and field-tests a model called *Adaptive Courage* to guide the process of managing leadership fears. This chapter highlights literature that develops the basis for the various principles of this model. The purpose of the first part is to provide a greater understanding of fear, including its effects and types, along with the process by which fear is triggered physiologically. Since the positive response to fear is courage, the second part of this chapter investigates literature revealing the positive impact this virtue can make. The third part of the chapter looks at a holistic approach to managing fears. The final part of the chapter looks at the relationship between courage and the behavioural change process.

Understanding Fear

The following section reviews literature that presents a broader understanding of the types and effects of fear, along with how fear is triggered in the human body.

Definitions of Fear

Before we can appropriately manage fear, it is important to form an understanding of fear. The philosopher Kurt Riezler described fear as the:

Fear *of* something or *for* something: *of* illness, loss of money, dishonor; *for* his health, family, social status. The relation of the first something to the second something and their respective relevances determine the particular kind and intensity of our fear. (Riezler 1944, 489)

As leaders struggle to overcome their fear, it is often because *of* a particular challenge or *for* something valued that may be at stake. Smith and Leicester (1996) give a simple definition of fear with an acronym, F.E.A.R; False Evidence Appearing Real. This straightforward definition emphasizes how fears are often larger as a perceived reality than in reality itself. Our imaginations play a significant role in fear production.

Allowing your imagination to wander down a long dark alley of possibilities and get mugged every couple of steps. Almost everyone who allows themselves to be taken hostage by what-ifs discovers that the only thing binding them is their own imagination. (Groeschel 2012, 146)

Leaders face challenges constantly. Teams, churches and organizations rely on their leaders to meet these trials with strength and confidence; however, fear in a leader has a way of undermining those qualities. Leaders cannot afford to let their apparent fears and difficulties triumph over the reality of their situation. This highlights the component of Ensnared Opportunity which seeks to reframe the perceived fear into the reality of an opportunity that can help advance the organization or team. For leaders to be effective, it is important for leaders to distinguish between what is imagined and what is reality. Leadership expert John Maxwell notes, “A leader’s first responsibility is to define reality” (Maxwell

2008, 66). Since the perceived reality of fears can misguide a leader's thoughts and feelings, it is vital that leaders have a safe person(s) to share their fears. This relational aspect, experienced through Selective Vulnerability of *Adaptive Courage*, will help provide a proper perspective of those fears. I detail this notion later in this chapter.

Jeffers (1987) explains how we can divide fear into three separate levels. Level 1 fear just happens. The fear of inevitabilities, for instance: aging, change, retirement, accidents, and loss of a loved one. This level of fear also includes those that require some form of action such as changing careers, ending a relationship or public speaking. Level 1 fears are primarily situation-oriented. In contrast, level 2 fears are ego-oriented. Examples of this level of fear include rejection, success, failure, vulnerability, helplessness, disapproval and loss of image. This level of fear involves,

Inner states of the mind rather than exterior situations. They reflect your sense of self and your ability to handle this world. This explains why generalized fear takes place. If you are afraid of being rejected, this fear will affect almost every area of your life—friends, intimate relationships, job interviews, and so on. Rejection is rejection—wherever it is found. So you begin to protect yourself, and as a result, greatly limit yourself.
(Jeffers 1987, 14)

By comparison, the final level is the most pervasive fear that permeates everything else. It is simply the person's belief that he or she cannot handle the fear. The level of fear suggests that “at the bottom of every one of your fears is simply the fear that you can't handle whatever life may bring” (Jeffers 1987, 15). This level 3 fear floods the other two levels making a person feel like they cannot handle either the ego or situation-oriented fears. This underscores the Humble

Confidence component of *Adaptive Courage* which seeks to reassure leaders that they will indeed persevere through their fear. All three of these fear levels are relevant to leadership realities.

As for level 1, there is a fear of inevitabilities when situations just happen. Leadership situations such as a business crisis or some change in the organization that was completely unanticipated. Leaders also must deal with fears that require action, such as a critical decision the church board needs to make or a difficult conversation the leader must have with a key staff member. These external situations are not rare for individuals who provide leadership. Level 2 fears are also familiar to leaders. Leaders may hesitate to move forward in a direction in order to avoid the uncomfortable feelings of rejection, failure or conflict. These inner battles of thoughts and emotions are genuine to the leadership experience. Finally, a level 3 fear may involve a core struggle such as a leader questioning their own ability to carry out key responsibilities or doubting one's own capacity to lead effectively. Leaders may struggle with being unconvinced of whether or not they can handle what life brings to them.

Triggering of Fear

It is also essential to recognize what triggers fear physiologically in the body. We process information from the world around us through electrical signals that travel to our brain. The target destination in the brain is the frontal lobe where rational and logical processing of information occurs. Yet, before electrical signals arrive at the frontal lobe, it passes through the limbic system where

emotions such as fear are produced (Bradberry and Greaves 2009). Within the limbic system, there is a specific part known as the amygdala which is the central area for assessing threat. As soon as the amygdala identifies something as a potential threat, it triggers outward responses such as trembling and sweating. However, if the frontal lobe perceives that there is no real threat, then the frontal lobe will communicate to the amygdala to quiet down (Wise 2009). Davidson (2003) traces the continued physiological pathway by describing how the amygdala connects to the hypothalamus, which is the headquarters for producing fight-or-flight responses as part of the sympathetic nervous system. The hypothalamus then activates the pituitary gland which then sets off the adrenal glands responsible for producing stress hormones such as adrenaline and noradrenaline. These hormones increase heart rate, blood pressure, respiratory rate and blood flow to the muscles to elicit this fight-or-flight response. When a person experiences fear, the “emotional brain centers are trigger-happy—all too ready to dispatch fear messages to the brain headquarters” to produce this bodily response (Davidson 2003, 8).

It is beneficial for leaders to understand this aspect of physiology. Since the frontal lobe’s reasonable thinking function is the key area of the brain that calms the fear stimulating amygdala, leaders need to purposefully engage in sensible and sound cognitive processes especially in the midst of their fear experience. The component of *Adaptive Courage* that engages this cognitive process and calms the activity of the amygdala is Ensnared Opportunity. This fight-or-flight bodily response to fear is helpful in certain situations, yet, in most

leadership scenarios, this fear response can be a barrier to a leader's effectiveness. This is discussed further in the next section.

Effects of Fear

Townsend (2010) outlines four barriers that fear produces: how fear paralyzes us from being decisive, clouds our judgment, makes us address short term rather than long term considerations, and limits our creativity by causing us to focus only on survival and security. It would be detrimental to a leader to experience one or any combination of these symptoms of fear in a recurring manner. A leader that lacks creative vision for the future and has impaired decision-making abilities would certainly not be successful in leading their organization forward. Townsend notes,

Fear is basically a danger signal. It alerts you to something that could harm you...but the wrong kinds of fear will keep you from solving problems the right way...Instead you'll simply go into the "fight or flight" mode, which means you will either do something irrational and rash, or you'll avoid the problem and risk having it get worse. (Townsend 2010, 78-79)

Fear may be connected to imagined or perceived hazards in our environment and propels us into survival-mode. That internal warning sign would be tremendously helpful for an individual camping in the woods and confronted with a giant grizzly bear. However, for leaders expected to give direction and positive influence to their enterprises, exhibiting reckless organizational behaviour or evading ministry responsibilities would eventually lead to their downfall and to the mission's demise. Fear and anxiety also causes psychological blind spots that affect our perspective on various things including our capacity to,

...tolerate ambiguity and complexity. You can't see two sides of an issue, much less six or seven sides. Most devastating to your self-esteem is that the ability to see the many-sidedness of your own self is lost. You tend to get locked into a narrow view of who you are, and lose sight of your own possibilities. (Lerner 2004, 58)

It can be perilous for leaders to have a limited and restricted mind set due to their fears. Leaders constantly need to keep an open mind for new ideas and information (Kets De Vries 2006). Ambiguity and uncertainty are a very real part of any leader's situational context. No leader oversees an environment where there is an absolute guarantee of results. The leader's job is not to eradicate uncertainty as much as it is to give clear direction in the midst of it (Stanley 2003). Although leadership fear may increase an inner sense of outcome obscurity, leaders must remember that,

Uncertainty is a permanent part of the leadership landscape. It never goes away. Uncertainty is not an indication of poor leadership; it underscores the need for leadership...The nature of leadership demands that there always be an element of uncertainty. Where there is no uncertainty, there is no longer the need for leadership. The greater the uncertainty, the greater the need for leadership. (Stanley 2003, 79)

A leader must learn ways to manage their leadership fears so that they maintain their capacity to provide clear guidance even during inevitable times of contextual ambiguity.

Types of Fear

Many different types of fears exist. For example, one type of fear relates to trauma, which includes "experience of combat, a natural disaster or terrorist attack, sexual assault, or any experiences where individuals fear that their life or psychological integrity is threatened" (Sigmund 2003, 222). Yet, for the purposes

of this project, I am considering specifically fears associated with leadership. In Chapter 1, leadership fear is defined as an intense feeling of dread or trepidation that is triggered by the perception of a threat that is either real or imagined while giving guidance, direction or instruction to a particular group or task. In light of this definition, a number of authors have identified various fears that can potentially be categorized under that description. Groeschel (2012) describes four fears: fears of loss, failure, rejection, and the unknown. Osborne (1976) outlines various fears such as: fears of people, emotions, failure and the future. Hubbard (1972) lists several types of fears: fears of loneliness, rejection, being taken advantage of, and an unknown future. Wright (1989) discusses similar fears including the fears of rejection and failure but adds another, which he identifies as the fear of success. A multitude of potential leadership fears exist, highlighting the importance of this project in designing a practical model to help leaders manage their fears.

Understanding Courage

Among various ancient philosophers, courage is a foundational virtue. The classical Greek philosopher Plato identified four cardinal virtues including “wisdom, courage, self-discipline and morality” (Waterfield 2008, 133). The concept of courage will now be explored through various literature.

Definitions of Courage

Having characterized fear and its effects on leadership, along with how it manifests in the human body, we turn our attention to the remedying of fear. Courage is “often described as the overcoming of fear through hope” (Harris 2001, 196). We link the ability to master fear with courage to hope, as “fear and hope are at odds: hope wants fear removed; it demands action. Fear lets hope dread its end” (Riezler 1944, 489). Koestenbaum (2002) describes courage as the very foundation of leadership. It is the root, the source, and the origin of where leadership begins. Courage is the groundwork upon which we build all other leadership qualities. In light of this, it is all the more important for leaders to confront their fears with courage as it distinguishes the very core of who they are. We define courage as “the mental and moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty.... Courage begins by facing strong negative, gut-wrenching feelings. It requires the direct and robust facing of fear” (Lee 2006, 35). Courage involves the mustering up of an individual’s inner fortitude to stand up for what is right, even in the face of fear. This is crucial for leaders as their churches and businesses rely on them to carry out with integrity what is best for the future of their organizations. Allowing fear to hinder this would be damaging to both the leader and the venture to which they are giving oversight. Fear influences the way in which a leader thinks and feels. Courage then requires a leader to self-manage both cognitive and emotive aspects in order to overcome the fear they are experiencing. This aligns with the Ensnared Opportunity and Humble Confidence components of the *Adaptive Courage* model. Courage is,

...the willingness to move in a direction in spite of the emotions and thoughts that bid you to do otherwise. Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage assumes fear...Courage is the willingness to strap on your fear and move ahead. (Stanley 2003, 54)

Being courageous does not mean a leader is not afraid of anything. Former South African President Nelson Mandela once said that “the brave [person] is not [he/she] who does not feel afraid, but [he/she] who conquers that fear” (Durando 2014). Fear is a natural part of the human experience. However, it is what leaders constructively do with their fear that matters. The thoughts and feelings of leaders may grip them to do the very opposite of what courage requires. Yet, courage is moving forward with tenacity even while still experiencing a particular fear. Later in this chapter I discuss more about the cognitive and emotive facets of courage.

Effects of Courage

Just as there are effects created by fear, similarly, there are effects created by courage. When fears hinder leaders, it not only affects them personally but also those whom they are leading. Transformational leadership expert Carol Pearson described this dynamic as it relates to the systems theory. She noted:

Systems theory tells us that when any element of a system changes, the whole system has to reconfigure. Therefore, simply by experiencing your own metamorphosis, you can contribute to the transformation of all the social systems of which you are a part: family, school, workplace, community, and society as a whole. (Pearson 1998, 5)

Leaders do not lead in isolation. Their thoughts, feelings and actions impact the leadership system of which they are a part. While giving into fear may produce negative ripple effects into churches or organizations, leaders who step up with courage will generate positive dynamics in those systems. These systems

are like delicate mobiles that must remain in good balance. Even seemingly small stirrings in one part of the structure will cause significant reaction in others parts of the system. Leaders should consider how “any movement by any one part of the mobile, toward or away from the center of gravity, affects the balance of the whole mobile” (Richardson 1996, 29-30). The way in which leaders can help these fragile systems attain greater stability is to lower the levels of fear that are present within themselves and to manifest courage. Edwin Friedman, known for his work in family and congregational systems, describes the role of leaders as step-down transformers in addressing anxiety, which can certainly be fear-related. He explained that:

To the extent we are anxious ourselves...it becomes potentiated and feeds back into the congregational family at a higher voltage. But to the extent we can recognize and contain our own anxiety, then we function as step-down transformers, or...circuit breakers. In that case, our presence, far from escalating emotional potential, actually serves to diminish its “zapping” effect. (Friedman 1985, 208-9)

Whether fears develop in the organization or lie deep within the leaders themselves, the process of diminishing negative influences begins by conquering fear with courage.

Courage has the multiplying effect of inspiring others. A school principal may make a difficult decision with a faculty member in the best interest of students. A football team’s captain may refuse to let his teammates hang their heads in defeat after a disappointing loss. A Chief Executive Officer may take a salary cut to allow other staff to keep their jobs. Courage to do the right thing sets an exemplary model for others to follow. In turn, courage can motivate others to

demonstrate courage as well. Leadership can be described as “ethically inspiring others to be their best selves to courageously act for what is right” (Lee 2006, 123). As leaders courageously do the right things, followers experience heartfelt motivation to do the same. The impact of churches or organizations courageously progressing in forward action by doing the right things for the right reasons would be immeasurable. The outcome of applying the *Adaptive Courage* model is to help leaders move forward in making these courageous choices even in the midst of their fears.

Management of Fears

With courage defined and recognition of the positive impact of courageous action identified, we must dissect how leaders can manage fear in a holistic manner.

Rational Thoughts

Earlier in the chapter, I offered the Smith and Leicester (1996) description of fear as false evidence appearing real. This characterization of fear accentuates how perceptions of fears are often larger or different from reality itself. Fear has a way of blinding leaders to the complete picture. By seeing their fear, they are only seeing one side of the coin. It is imperative for leaders to recognize the opportunity which lies on the other side:

A leader’s regrets generally revolve around missed opportunities, not risks taken. Many of those missed opportunities would not have been missed had they been willing to push through their fear and embrace what could

be. Fear, not a lack of good ideas, is usually what keeps a man or a woman on the sidelines. (Stanley 2003, 55)

Leaders who allow their fear to overtake them may deprive themselves and their people of an opportunity to advance the vision of their ministry or organization. Leaders must realize that when fear is present, there is usually a unique prospect associated with it. The problem is that fear has a way of ensnaring the opportunity. The job of a leader is to learn to shift the focus from the dreaded fear to free the trapped opportunity that is awaiting discovery.

This process of shifting focus is known as re-framing. Essentially, leaders need to change the way they think about their fear. Adams (2009) produced a significant resource called the Choice Map which helps to empower individuals to change the types of questions they ask of themselves. The technique helps a person “think productively rather than reactively, and to choose wisely rather than simply react...real change always begins with a change in thinking” (Adams 2009, 4-5). By re-framing internal questions, this cognitive process helps individuals overcome negative inner thoughts and to replace them with positive ones. Adams distinguishes between two mind paths that occur when an individual confronts a challenge. One path is called the Judger Path, which is characterized by reactionary, judgmental thoughts of themselves or others. In this pathway questions such as “What’s wrong with me?”, “Whose fault is it?”, “How will this be a problem?” or “How can I be in control?” arise. If leaders keep asking themselves these types of questions when they are facing challenges, there is a high probability fearful thoughts will emerge.

On the contrary, the other mind-processing path is the Learner Path. This form of thinking chooses to channel attention and energy around new possibilities. Individuals will ask themselves a very different set of questions such as “What can I learn?”, “What’s useful about this?”, “What’s the bigger picture?” or “What’s possible?” When leaders face difficult situations that may produce fear, choosing the Learner Path directs their thoughts in a more constructive trajectory. Adams describes how the key to consciously changing paths is to use the Switching Lane, as “that lane is the key to change. You get to learner by asking Switching questions...You literally switch how you’re thinking about what’s possible” (Adams 2009, 74-75). For instance, if leaders are feeling some kind of fear in the midst of their responsibilities, they could ask “How else can I think about this?” or “How can I think about this fearful situation more positively?” Re-framing fearful thoughts and discovering exceptional opportunities within those situations is a key way for leaders to manage their fears. Distinguished educator and consultant Manfred Kets De Vries suggested,

In general, resilient people deal with emotionally difficult problems proactively, reframe experiences in a positive way, have a great capacity to fantasize a more optimistic picture of the future, give themselves time for self-reflection, and work hard at maintaining a network of supportive relationships. (Kets De Vries 2001, 89)

The re-framing technique consists of similar characteristics to cognitive therapy, defined as a “psychotherapy in which the emphasis is on altering the client’s maladaptive thought processes” (Baron and Byrne 1991, 306). Comparable to re-framing, cognitive therapy is about helping the individual

choose positive thought patterns over negative ones. Cognitive psychotherapy is an approach that,

Identifies inappropriate thoughts as the cause of debilitating mood disorders and self-defeating behaviours. For example, the reason people become anxious and depressed is that they harbor anxiety-provoking and depressing thoughts. Consequently, the goal of most cognitive therapies is to help clients recognize these self-defeating thoughts and replace them with more appropriate ones. Sometimes this approach is referred to as cognitive restructuring. (Burger 1993, 490)

Leaders cannot afford to waste their limited resources of time and energy on negative thoughts but need to re-direct those into helpful and productive ones. The reality is that “people spend much of their lives reacting to situation after situation with little considered attention given to why they perceive and mentally process information the way they do” (Manz and Neck 1991, 88). For leaders to be effective, it is essential for them to learn how to manage their negative thought patterns and to substitute those with more constructive ones. Ensnared Opportunity is the key component of *Adaptive Courage* that addresses this.

This rational thinking aligns with the physiological understanding of the body’s response to fear, as presented earlier in the chapter. Before electrical signals arrive at the frontal lobe where logical thought processing take place, it passes through the limbic system where emotions such as fear develop. Specifically, the amygdala is the central area that assesses potential threats. As leaders intentionally guard their minds with rational thoughts centred on possible opportunities that may help the organization rather than focusing on their fears, this very process engages the frontal lobe. As the frontal lobe activates and

subsequently perceives no real threat, it will send messages to the amygdala to quiet down, resulting in a lowering of the fear intensity for leaders.

Emotional Convictions

As leaders rationally unravel the Ensnared Opportunity that their fear has tangled, it is important for them to simultaneously strengthen their inner emotional convictions as well. When leaders address their fear they may struggle—sometimes seemingly overwhelmingly—to know whether they will be able to conquer level 3 fears, as outlined by Jeffers (1987) earlier in this chapter. It is difficult to manage fear if leaders lack inner confidence that they will eventually triumph. If leaders believe fear will defeat them, the feared failure may ultimately become their reality.

Collins (2001) shares an account of U.S. Admiral Jim Stockdale, the highest-ranking military officer captured as a prisoner during the Vietnam War. Tortured for eight years by captors, they finally released him. When asked how he survived his terrible ordeal, he responded by saying, “You must never confuse faith that you will prevail in the end—which you can never afford to lose—with the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be” (Collins 2001, 85). Leaders of teams, ministries and companies must embrace the conviction that no matter how fearful they may feel due to their troubling circumstance, that in the end they will persevere through their difficulties. This is not a boastful, arrogant attitude but rather a quiet, humble certainty that they will persevere through demanding times.

This sense of emotional assurance begins once again with the thought-life of leaders. Bradberry and Greaves (2009) details how an average person has 50,000 thoughts each day and that there is a hard-wired connection between what an individual thinks and what they feel. This aligns with the previous discussion of biology and how the brain processes thoughts and emotions. Bradberry and Greaves propose a term called self-talk, an internal voice inside a person's head that impacts their perception of things:

Our thoughts are “talking” to us every day, and this inner voice is called “self-talk.” With thoughts, the primary vehicle for regulating your emotional flow, what you allow yourself to think can rumble emotions to the surface, stuff them down underground, and intensify and prolong any emotional experience. When a rush of emotion comes over you, your thoughts turn the heat up or down. By learning to control your self-talk, you can keep yourself focused on the right things and manage your emotions more effectively. (Bradberry and Greaves 2009, 118)

Leaders need to have a heightened awareness of negative self-talk regarding their fear. Instead they must positively reassure themselves that they will succeed. It is important to realize that “you always operate in a manner consistent with your self-concept, whether positive or negative” (Tracy 2004, 72). It is vital for leaders to steadily increase the number of positive thoughts they have each day as this ultimately will shape their emotions. Leaders need to be reminded that “we cannot expect to mentally and verbally abuse ourselves and build trust and confidence at the same time. Just as we worked to mentally change our images, we must also change what we say to ourselves. So instead of thinking thoughts that terrify us, we must think more reassuring thoughts” (Esposito 2000, 47-48).

Another method of restoring an inner sense of humble certainty is through a technique known as visualization. Experts suggest that positive visualization of managing one's emotions and behavior is an effective way to build new skills and turning them into habits (Bradberry and Greaves 2009). It is fundamental for leaders to spend time encouraging themselves with heartening statements and images to help them manage their fears. This practice,

...has been shown to be very effective, both in creating high levels of confidence and in actually improving performance...if we focus on negative images and predictions, we set ourselves up for dramatically reduced confidence and lower performance levels. On the other hand, if we focus on and create resourceful images and thoughts, we create an internal state of confidence and positive predictions. (Esposito 2000, 88)

As leaders become more proficient at the skills of affirming self-talk and visualization, they fortify their emotional convictions that they will conquer their fears. Research has indicated that incorporating these main components of belief, self-talk and mental imagery results in more productive thought patterns (Manz and Neck 1991). Focusing on these aspects will help leaders develop the inner reassurance that despite their fear experiences, they will prevail in the end. The component of *Adaptive Courage* that will help leaders in this challenge area is Humble Confidence.

Relational Transparency

The building blocks of managing fear discussed to this point have included leaders rationally thinking through their ensnared opportunities and also embracing emotional convictions with a humble certainty that they will thrive even through their fear experience. Another major component to navigate through

fear is relational transparency. Sometimes there can be a stigma or sense of shame associated with leadership fears, especially since there may be unrealistic expectations placed on leaders to have a fearless attitude. However, such fears are common to humanity and leaders should not feel any embarrassment in experiencing them. Yet, many leaders still hesitate in being open about their fears and end up suffering in silence.

Leaders need to recognize the fact that they do not have to have all the answers and nor do they have to be perfect.

In complex situations, no leader—even one who has successfully led his company to new heights—has the objectivity to know what to do and how to do it all the time...No one is knowledgeable, smart, tough, and experienced enough to consistently do what is necessary in these situations all alone. (Ciampa 2006, 6)

Due to their various responsibilities, leaders undergo significant degrees of stress. As a leader advances higher in his or her position, more pressures and fears tend to arise. Leadership can feel like a lonely place as leaders often carry the weight of their decisions by themselves. It is certainly true that appointed leaders are ultimately accountable for the organization's direction and results. Yet, given this reality, leaders need not feel that they have to bear the burden of sorting out their leadership fears alone.

It is not often appropriate for leaders to publicly broadcast all their hidden fears to everybody they meet. That would not be a wise leadership move as it would undoubtedly damage people's trust and confidence in them over the long-term. Not all followers have the capacity to hear their leader's deepest struggles and still maintain a completely objective view of what the leader is going through.

Hence, it is imperative that leaders be selective with whom they are deeply vulnerable. This does not mean that leaders should compromise integrity, openness, and authenticity with their followers. A leader must never comprise his or her character. Leaders need to be astute when developing an inner circle of companions to whom they can divulge their innermost fears without feeling judged or criticized. Leaders must recognize the “importance of something like an extended family where there would be a deep commitment to meet with one another regularly, to share life and its challenges...The resilient life— this long-distance race—is not possible without such a personal community” (MacDonald 2004, 206).

To increase their resiliency, leaders need at least one safe person, if not a few safe people to disclose their emotional burdens in a secure and caring environment. Disclosure is the verbal expression of one’s personal information such as dispositions, past events, and future plans (Jourard 1971). It is beneficial for leaders to be aware that research supports a strong connection between disclosure and relational satisfaction (Finkenauer et al. 2004). As leaders are more transparent with their personal fears and struggles, they may even discover an increase in the quality of those particular relationships.

Townsend (2010) outlines four steps for banishing fear: trusting in God to be larger than any problems we have, unloading on a few safe people, adding structure by having more regular rhythms in our day, and adapting to reality even though it may be uncomfortable. Kushner (2009) discusses three areas of conquering fear. The first is the courage to face the difficult realities of life,

without illusions. The second is to go ahead and do something even if it scares you. The third is similar to one of Townsend's steps of banishing fear and that is the realization that we don't need to face our fears alone. The gleaned principle is to find a few key individuals who will listen and provide proper perspective to the leader in the midst of their fears. Fear has a menacing way of obstructing the leader from thinking impartially. By expressing their fears and anxieties in a protected setting, known in *Adaptive Courage* as Selective Vulnerability, leaders can gain valuable input as to an accurate outlook of their situation.

Intentional Action

As a leader manages their fear rationally, emotionally, and relationally, it is important to not underestimate the power of the next component, intentional action. Without this step, we may process fear internally and fail to overcome fear practically. Without actually doing something, the fear may still prevent the leader from tangibly moving forward.

Leaders need to take action even when they feel afraid. Pastor, communicator and author Andy Stanley suggests that, “doing it anyway is really the only way to ensure that fear doesn’t rob you of an opportunity. Doing it anyway is the essence of courage” (Stanley 2003, 54). Previously, courage was defined as not necessarily the absence of fear, but the ability to take solid steps of advancement even in the midst of experiencing fear. Jeffers challenges that “the only way to get rid of the fear of doing something is to go out and do it” (Jeffers 1987, 22). This is critical for leaders to understand. They can apply cognitive and

emotive elements in handling their fear, but it is not until they do something—take action—in response to their fear that they defeat fear. As outlined above, Kushner (2009) also acknowledged a parallel aspect to go ahead and do something even if it scares you. The key aspect once again is taking purposeful steps to confront fear even in the face of it.

Executive coach David Allen outlines two main phases when dealing with a problem or situation. The first is determining what the successful outcome would be for a particular challenge. In other words, to define what success would look like if we effectively addressed that particular difficulty. The second aspect is determining:

The very next physical action required to move the situation forward. If you had nothing else to do in your life but get closure on this, where would you go right now, and what visible action would it take? Would you pick up a phone and make a call? Go to your computer and write an email? Sit down with a pen and paper and brainstorm about it? Talk face-to-face with your spouse, your secretary, your attorney, or your boss? (Allen 2001, 14)

Leaders facing their fears need to apply these techniques. They need to figure out what productively overcoming their fears might look like, identify the next concrete action step, and then take the action.

Fears have a way of appearing and feeling overwhelming. Finding the courage to wade through a seemingly enormous difficulty can feel insurmountable. Yet, the reality is that leaders do not necessarily need to find the courage to triumph over all the stages of their fear at once. They only need enough courage and enough tenacity to battle through that very next action step. Leaders need to embrace the concept that “by doing something in such small

steps, we learn that the fears aren't true—that we can do it and not completely fail” (Babauta, 2012, December 18). The courage of leaders need not be all-encompassing as much as it needs to be growing incrementally one phase at a time. Encountering episodes of fear is common to the leadership landscape. Yet,

...the primary difference between high achievers and low achievers is “action orientation.” Men and women who accomplish tremendous deeds in life are intensely action oriented...On the other hand, low achievers and nonachievers are full of good intentions, but they always have an excuse for not taking an action today. (Tracy 2004, 36)

All leaders have various fears that they will need to overcome in the course of diligently carrying out their duties. However, they need to be careful fears and attempts to justify inaction do not paralyze them. They need to respond courageously with Incremental Tenacity as outlined in *Adaptive Courage* by taking the next intentional action in overcoming their fear.

Spiritual Cultivation

I have differentiated the major concepts of managing fear, including rational thoughts, emotional convictions, relational transparency, and intentional action. One concept remains that is not so much a separate, distinguished component of the cycle as much as it is a practice that should permeate all the others concepts.

At a strictly human level, we can manage fear to a certain degree utilizing and applying the four methods reviewed above. Yet, another dimension exists that plays a major role in calming our fears and that is the practice of spiritual awareness. Some argue that religion positively affects strategic leadership

including areas such as vision, values, ethics and credibility (Worden 2005). Further research suggests “the interaction of personal spirituality and organizational spirituality was found related to total work rewards satisfaction” (Kolodinsky et al. 2008, 465). That which is true between spirituality and strategic leadership in the workplace likely extends into the realm of managing leadership fears as well. For many people “religion has often been perceived as a source of comfort, meaning and purpose for those experiencing extremely difficult and negative life events” (Chen and Koenig 2006, 372). Leaders need to acknowledge the view that at some point, our human efforts and abilities to conquer our fears can only take us so far. Hence, we require a greater spiritual power that is beyond our control. We need a supernatural intervention to help us overcome our natural, human leadership fears.

Professor and sociologist of religion Rodney Stark describes the supernatural as “somewhat mysterious forces or entities that are above, beyond, or outside nature and which may be able to influence reality” (Stark 2007, 10). As leaders search for ways to cope with their fears, it should become apparent to them that they need access to supernatural resources, which are outside of themselves in order to overcome their fear experiences. Having defined supernatural, it is also important to explore the meaning of spiritual. Alex Norman, lecturer and researcher of religious studies, investigated the religious practices in Western society that is helpful to review:

Loosely defined as thus, a spiritual tourist is one who includes an activity, such as yoga, meditation, following a pilgrimage, prayer or time for self-reflection in their travel itinerary for the purpose of ‘spiritual betterment’,

such as creating personal meaning, in a secular way. The term ‘spiritual’ is here deployed to indicate the unstructured, individualized way in which they approach these activities, which they see as concerned with meaning, identity, morality and transcendence. (Norman 2011, 20)

Leaders may discover that all of their hard work in managing their fears cognitively, emotively, relationally and actively may still leave a fear gap that a person can bridge completely only through a sense of transcendence in everyday life.

Medical expert Jonathan Davidson offered this perspective of the importance of an individual’s spirituality as it relates to health:

From my experience as a clinician working with people beset by fear, and from my reading of a number of published studies, I have come to believe that spiritual beliefs and practices can add a potent dimension to treatment for anxiety—in some instances, a pivotal one. Certainly a hallmark of religious faith is that it enables us to find strength and serenity in the face of fear. And recent research attest to the psychological and physical health benefits of spiritual practices, including prayer. The late Dr. David Larson of the National Institute for Healthcare Research catalogued scores of studies that suggest that spiritual practices, including prayer, have genuine clinical value in the treatment and prevention of mental health conditions, including anxiety. (Davidson 2003, 171)

Leaders should be open to the notion that there may be another dimension at work in the midst of their fear. We may access this dimension only through spiritual practices that experts associate with both psychological and physiological health benefits.

There are various expressions of spiritual practice that leaders can consider in helping manage their fears. One form of spiritual practice is prayer. Prayer can be defined as “the act of communicating with a deity, especially in the form of a request or a petition for help” (Newberg and Waldman 2009, 48).

Another element of spiritual practice is meditation which can be characterized as “contemplative reflection or mental exercise designed to bring about a heightened level of spiritual awareness, trigger a spiritual or religious experience, or train the mind in specific way” (Newberg and Waldman 2009, 48). Regardless of whether a leader chooses to meditate, pray, or do both, research has indicated that the longer an individual engages in these practices, the greater the significant neurological changes in the brain. Experts have discovered that:

Different parts of the brain produced different experiences that affected the way we perceive or think about God, the universe, our mind, and our lives. For example, our frontal lobes (the newest part of the human brain) provide us with a logical concept of a rational, deliberate and loving God, while our limbic system (the oldest part of the brain) creates an emotionally meaningful experience of God. If either part of the brain malfunctions, unusual thoughts and perceptions can occur. (Newberg and Waldman 2009, 49)

Earlier in the chapter we learned that the key region within the limbic system that triggers fear is the amygdala. Studies show that training programs such as yoga and other “mindfulness-based meditation, which includes the act of consciously labeling one’s moment-to-moment feelings, also reduces amygdala activity” (Newberg and Waldman 2009, 50). It is crucial for leaders to understand that by engaging in regular spiritual cultivation activities such as prayer and meditation, this will lower the fear-triggering response of the amygdala and ultimately help individuals navigate through their leadership fears.

Luhmann (2012) suggests that there is a significant interweaving between our perceptions and prayer. She noted that:

The mental muscles developed in prayer work on the boundary between thought and perception, between what is attributed to the mind—internal,

self-generated, private and hidden from view—and what exists in the world. They focus attention on the words and images on one side of the boundary, and they treat those words and images as if they belonged on the other. (Luhrmann 2012, 184)

To the extent that fear is false evidence appearing real, it appears that as leaders develop spiritual practices they will experience a calmer, more realistic mindset in contrast to the faulty perceptions that fear may have created within the leader. This psychological anthropologist proceeded to describe this nurturing development.

The inner senses has real consequences for those who use it. In the first place, of course, inner sense cultivation shapes the content of the cultivator's mind...But the impact appears to do more than simply exclude unwanted thoughts or control thought. Inner sense cultivation seems to make that which is imagined more real in experience, especially when all the senses are engaged. It appears to make what is imaged feel more substantial, more present. (Luhrmann 2012, 185)

By fostering this spiritual awareness through practices such as prayer, spiritual readings, and meditation, this has the potential to produce an inner sense of settledness that will directly shape a leader's fear experience in a positive manner.

As a leader cultivates practices such as prayer, it changes:

...the way the person praying attends to his or her own mind. That makes sense whether you look at prayer from a spiritual or secular perspective. The point of religious conviction is that the everyday world is not all there is to reality; to see beyond, one must change the way one pays attention. (Luhrman 2012, 187-188)

To overcome their fears, leaders not only need to engage their thoughts, emotions, relationships, and action but to permeate these components with attention to spiritual cultivation, known as Simple Transcendence in *Adaptive Courage*.

Courage and Change

The principles of managing fear have now been differentiated: rational thoughts, emotional convictions, relational transparency, intentional action and spiritual cultivation. Encouraging leaders to apply these behaviours will be foundational in helping them overcome their fears. Researchers of influence strategies emphasize the importance of identifying vital behaviours:

And now for the big idea: A few behaviours can drive a lot of change. The breakthrough discovery of most influence geniuses is that enormous influence comes from focusing on just a few vital behaviours...When faced with a number of possible options, take care to search for strategies that focus on behaviours...It turns out that all influence geniuses focus on behaviours. They're inflexible on this point. They don't develop an influence strategy until they've carefully identified the specific behaviours they want to change. (Patterson et al. 2008, 23-26)

By helping leaders focus and employ the key principles of rational thoughts, emotional convictions, relational transparency, intentional action and spiritual cultivation, this will help them navigate through their leadership fear experience. Yet, in order to follow through with these specific elements of courage, leaders may need to change their current patterns of behaviour. Being courageous requires change, specifically changing not only how we think but what we do.

Researchers Chip and Dan Heath (2010) propose a framework for an individual's change process. The first aspect involves "Directing the Rider" which provides individuals with crystal, clear direction. Part of that clarity of direction helps leaders identify the bright spots of their situation as opposed to agonizing over their problems. The authors suggest a focus on solutions rather than on

problems by investing a greater ratio of their time thinking about extending successes. This relates directly to the cognitive aspect of *Adaptive Courage*, Ensnared Opportunity, which aims to help leaders focus on unexplored opportunities within their situations that will help their organizations advance. It also applies to the emotional aspect of *Adaptive Courage*, Humble Confidence, which seeks to give leaders clarity concerning their positive self-talk and visualization of the situation. The second feature is “Motivating the Elephant” which encourages the individuals to fully engage in the process of change. A key aspect of this is helping shrink the change process. The idea here is that when a task seems too big, the individual will resist the change. The principle to implement is that “Small targets lead to small victories, and small victories can often trigger a positive spiral of behavior...big changes comes from a succession of small changes” (Heath and Heath 2010, 146-147). This aspect ties directly to the intentional aspect of *Adaptive Courage*, Incremental Tenacity, which strives to help leaders move forward with courage in a manageable, steady manner. The final phase is “Shape the Path”, which involves adjusting the individual’s environment. The concept is that “tweaking the environment is about making the right behaviors a little bit easier and wrong behaviors a little bit harder” (Heath and Heath 2010, 183). This aligns with the relational transparency aspect of *Adaptive Courage*, Selective Vulnerability, as there is built-in accountability for leaders as they share their fears with safe people. Adopting this framework of Direct the Rider, Motivate the Elephant and Shape the Path will help leaders increase the likelihood of positive self-change in managing their leadership fears.

Watson and Tharp (1993) detail a process called self-directed behaviour of change which is about learning how to develop new skills for certain situations. Specifically, they characterize three phases called the A.B.C.'s of self-change.

The first phase is called Antecedents, which are essentially cues before a behaviour occurs that stimulate an individual to act in certain ways. Antecedents can include physical events that occur, and even an individual's thoughts, emotions, or inner speech. The principle is that,

Self-defeating or unpleasant self-statements can be replaced with more positive ones. A key to success in suppressing negative thoughts is to substitute new, adaptive self-statements. You should actually say self-instructions aloud or subvocally, as clearly as possible and as close as possible to the moment of the actual behavior. (Watson and Tharp 1993, 161)

This parallels the part of *Adaptive Courage* that strengthens emotional convictions, Humble Confidence. Leaders need to have a heightened awareness of any negative self-talk regarding their fear and instead positively reassure themselves that they will prevail through it.

The second segment is known as Behaviours, in which a person “can change actions, thoughts, feelings, or behaviors themselves by practicing desirable acts or substituting desirable alternatives for unwanted acts” (Watson and Tharp 1993, 14). In particular, the authors discussed a concept known as Incompatible Behaviors, which involves carrying out one type of behaviour that will inhibit another behaviour from occurring. They described how even shifting an individual's attention to provide a diverse outlook of the situation can interfere with the fear or anxiety itself. This notion is congruent with the rational thoughts

aspect of *Adaptive Courage*, Ensnared Opportunity, which transfers the concentration of leaders from the fear itself to the vision-advancing opportunity that may be embedded within the situation.

The final stage is Consequences, which is the principle that rewards be given or experienced as soon as possible following a desired behaviour. This can be as simple as verbal self-reinforcement, encouraging oneself following the desired behavior, or celebrating with others.

By incorporating this framework of Antecedents, Behaviour, and Consequences, leaders can learn to build new skills of change that will help them manage their leadership fears with courage.

Kegan and Lahey (2009) revealed an important dynamic when it comes to an individual resisting change. The authors use a medical metaphor to describe how,

In some instances an immune system can threaten our continued good health. When it rejects new material, internal or external to the body, that the body needs to heal itself or to thrive, the immune system can put us in danger. In these instances the immune system is no less focused on protecting us. It is just making a mistake. It does not understand that it must alter its code. It does not understand that, ironically, in working to protect us, it is actually putting us at serious risk. (Kegan and Lahey 2009, 37)

This metaphor can also apply to a leader who allows their fear to cause paralysis in their actions. As we've identified, fear is a survival mechanism that in specific instances can be good for us. However, when fear begins to be a barrier to the very responsibilities leaders need to execute, then the fear is placing leaders and their organizations in danger. These authors suggest a system of self-

reflection to overcome this immunity to change including: identifying the improvement goal, reflecting on what is currently being done or not done to accomplish that goal, and discovering obstacles to the goal. Courage necessitates change. By implementing these behavioural change practices, leaders will be better equipped to courageously navigate through their leadership fears.

In this chapter we have reviewed literature that expands on the theories of fear and courage. We have also explored various mechanisms for conquering fear with steps of courage. These approaches and mechanics include:

1. *Reframing* the way leaders think about their fear by identifying the Ensnared Opportunity
2. *Reassuring* leaders that they will prevail through their fear with an inner sense of Humble Confidence
3. *Relating* the fear by Selective Vulnerability with a safe person(s) to gain proper perspective
4. *Responding* to their fear with Incremental Tenacity by taking the very next action step, and
5. *Receiving* perspective in the midst of their fear through spiritual practices and a sense of Simple Transcendence.

These mechanics develop the basis for the *Adaptive Courage* model, which I explain in greater detail in Chapter 4, along with related methods and methodologies.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based upon the research detailed in the Theological Rationale and Literature Review, I developed a practical application model which I named *Adaptive Courage*. The purpose of developing this model was to support individuals to be courageous leaders by addressing fears associated with leadership. *Adaptive Courage* provided participants with a system to guide the process of managing their leadership fears.

The first section of this chapter details the various components of the *Adaptive Courage* model. I then introduce the meta-methodology used in this project followed by explaining the three major methodologies that formed the structure of this research study. The next segments of this chapter describe aspects of the ethical review, principal method, criteria for participant selection, design of questions, key elements of the process and data analysis.

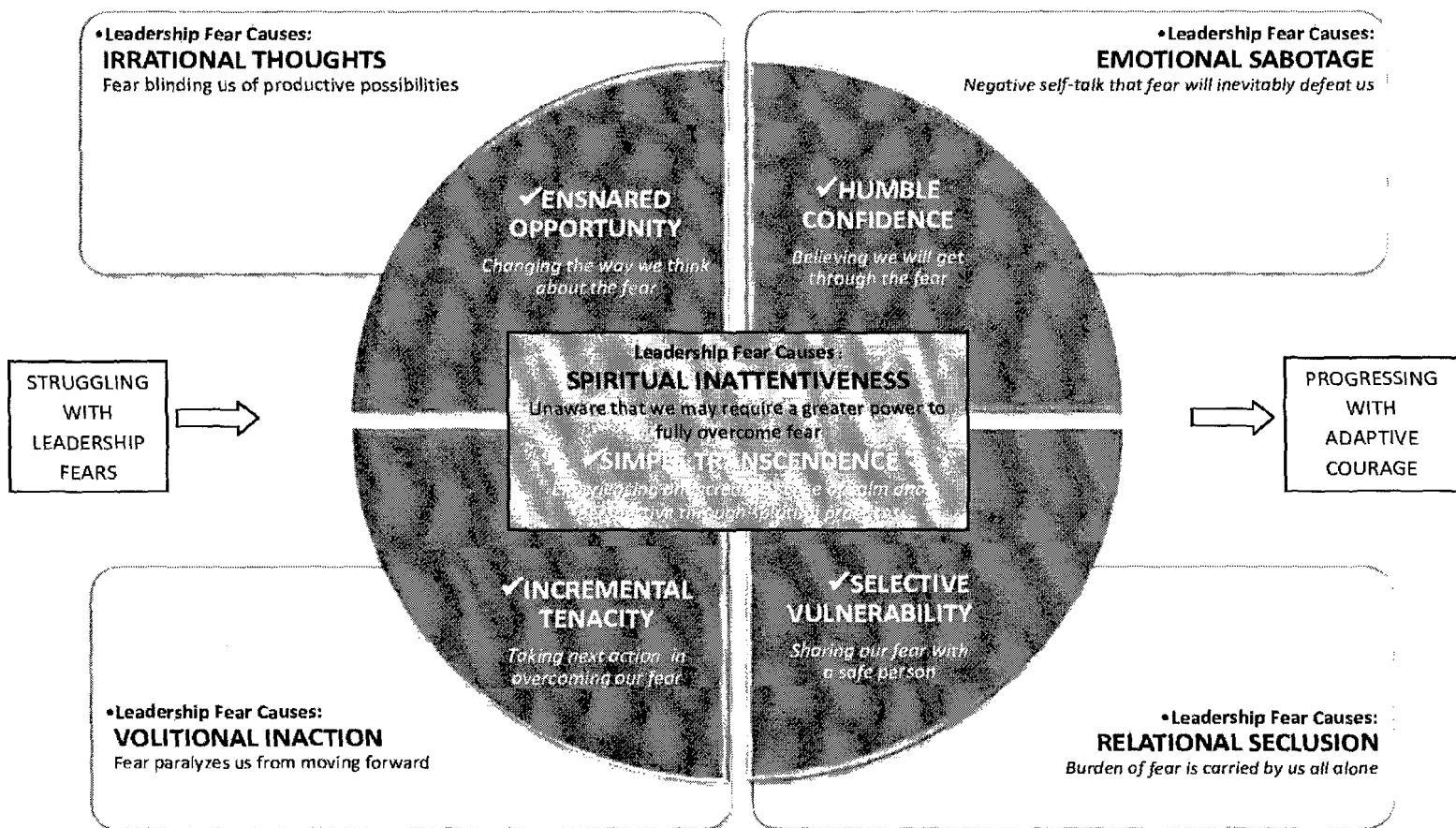
Adaptive Courage Model and Strategy

Leadership fears negatively affect the way an individual thinks and feels. As a result, this adversely impacts their leadership actions. This project provided a model called *Adaptive Courage* to guide the process of managing leadership fears in an effort to help individuals effectively lead themselves and their organizations

forward. I guided participants through this model during the first interview session using a pedagogical methodology. I then encouraged them to process their learning by reviewing *Adaptive Courage* through a workbook I provided to each of them. Beyond personal reflection of the model, I asked participants to integrate *Adaptive Courage* into their leadership context over the next several weeks. The second interview involved evaluation and assessment of the model's effectiveness in helping the participants navigate their leadership fears. The following is a design summary of the various components of the *Adaptive Courage* model.

Figure 2 offers a visual perspective of the model of *Adaptive Courage*. The goal of this model was to help participants struggling with various leadership fears, to apply *Adaptive Courage* to their context and then to progress with courage to deal with their fears.

Figure 2: Components of *Adaptive Courage*



This visual depicts *Adaptive Courage*'s various parts and functions. The model helped users apply *Adaptive Courage* within their respective contexts while accommodating the uniqueness of their individual situations. In some situations they may have needed to apply all the components of the model to navigate through their fear. Other times, they may have needed to adjust the model to focus on specific components to effectively overcome their fear. Depending on the intensity and duration of their leadership fear, it may have necessitated a flexible, on-going application of the model. The model adapted uniquely to each iteration and modified to align with each participant's moment-to-moment realities.

Figure 3 summarizes the components of *Adaptive Courage* as the 5 R's: Reframing, Reassuring, Relating, Responding, and Receiving.

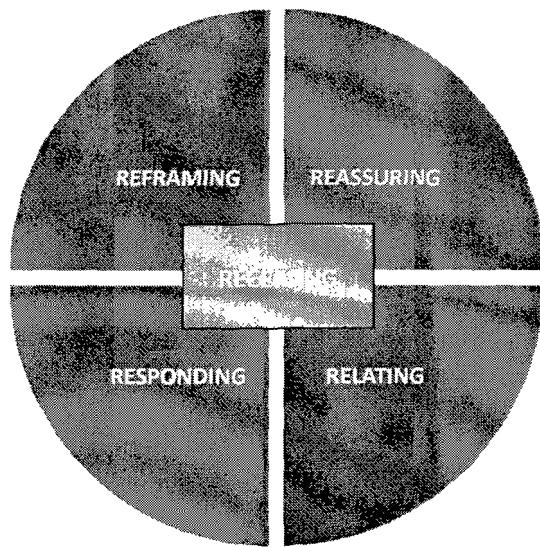


Figure 3: The 5R's of *Adaptive Courage*.

Figure 4 depicts comparative elements of the *Adaptive Courage* model. I mentored participants through each component and taught them how to apply each aspect of *Adaptive Courage* presented in the figure below.

Irrational Thoughts	Ensnared Opportunity	REFRAMING	Reframing the Fear
Emotional Misbeliefs	Humble Confidence	REASSURING	Reassure oneself of getting through the fear
Relational Seclusion	Selective Vulnerability	RELATING	Relate the fear to a safe person
Volitional Inaction	Incremental Tenacity	RESPONDING	Respond to the fear by taking the next action step
Spiritual Inattentiveness	Simple Transcendence	RECEIVING	Receive calmness and perspective in the midst of fear

Figure 4: Comparative Aspects of *Adaptive Courage*

The following includes a brief explanation of each component of *Adaptive Courage*. I guided participants through each of the model's elements helping them specifically relate the model and its parts to their individual leadership fears.

Ensnared Opportunity

Often fear has a way of blinding leaders to the complete picture with irrational thoughts. Leaders that let their fear overtake them may deprive themselves and their people of amazing opportunities to advance the vision of their organization. Leaders must realize that when fear is present, there is usually also a unique prospect associated with it.

The problem is that fear has a way of ensnaring that opportunity. Leaders need to adjust the focus from the dreaded fear they are experiencing and to free the trapped possibility that is waiting to be explored. As leaders change the way they think about their fear, they are essentially **reframing** a challenge in a more

positive and productive manner. Figure 5 emphasizes Ensnared Opportunity, the first component of *Adaptive Courage*.

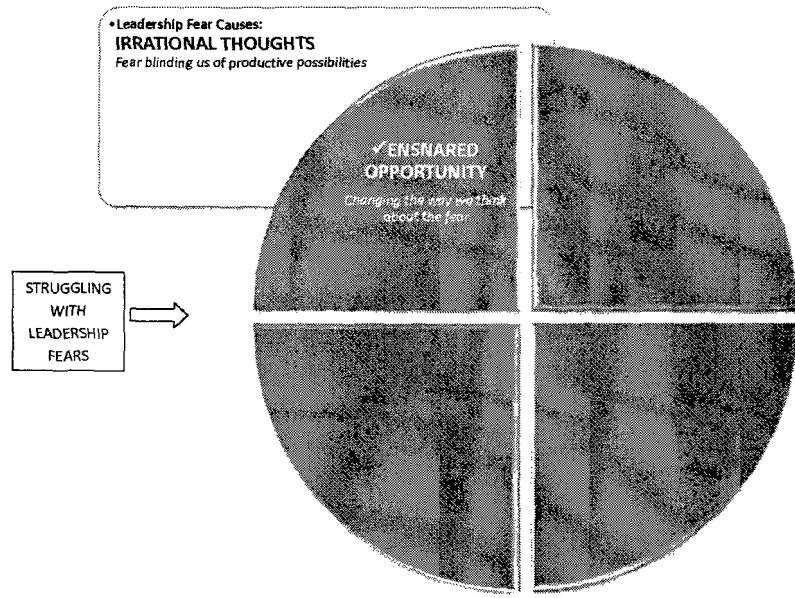


Figure 5: First Component of *Adaptive Courage* - Ensnared Opportunity

Humble Confidence

A challenge all leaders face when addressing their fears involves struggling to know whether they will be able to conquer their fear. It is difficult to manage fear if leaders emotionally sabotage themselves with negative self-talk that they will not make it through their fear. If leaders believe the fear will defeat them, this will ultimately become their reality.

Leaders must embrace the conviction that no matter how fearful they may feel due to their troubling circumstance, that they will overcome their obstacles

and surmount their challenges in the end. This is not a boastful, arrogant attitude but rather a quiet, humble certainty that they will persevere through it. Leaders need to have a heightened awareness of any negative self-talk regarding their fear while positively visualizing and *reassuring* themselves that they will prevail.

Figure 6 adds the next component of *Adaptive Courage*, Humble Confidence.

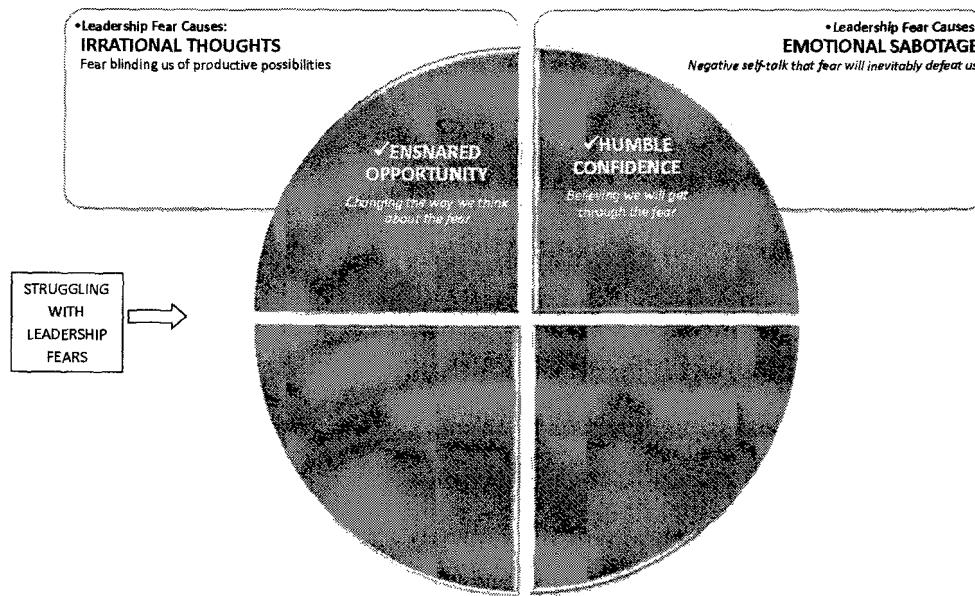


Figure 6: Second Component of *Adaptive Courage* – Humble Confidence

Selective Vulnerability

Sometimes there can be a stigma or sense of shame associated with leadership fears, especially since there may be unrealistic expectations placed on leaders to have a fearless attitude. However, such fears are common to humanity and leaders should not feel any embarrassment in experiencing them. Yet, many

leaders still relationally seclude themselves regarding their fears and carry these burdens in silence.

Leaders need not feel that they have to bear the weight of sorting out their leadership fears all alone. Leaders need to be astute in developing an inner circle of companions with whom they can be vulnerable to divulge their innermost fears without feeling judged or criticized. By *relating* their fears to a safe person(s), leaders can gain valuable input as to an accurate outlook of their situation in a caring and protected environment. Figure 7 includes Selective Vulnerability, the next component of *Adaptive Courage*.

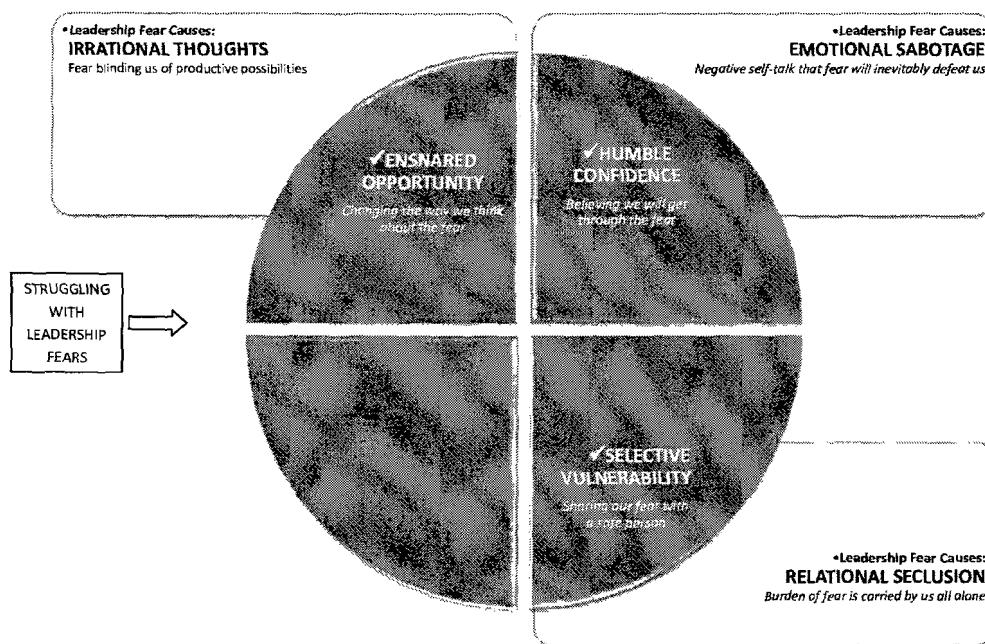


Figure 7: Third Component of *Adaptive Courage* – Selective Vulnerability

Incremental Tenacity

Finding the courage to wade through a leadership fear can often feel so insurmountable that it paralyzes leaders to inaction. Yet, the reality is that leaders do not necessarily need to find the courage to triumph all the stages of their fear at once. They only need enough resilience to battle through that very next step.

Without actually doing something, the fear has still prevented the leader from tangibly moving forward. This aspect is critical for leaders to understand. It is not until they *respond* in action that their fear is defeated. They need to figure out what productively overcoming their fears might look like, identify the next concrete step, and then commit to completing it. Figure 8 inserts the next component of *Adaptive Courage*, Incremental Tenacity.

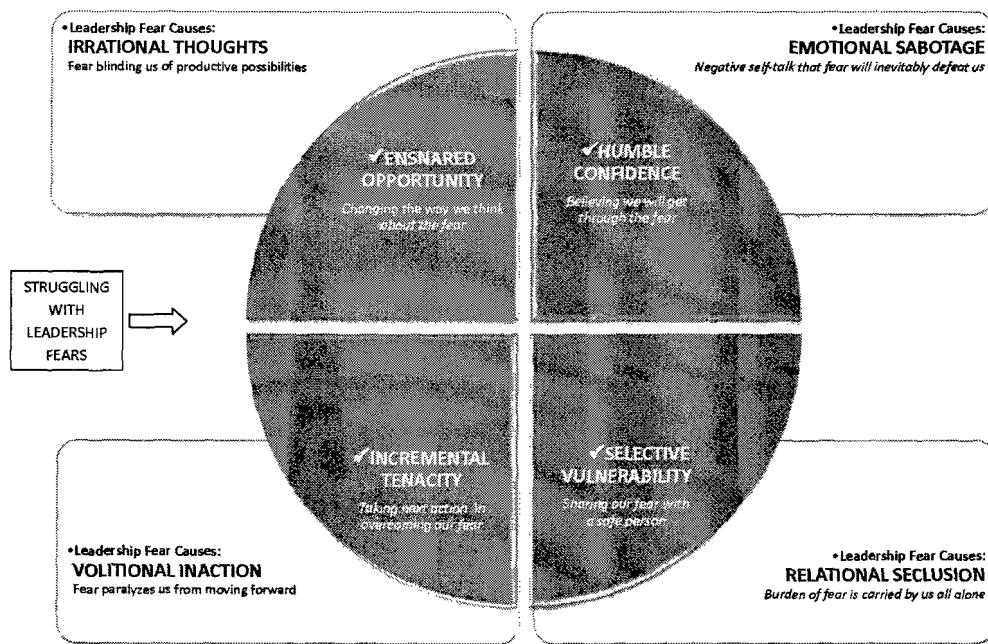


Figure 8: Fourth Component of *Adaptive Courage* – Incremental Tenacity

Simple Transcendence

Leaders may well discover that at some point, their human efforts and abilities of conquering fears can only take them so far. Beyond that, they may likely require a greater power that is outside of their control. Leaders might possibly need supernatural intervention to help them overcome their naturally human leadership fears. Leaders may notice that all of their hard work in managing their fears still leaves a gap that only a sense of transcendence for even the simple concerns of everyday life can completely bridge. Leaders who are attentive to spiritual practices such as prayer, meditation or spiritual readings will likely *receive* a greater sense of calm and perspective in the midst of their fears.

The purpose of this component is to encourage leaders to consider how spiritual practices can be incorporated into their lives regardless of their religious affiliation. The *Adaptive Courage* workbook (Appendix 5) provides questions in this area of spirituality:

- How can you be more attentive to spirituality as you face your leadership fears?
- Is there a prayer or meditation that will provide a greater sense of calm during the leadership fears you experience? If so, please describe.
- Is there a spiritual reading that will provide a greater perspective during the leadership fears you experience? If so, please describe.

As explained in the *Context* section of the opening chapter, my personal faith journey is rooted in Jesus Christ. At the same time, my ministry context serves diverse groups of people from various backgrounds and religious affiliations. Hence, this has shaped the *Adaptive Courage* model and in particular

this component of Simple Transcendence, which provides a multi-faith approach designed to help a broad range of leaders. Figure 9 completes the components of *Adaptive Courage* with Simple Transcendence.

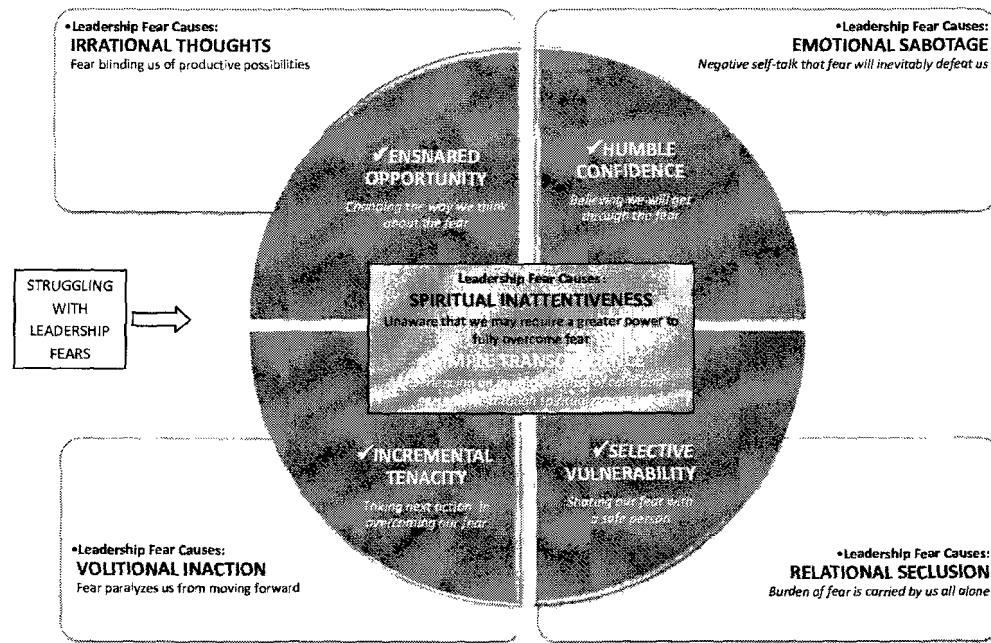


Figure 9: Fifth Component of *Adaptive Courage* – Simple Transcendence

As the various components of *Adaptive Courage* have now been detailed, the next section introduces the meta-methodology used in this study followed by the three methodologies that composed the framework of this project.

Meta-Methodology

The meta-methodology used for this study was Action Research. Coghlan and Brannick (2010) describe how Action Research seeks to discover what one finds puzzling while addressing that issue. For this project, I examined leadership fears; an issue that I addressed through the application of *Adaptive Courage*. Action Research required reflection upon a research question and an iterative approach. The two central research inquiries for this project was to determine what strategy arose from the literature and whether applying the model of *Adaptive Courage* would support leaders in managing their fears so that they could be more effective in their leadership role. Leaders learned how to apply the *Adaptive Courage* model to their setting and to use an iterative approach to manage their fears.

Methodology

The three primary approaches used in this research project were evaluative, phenomenological and pedagogical. These approaches to methodology shaped the framework of the study. The following identifies these methodologies and the rationale for using them.

Evaluative

The first methodological approach was evaluative as the research involved a “systematic acquisition and assessment of information to provide useful feedback about some object” (Chapman 2012). I gathered details from the

participants through a series of statements and questions to which they responded. These inquiries flowed in an organized and consistent pattern for each of the participants. I then considered responses from these individuals and assessed the effectiveness of *Adaptive Courage* in helping leaders manage their leadership fears. This methodology provided a coherent stream of data that was standard for each of the participants despite their varied leadership demographics and backgrounds. This approach helped provide a comparable intake of data collection and subsequent analysis of the participant responses.

Phenomenological

The second methodology used was phenomenological as there was an intentional “focus on the essence and underlying structure of the phenomenon” (Chapman 2012), namely, leadership fears. I did not ask participants questions about other life fears or phobias, for instance, the fear of heights or spiders. Rather, the study centred around one particular aspect of their lives. My approach sought to specifically uncover the individual’s fears that were associated with their leadership experiences. The rationale for this methodology was to allow data collection and analysis to gain an increased level of insight. It was important to not only identify the types of fears that participants had but to also determine the surrounding circumstances and reasons that lead them to inhabit these fears. This methodology explored deeper convictions of each of the participants in this particular subject area.

Pedagogical

The third methodology used was pedagogical. This related to the teaching aspect of *Adaptive Courage* to the participants. The project was not only gathering data related to leadership fears but also mentoring the subjects through a model to help them navigate those fear experiences. This pedagogy of mentoring and teaching was based on my previous research. Clinical researchers describe how “the intervening variable between an innovative pedagogical approach and the acquisition of new concepts or skills is the learning process impacted by the former” (Supino 2012, 49). The capacity for participants to understand the principles of *Adaptive Courage* and then to subsequently apply those guidelines in a relevant manner to their context was directly connected to the learning process they went through. This learning process of *Adaptive Courage* is outlined in detail in the next section.

Method

The primary method of data collection for the evaluation was interview, while a review of the literature provided ideas for the conceptual model and its application. The following section details the study’s ethical review, process, participant selection, interview questions and corresponding reasoning.

Ethical Review

The human rights and dignity of the participants were protected in various ways. First, there were potential benefits to the participant. One benefit for the

participant was an increased awareness that they were not alone in their leadership fears. Often, leaders feel that their struggles and personal challenges are unique to them alone, resulting in feelings of isolation. This project revealed that other leaders also struggled with the very same issues which provided emotional encouragement and support for the participant. Also, a significant aspect of this project was to provide the participant with practical principles and strategies from *Adaptive Courage* to navigate through their fear experiences. As the participant learned how to process their leadership fears and take courageous leadership initiative, it was assumed this would have a positive impact on the teams and organizations in which they lead.

The project was designed so that risks to the participant were minimal. A risk for the participant may have involved the emotional triggering of unpleasant thoughts and feelings when reflecting on their personal leadership fears. However, the magnitude of this risk was no greater than those encountered by the participant in everyday life if they contemplated leadership fears on their own initiative. The participant was assured at the outset that having fears were common to the human experience and that they did not need to feel any unnecessary shame or embarrassment by having them. The participant had the support of two meetings with me along with my accessibility during this time. Had serious emotional problems been seen to emerge, the participant would have been referred to a counsellor. Another risk for participants may have been the social stigma of struggling with internal fears, while externally having the appearance of being fearless leaders. To protect participant confidentiality,

leadership fears were not associated with the participant personally in the analysis and the meetings were handled discreetly.

Safeguarding participant privacy and confidentiality was a top priority.

The method of data collection was on paper and on the computer. Paper documents were secured in a locked location with limited access; identifying information was coded and digital data in the computer was password protected.

The consent process was voluntary, informed and on-going. The consent procedure included disclosing to the participant the research purpose, proposed use of data, foreseeable risks and potential benefits, along with safeguards for confidentiality and privacy. Withdrawal procedures were explained by assuring participants that they could choose to end their involvement in the study at any time.

As for dissemination of research information, data from participants were shared in aggregate form to further protect confidentiality. Specific names of churches or organizations were not mentioned to prevent any unintentional identification and it was believed this was not relevant to the findings or the published thesis. Participants were informed that they would be able to access results of the study from the researcher.

Interview

The interview method was determined to be the most appropriate as this project sought to gather information from a variety of leaders representing broad professional fields in an open, deep, consistent and meaningful manner. For these

reasons, the survey method was excluded. The interview method also meshed with the one-to-one teaching aspect of the project. As such, the interview method I used to collect data aligned with the evaluative, phenomenological and pedagogical methodologies described above. Lecturer, administrator and researcher Judith Bell notes:

The major advantage of the interview is its adaptability. A skilful interviewer can follow up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings, which the questionnaire can never do. The way in which a response is made (the tone of voice, facial expression, hesitation, and so on) can provide information that a written response would conceal. Questionnaire responses have to be taken at face value, but a response in an interview can be developed and clarified. (Bell 2006, 161)

The interview method offered the flexibility needed to engage the participants in their real-time responses and to shed additional light on issues surrounding their leadership fears. The major challenge with interview though is that “it is a highly subjective technique and therefore there is always the danger of bias” (Bell 2006, 161). To help decrease bias for my research during analysis, I designed the interview questions to include not only open-ended questions, which could be more subjective in nature, but also forced-choice questions providing more objectivity. Participants were encouraged to be honest with their opinions, and to give negative as well as positive observations, especially in evaluating the project in the second interview. Specifically, I used a combination of structured and guided interviews. The structured interview format “enables you to tick or circle responses on your previously prepared schedule” so that responses “can be fairly easily recorded, summarized and analyzed” (Bell 2006, 162). This was the case with many of my interview questions (Appendix 2 and 3). At the same time,

the part of the interview that was guided “allowed a considerable degree of latitude within the framework. Certain questions are asked, but respondents are given freedom to talk about the topic and give their views in their own time” (Bell 2006, 165). This was evident as participants had much liberty to respond to the open-ended, in-depth interview questions that involved a qualitative characteristic. The interview method also allowed me to ask follow-up questions of the participants when further clarification was appropriate.

Participant Criteria

The participants were a selected convenience sample. It was critical for me to interview a diverse group of individuals, as I wanted to determine whether *Adaptive Courage* was effective in helping a wide bandwidth of leaders from different backgrounds, experiences, and walks of life. As such, I conducted the project with ten voluntary leaders that varied in age, gender, role, occupational field, years of experience, and religious affiliation. These participating individuals were an intentionally diversified selection of persons in leadership positions from my professional network of contacts. Another reason for the convenience sample derived from my contacts was to ensure that the participants were generally stable mentally and emotionally in that I did not know of any personal issues that would adversely affect the research process. I chose the leader participants from the Greater Toronto Area for practical reasons when conducting in-person interviews. In a conversation with the Director of the Doctor of Ministry program on June 19,

2013 the rationale for determining the number of participants was when saturation was reached and that I was no longer collecting any significantly variant data.

During the selection process, I invited leaders with whom there was substantial relationship to make such a significant request as to be part of this extensive interview process. At the same time, there needed to be a balancing of the spectrum in that I as the researcher did not have such a close friendship with the participants that our relationship would sway their responses and produce desirability bias. There was a fair representation of both Christian leaders and those of other faiths to determine if there were any differences in the types and intensity of leadership fears based upon their value of spirituality.

Questions

The following section outlines the design and rationale of interview questions (Appendix 2) derived from the Literature Review. The first series of questions for the intake interview inquired about the types of leadership fears and the circumstances that lead to those fears. Question 1a of the interview presented participants with a list of ten leadership fears. I did not intend for this list to be an exhaustive list of every fear leaders might experience. However, this list represented fears based upon the *Biblical Case Studies in Leadership Fears* section outlined in Chapter 2 and upon the *Types of Fears* section as described in Chapter 3. As participants identified their top two leadership fears, questions 1b and 1c asked the participants to rate the intensity of their fears. I used the Likert scale method to measure intensity because this evaluative scale is useful when

seeking to “discover strength of feeling or attitude” (Bell 2006, 146); in this case checking each participant’s intensity of their leadership fear.

Questions 1d and 1e asked participants what approaches they had used to deal with those fears in the past and to what degree those approaches had helped them previously. The reasoning for those questions was to determine whether there were any similarities or differences with the principles outlined in *Adaptive Courage*.

The next set of questions centred around statements on personal spirituality. The purpose of these questions was to determine whether the participant’s relative value of spirituality played a role in managing their leadership fear. Questions 2a-2d inquired about a participant’s reliance on spiritual practices such as prayer, meditation and readings to help calm them in preparation for leadership fears they experience. I based the definitions of these key terms on the *Spiritual Cultivation* section set out in Chapter 3 of this thesis. An ordinal scale “where numbers are rated or ranked” (Bell 2006, 223) was used in conjunction with the spirituality statements to determine the participants’ views on the corresponding spiritual practice.

The final series of questions for the intake interview revolved around demographics. Question 3a inquired about the age of each participant. I used the clustering of five-year age groups as outlined by a previous Statistics Canada survey to define the age range options available to participants. Question 3b asked participants to self-identify their religious affiliation. These religious categories were determined in consultation with the Associate Professor of Research

Methods of the Doctor of Ministry program who specializes in world religions and Christian denominations. Question 3d inquired about each participant's occupational field. I identified occupational categories from a prior Statistics Canada survey.

The purpose of the exit interview questions (Appendix 3) was to gauge the degree to which *Adaptive Courage* was effective in equipping and enabling the participants to manage their leadership fears. It also provided an opportunity to debrief with the participants for the benefit of their own leadership development. Questions 1 and 2 evaluated the general nature of the participant's experience using *Adaptive Courage* and any application examples of utilizing the tool. Questions 3a-3e assessed the five specific quadrants of *Adaptive Courage* and the extent to which those components were helpful. Questions 4a and 4b sought to determine if there were any differences in fear intensity from those the participant had identified during the in-take interview. Question 5 inquired about possible improvements to the model. Questions 6a-6e asked questions about whether the participants would use *Adaptive Courage* again in the future, whether spiritual practices played any role in their application of *Adaptive Courage*, and whether they would recommend the model to other leaders.

Process

Prior to the formal interview process with participants, both the interview questions and the *Adaptive Courage* model were pilot-tested, which afforded the process design valuable Action Research cycles. Two pilot-testers were selected

from my professional network who held leadership positions in their respective organizations and understood the concept of leadership fears. These pilot-testers were also selected because I believed they had the competence to provide constructive criticism and objective feedback based upon my previous interactions with them. These pilot-testers provided feedback on areas that needed further clarification or modification before actual testing began and were not selected again to be the research participants.

The feedback that was received regarding the *Adaptive Courage* model was then used to create a workbook (Appendix 5) that participants would use to help process their learning of the model. I had produced the content of this workbook and had had a graphic designer layout the material in a visually appealing manner. The workbook was produced at an external print shop in full color on thick quality paper including a card stock cover. The reason for creating such a high-quality workbook was to inspire confidence in participants and reflect the level of excellence they would receive through the mentoring process of *Adaptive Courage*.

After the pilot-testing, I invited participants who would be part of this research study to review an informed consent form (Appendix 1). Details of the informed consent explained purpose of the research, identity of the researcher, voluntary participation, procedures, possible risks and benefits, confidentiality, proposed used of data and project approvals. I noted that the researcher was not a trained counsellor, coach or psychologist but trained in ministry and interested in offering leadership development as a mentor and teacher. As such, this study

provided short- term leadership mentoring exclusively. Willing volunteer participants signed and returned the informed consent form before the start of the interview.

Research participants were involved in two separate one-on-one interview sessions. Each of the two sessions was approximately one hour in duration. The rationale for the one-on-one arrangement was to maximize openness and transparency to one's leadership fears in alignment with the phenomenological methodology. The first session involved the in-take interview. It took place typically at the participant's home or office. Several times it took place at a mutually convenient location including a coffee shop and community centre.

The session functioned both as data gathering and training for *Adaptive Courage*. I asked participating leaders to identify their top two leadership fears and to rate the intensity of those fears in addition to describing the circumstances that lead to those fears. In the initial session I also asked questions involving basic demographics and personal spirituality. The timeframe to cover these initial questions was approximately 30 minutes.

The session then progressed into the teaching element of *Adaptive Courage* to help equip participants with tools to manage their leadership fears. This aligns with the pedagogical methodology mentioned previously. I started by giving each participant an *Adaptive Courage* workbook (Appendix 5). I then asked them to turn to page 4 of the workbook illustrating a diagram of the model and proceeded to explain each component, beginning at the top left with Ensnared Opportunity and moving in clock-wise fashion, ending with Simple

Transcendence. For each component, I began with establishing the problem that leadership fear causes as I wanted participants to understand the negative symptom that we were first trying to address. Then I continued to explain each *Adaptive Courage* component and the positive solution that it provided over these causes of fear. In addition to explaining the component, I presented various leadership examples to illustrate each point. At the end of each component description, I paused and asked the participant to reflect on the top two leadership fears they identified earlier in the session and how this newly-learned component of *Adaptive Courage* could be applied to their context. I then turned the participant's attention to page 5 showing a grid form of *Adaptive Courage* and emphasized each component in connection to the 5 R's: reframing, reassuring, relating, responding and receiving. I proceeded to explain the meaning of 'adaptive' in that the model was unique to the participant and the leadership fears they were experiencing. I elaborated that in some situations, they may need to apply all the various components of the model to navigate their fear. At other times, they may need to adjust the model to focus more on specific components to effectively manage their fear. I detailed the notion that depending on the intensity and duration of their leadership fear, it may necessitate a flexible, on-going application of the model, with each iteration needing to be modified to align with their moment-to-moment situation. I then flipped through the remaining pages of the workbook to underscore how each component had a brief summary description and corresponding questions that they were to complete as an assignment before the next interview. Additionally, I strongly encouraged

participants to not only complete the workbook, but to go beyond that by applying *Adaptive Courage* ‘real-time’ to their leadership setting. So for instance, if they were in a middle of a meeting and experienced a leadership fear, to then privately process their fear through the model of *Adaptive Courage* and to note the effects. The timeframe for this mentoring aspect of the model was approximately 30 minutes. The participant and I then scheduled the date for the second interview session, followed by my expression of gratitude for their time and involvement. I then concluded the interview.

The initial intent was to give participants a one to three week timeframe to apply and practice these principles on their own. However, scheduling issues meant that the average timeframe turned out to be between three to five weeks. During this application period, the participants processed their learning through the *Adaptive Courage* workbook. For most of the participants I had no further contact with them until the next interview session and while they could contact me, no further contact had been planned. For a few participants, since I had existing relationships with them, we did briefly connect on occasion during this phase.

Following the application period, I met the participants a second time, which involved the exit interview. This meeting asked participants to report on their recent experience and the extent to which *Adaptive Courage* was effective in managing their leadership fears. I also notified participants that they might receive an email or brief phone call of no longer than ten minutes within three to six

months to follow up on their progress (Appendix 4). The interview sessions were audio recorded for purposes of ensuring complete and accurate note-taking.

Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data was gathered and analyzed. For the quantitative measures, Tables 1-6 on demographics and Table 12 on the components of *Adaptive Courage* were derived from categorical questions that the participants were asked self-identify. The responses of individuals “to a category question is one only of a given set of categories” (Bell 2006, 215). These categories were then tallied and presented in table form. Table 7 of top leadership fears used mode as the measure of central tendency as it revealed the “most frequently occurring value” (Bell 2006, 216) among the participants. Tables 8-11 of fear intensity ratings and Tables 13-15 of personal spirituality statements analyzed data using the arithmetic mean of these Likert scales asking “respondents to indicate strength of agreement or disagreement with a given statement” (Bell 2006, 226).

The qualitative data was analyzed though coding. These “codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study” (Miles and Huberman 1994, 56). As the participants gave responses surrounding their leadership fears, these answers were assigned a brief phrase that saliently captured the meaning of what they were trying to communicate (Saldana 2013). The specific type of coding used was Narrative Coding which:

Applies the conventions of (primarily) literary elements and analysis to qualitative texts most often in the form of stories. Appropriate for exploring intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions to understand the human condition through narrative. (Saldana 2013, 131)

This mode of coding was appropriate as participants shared the phenomenological experiences of their fears through personal stories. Brief words or phrases were drawn from their narrative responses. These codes were then analyzed and grouped together according to logical patterns or themes which then produced summative categories. There were typically ten codes produced from participant responses which were then clustered into two or three thematic categories.

This chapter gave a detailed description of the various components of the *Adaptive Courage* model along with an outline of the primary methodologies and principal method. The following chapter presents research findings of the participants both before and after the application of the model.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter I unpack the evaluative results from the project and assessment as described in Chapter 4 of Research Methodology. The first section gives a detailed examination of the participant demography. The next section ranks the top leadership fears of participants along with corresponding fear intensity ratings. Following that is an overview of the value of spirituality and its relative importance in the lives of leaders in managing their fears. The final section consists of an investigation into the impact of *Adaptive Courage*, including: participant experiences and examples of use, how *Adaptive Courage* impacted top leadership fears, the combined use of this model with spiritual practices, future use and improvements, and durability of the model along with additional participant feedback.

Pre-Application of *Adaptive Courage*

The following section pertains to data collected prior to participants being mentored through the *Adaptive Courage* model.

Demographic Analysis

I conducted this research study with a broad range of leaders. As described in the *Participant Criteria* section presented in Research Methodology, the project involved ten leaders that were a selected convenience sample. They varied in characteristics including: age, gender, job position, occupational field, years of experience, and religious affiliation. These participating individuals were an intentionally diverse group in leadership positions from my professional network. This convenience sample derived from my contacts was to ensure that participants were generally stable mentally and emotionally with no apparent personal issues that would negatively affect the research process.

The following Tables 1 - 6 provide a detailed breakdown of the multiple facets pertaining to the project's participant demography.

Table 1: Demographic Data – Participants' Age Range

Age Range	# of Participants	Percentage of Whole
18 – 34	1	10%
35-49	5	50%
50-64	3	30%
65 and over	1	10%
Totals	10	100%

Table 2: Demographic Data – Participants' Genders

Gender	# of Participants	Percentage of Whole
Female	3	30%
Male	7	70%
Totals	10	100%

Table 3: Demographic Data – Participants’ Fields of Occupation

Occupation	# of Participants	Percentage of Whole
Social science, education, government service, religion	3	30%
Art, culture, recreation and sport	1	10%
Trades, transport, and equipment operators	1	10%
Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities	1	10%
Business, finance and administrative	4	40%
Totals	10	100%

Table 4: Demographic Data – Participants’ Job Titles and Years in Role

Job Title	Years in Role
Senior Pastor	15
Site Manager	0.67
Principal	1
Coach	17
Production Manager	7
Director of Banking	5
Imam and Chaplain	44
Regional Vice-President	3
President and CEO	2.5
Senior Tax Manager	3
Totals	98.17

Table 5: Demographic Data – Participants’ Years in Leadership (Entire Career)

Years in Leadership	# of Participants	Percentage of Whole
1 – 14	5	50%
15 - 29	1	10%
30+	4	40%
Totals	10	100%

Table 6: Demographic Data – Participants’ Religious Affiliation

Affiliation	# of Participants	Percentage of Whole
Buddhism	1	10%
Christianity	5	50%
Hinduism	1	10%
Islam	1	10%
Sikhism	1	10%
Not devoted to any religious affiliation	1	10%
Totals	10	100%

As reported in the demographic summaries, the sample includes an assorted group including leaders: who are young and old, from both genders, from wide-ranging professional fields, holding job positions with varying degrees of experience, and representing multiple religious backgrounds. This comprehensive collection of leaders is a foundationally critical aspect in demonstrating the robustness of *Adaptive Courage* as an extensive model of application across-the-board of differing leader profiles and leadership contexts.

Top Leadership Fears

Given the broad demographic represented in this research study, it was important for me to identify the common fears associated with leadership, which I believed was central to this project. When I asked the participants, “**What is a leadership fear?**” each used different terminology. However, it was apparent that their definition of fear had commonalities regardless of their leadership roles. The reason for asking this question was to ensure that each leader also understood that this project was not about everyday phobias but rather specifically about their leadership fears. Using Narrative Coding as outlined in Research Methodology, the responses of the participants could be summarized into three main categories.

- CATEGORY 1: EXPECTATION TO PERFORM (2)

“Performance and expectations.”

“Being second-rate and not meeting expectations.”

- CATEGORY 2: REACTION FROM FOLLOWERS (4)

“Concern to an issue that comes up.”

“How my message is going to be understood...people’s reaction.”

“If you try to be a tough leader,..you might lose them.”

“People of different ways of thinking.”

- CATEGORY 3: PERCEPTION OF SELF OR SITUATION (4)

“Might make me look stupid.”

“Fear of being branded...don’t want to look bad.”

“Something you’re worried about or keeps you up at night.”

“Potential to become debilitating...it overwhelms you.”

It seems that Categories 1 and 2 responses relate to the level 2 fears as detailed by Jeffers (1987) in Literature Review. These level 2 fears are more ego-oriented as it primarily affects fears such as rejection, failure, vulnerability, disapproval and loss of image. Category 3 responses align with level 3 fears as it is simply the belief that the leader cannot handle the fear. Co-relating this to *Adaptive Courage*, it seems that Humble Confidence is a key component for leaders of Categories 1 and 2 to manage their fears as they need to reassure themselves with positive self-talk through these feelings of potential rejection and failure. Selective Vulnerability is also important as these leaders need to find a safe person(s) to share their burdens with to gain broader perspective of their fears. As for Category 3 responses, Incremental Tenacity is an essential component to help leaders avoid volitional inaction and to take the next step in responding to their fears.

It was evident from the responses of participants that they understood the project was not about phobias; for instance, a fear of snakes or heights. Rather, I wanted to focus specifically on *leadership fears* as defined in Chapter 1—an intense feeling of dread or trepidation that is triggered by the perception of a

threat that is either real or imagined while giving guidance, direction or instruction to a particular group or task. In reviewing their responses, leadership-associated fear was something each had experienced to a certain degree at some point in their lives.

Table 7 lists fears presented to the participants. This list was primarily derived from the *Biblical Case Studies in Leadership Fears* in Theological Rationale and *Types of Fears* in Literature Review. I asked them to identify which of the listed fears were their greatest. Space was available at the bottom for leaders to indicate any fears they were experiencing that I had not listed.

Table 7: Top Leadership Fears Identified by Participants

Fear of...	# of Participant Responses
Ineffectiveness	3
Incompetence	3
Uncertainty	3
Conflict	3
Inexperience	2
Insignificance	2
Unpopularity	2
Intimidation	1
Loneliness	1
Failure	1
Other unlisted fears:	
Not being supported by superiors	1
Being misunderstood	1

n=10

Note: Original interview question asked for top 2 leadership fears. Variance in the total responses is due to some participants identifying 3 leadership fears.

The top leadership fears include: Ineffectiveness (3), Incompetence (3), Uncertainty (3) and Conflict (3), which different leaders identified several times. This suggests that leaders did not put on masks of invincibility during these interviews even though there can sometimes be a stigma or sense of shame associated with having leadership fears. A couple of leaders indicated fears not represented on the original list. At least one participant selected each of the leadership fears on this list. Each leader is different and may struggle with a uniquely personal combination of fears. It also suggests that the list provided, although not exhaustive, was relevant to the leaders. One leader may not struggle with the same fear as another leader, but they all struggle with some form of leadership fear.

From the list of top leadership fears indicated, participants were then asked to rate the intensity of those particular fears as reported in Table 8. The purpose of this measurement was to develop a baseline intensity to determine whether there would be any distinguishable differences after the leader had applied the model of *Adaptive Courage*.

Table 8: Ratings of Fear Intensity

Fear	Intensity
#1 Leadership Fear	2.55
#2 Leadership Fear	2.40
Average Rating	2.48

n=10

Rating score = 1 (slight), 2 (mild), 3 (significant), 4 (extreme)

The participants' intensity ratings suggest that although leadership fears were not rated extreme, they were at the mid-point (2.48) of being Mild to Significant. Leaders reported an intensity rating that while not necessarily paralyzing might create substantial barriers to effective leadership.

Table 9 dissects the fear intensity ratings reported in Table 8 by comparing the responses of Christians, to participants of Other Faiths (including Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism), and No Religious Affiliation. The purpose of this measurement was to determine whether there were any remarkable differences between these three groups.

Table 9: Fear Intensity Ratings of Christianity, Other Faiths, and No Religion

Fear	Christianity Intensity Rating	Other Faiths Intensity Rating	No Religion Intensity Rating
#1 Leadership Fear	3.00	2.13	2.00
#2 Leadership Fear	2.60	2.25	2.00
Average Rating	2.80	2.19	2.00

n=10

Participants in each grouping = Christianity (5), Other Faiths (4), No Religion (1)
Rating score = 1 (slight), 2 (mild), 3 (significant), 4 (extreme)

The Christianity group rated the highest in fear intensity of not only one but both leadership fears (3.0 and 2.60). The Christianity group on average rated their fear 0.61 higher (2.80) than those in Other Faiths (2.19), and 0.8 higher than that of No Religion (2.0). This is a concern, as it suggests that Christian leaders are indicating more fearfulness than other leaders. This could be due to various reasons including perhaps the Christian group exhibiting more transparency in

response to the questions, a greater self-awareness to their fear intensity, or may even reflect the need for this group to step up to higher levels of trust and faith in Jesus Christ. Equally fascinating is that the category with No Religious Affiliation rated their fear intensity the least (2.0), even lower than those of Other Faiths. A possible reason may be that only one participant represented the No Religion grouping and had there been a larger sample size, this score may have changed.

Related to these tables, I asked the participants, “**What are the circumstances that lead you to Leadership Fear #1?**” Responses were varied, yet, it seems that similar patterns were emerging in relation to the earlier three categories when participants were asked to define leadership fears.

- CATEGORY 1: EXPECTATION TO PERFORM (5)

“People expect you got to know.”

“They are going ask you questions...you can’t answer.”

“Considered subject matter experts.”

“It’s a very results-oriented business.”

“Biggest fear is not making results.”

- CATEGORY 2: REACTION FROM FOLLOWERS (3)

“Stormed in...glared...spat at me.”

“If I’m too direct...maybe they don’t like me.”

“People may not understand properly.”

- CATEGORY 3: PERCEPTION OF SELF OR SITUATION (2)

“I often wonder of the effectiveness of my presence.”

“You sort of feel like you’re in his shadow.”

It appears that some patterns may be forming as it relates to fears rooted in performance expectations, reactions from those they lead, and the perception of their own self or how the fear will personally affect them.

Although these responses about leadership fears were distinctive to each individual participant, their responses again reinforced how fear was a common phenomenon for every leader. When I asked the participants, “**What are the circumstances that lead you to Leadership Fear #2?**” responses were equally widespread, yet held the same thread of some dimension of fear. These responses again seemed to align within the three categories previously mentioned.

- CATEGORY 1: EXPECTATION TO PERFORM (4)

“Multi-staff, multi teams with appetites, expectations.”

“Painful to accept that we had a loss...I feel like we failed.”

“People perceiving you to have certain level of knowledge.”

“You can't share your failure with your people.”

- CATEGORY 2: REACTION FROM OTHERS (3)

“If not what people expected...may create unpopularity.”

“Haven't been supported in the decisions they made here.”

“I didn't want to deal with that conflict.”

- CATEGORY 3: PERCEPTION OF SELF OR SITUATION (3)

“Am I competent? Am I the right person?”

“Confident in decisions, not second-guessing yourself.”

“Not knowing enough...feeling insecure.”

The circumstances that lead to Leadership Fears #1 and #2 were different for each leader depending on their situation. However, all the leaders struggled with some facet of fear that they understood to be a barrier in their context that they needed to manage. At the same time, patterns seemed to emerge again into three broader categories. Relating these categories to *Adaptive Courage*, reframing the challenge and discovering the Ensnared Opportunity for their organization would be helpful to leaders in managing Category 1 of performance expectations. These leaders may be experiencing ‘irrational thoughts’ and need to change the way they think about the fear. Addressing Category 2 of people’s reaction would require leaders to find a safe place to share their fears through Selective Vulnerability. To help with Category 3 of one’s negative perceptions, leaders can re-inforce their positive self-talk through Humble Confidence. These leaders may be experiencing ‘emotional sabotage’ and need to reassure themselves that they will prevail through the fear. Along with Category 3, sometimes leaders may feel overwhelmed with their situation so applying Incremental Tenacity to their context will help them respond to their fear in a tangible manner.

In summary, fears are a reality among all leaders. While the intensity of these fears is fairly substantial, leadership fears differ in type depending on the leader and their situation. It appears that the participant responses to what leadership fear are and circumstances that lead to those fears can be grouped into three main categories: performance expectations, people’s reactions, and self-perceptions.

Spirituality and Fears

The purpose of this research study was to support individuals who wish to become courageous leaders by addressing leadership-associated fears. It was also an important aspect of this study to determine the extent to which a person's valuing of spirituality plays a role in managing his or her leadership fears. As such, Table 10 assessed ratings on personal spirituality of the participants.

Table 10: Ratings on Personal Spirituality

Statement	Intensity
Spirituality is a priority in my life that helps put my leadership fears in perspective.	3.6
I rely on prayers to help calm me during the leadership fears I experience.	3.3
I rely on meditation to help calm me in preparation for leadership fears I experience.	3.0
I rely on spiritual readings to help calm me in preparation for leadership fears I experience.	2.8
Average Rating	3.18

n=10

Rating score=1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), 4(strongly agree), N/A

Overall, there was solid agreement among the leaders that spirituality is an important aspect in the management of leadership fears (3.6). Of the various spiritual practices, prayer (3.3) was the most relied upon practice while spiritual readings (2.8) were the least. A possible factor for this is the simple convenience of prayer as compared to the access needed and the time required to obtain and use spiritual readings. Even busy professionals would have a relatively easy time

to offer brief prayers. Meditation (3.0) also rated higher than spiritual readings. Leaders generally found the practice of meditative reflection more aligned with their lives than reading spiritual books. This may imply a greater sense of ease and relevance for leaders to find time for contemplation as opposed to the effort required to do spiritual readings. In relation to *Adaptive Courage*, this underscores the importance of Simple Transcendence for leaders in receiving calm and perspective through spiritual practices in helping manage their leadership fears. This also aligns with the spiritual cultivation aspect of the Literature Review as part of a holistic approach to fear management.

Table 11 further analyzes the previous table into categories of Christianity, Other Faiths (including Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism), and No Religious Affiliation. The reason for this evaluation was to uncover whether there were any noteworthy differences between these religious groupings.

Table 11: Spirituality Ratings of Christianity, Other Faiths, and No Religion

Statement	Christianity Rating	Other Faiths Rating	No Religion Rating
Spirituality is a priority in my life that helps put my leadership fears in perspective.	3.6	3.5	4.0
I rely on prayers to help calm me during the leadership fears I experience.	3.6	3.25	2.00
I rely on meditation to help calm me in preparation for leadership fears I experience.	2.8	3.0	4.0
I rely on spiritual readings to help calm me in preparation for leadership fears I experience.	3.0	2.75	2.0
Average Rating	3.25	3.13	3.00

n=10

Participants in each grouping = Christianity (5), Other Faiths (4), No Religion (1)
Rating score=1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), 4(strongly agree), N/A

The Christianity group rated the highest in their reliance on prayer (3.6) and spiritual readings (3.0). They also rated the highest on the overall average (3.25).

Although Christian leaders experienced the greatest fears, they also relied most on the *act* of spiritual practices. However, beyond the behavioural component, there may be faith and trust issues undermining the action. Remarkably, the category with No Religion rated highest in meditation (4.0) and spirituality being a priority in life (4.0) to help put fears in perspective. This reinforces various literature contrasting the difference between spirituality and religion. As evidenced, it is certainly possible for someone to not have any religious affiliation and still be

very spiritual. Again, there was only one participant represented in this grouping and had the sample size been larger this score may have changed.

In summary, spirituality is highly valued by leaders as a help to overcoming their fears. Prayers and meditation appear to be the more prominent practices relied upon among leaders to support a sense of calmness when dealing with fears.

Post-Application of *Adaptive Courage*

As the baselines for types and intensities of fears along with spiritual practices now established, I provided participants with the *Adaptive Courage* model to guide the process of managing leadership fears. I mentored leaders in how to properly apply principles of this model to their leadership situations. Then, I asked them to assess the tool's effectiveness.

Experiences and Examples of *Adaptive Courage*

When participants were asked, “**What was your experience using *Adaptive Courage*?**” the overall responses indicated tremendous feedback as to the benefit. The comments were grouped into two main categories:

- CATEGORY 1: EXPANDED PERSPECTIVE AND OBJECTIVITY (6)
 - “Helps them see things in a wider perspective.”
 - “It's good. It's given me a new perspective for sure.”
 - “Not so focused on negative aspects but the positive.”
 - “The ability to analyze the different facets...”

“Not get so emotional about stuff and maintain composure.”

“Methodical or logical approach to something not very visible.”

- CATEGORY 2: DEEPENED FOCUS AND REFLECTION (4)

“It occurs naturally, you do it behind the scenes.”

“Best part is going through questions...and making you reflect.”

“My default because of my faith is just right to the spiritual piece.”

“Framed in a way that I found it to be memorable.”

It is apparent that the participants found great value in their experience of integrating *Adaptive Courage* into their leadership situations. In particular, it helped broaden their outlook of the leadership fear without letting their negative emotions take control. This especially aligns with the Ensnared Opportunity component of *Adaptive Courage* as leaders were encouraged to reframe the unconstructive manner in which they viewed the fear into a more productive possibility. *Adaptive Courage* seemed to also help participants increase their capacity to process the leadership fear situation in a more focused approach.

Not only did the leaders find their experience with this model meaningful, but the model itself seemed to have a high degree of adaptability to varying leadership circumstances. When leaders were asked to, “**Give an example of when you applied *Adaptive Courage* and describe how it was or was not helpful**” participants indicated a spectrum of responses indicating the tool’s elasticity in responding to multiple situations.

- HANDLING STAFF TEAM CONFLICTS: “We were in a staff meeting...Don't like conflict, don't need to escalate it, I need to manage it...So because of our conversation I'm trying to filter everything and ask where would this fit in that (*Adaptive Courage*) model and how do I apply the model into the context. They are unique enough and almost cyclic in their pattern...What's nice about it is if you can get the model in your mind, just the visual, then when something comes up you go, ‘I really don't want to do this but I can't get away from the fact that I have this truth that can actually result in a much better future...’”
- PREVENTING EMPLOYEE SUICIDE ATTEMPT: “...One of our people wanted to take her own life and said, ‘Everything's a mess, I just want to die, I just want to kill myself.’ I had to call this lady at home and talk to her and I'm not trained in any of this stuff. From the second she picked up the phone I knew how bad it was. It definitely took courage because within three seconds of hearing her voice you could hardly understand anything that came out of her voice. I was immediately scared that I would say the wrong thing. It took a lot of courage...”
- FIRING STAFF: “What is a current fear for me now and what I've had to work through *Adaptive Courage* with is hiring and firing...teachers have been so used to knowing that even though it's on a contract basis that they would come back...We are operating below the numbers that we need to stay viable...We have been losing half a million dollars a year...a certain complacency has set in with some staff.”
- ASSEMBLING TEAM FOR INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION: “That kind of gave me a push to do this team. It helped...Very tricky to pull these people together. In the end, I could have said ‘We don't have enough people, we're not going to go.’ So I think, even just talking about it really helped. It (*Adaptive Courage*) helped me push through the last part where I could have said, ‘It's actually not worth it, we'll do it next year, we'll just build this year for next year.’ It was one of the factors that helped me say "OK let's just keep doing it, it's worth it."
- STEPPING INTO TOUGH CONVERSATION WITH BOSS: “I'm thinking to myself this is not a good situation...I'm scared to approach this but I know I have to do it...I'm just delaying and delaying and going along with it...That's when I started saying, ‘Let me try using this (*Adaptive Courage*) to get the ball rolling.’ I went through the steps...I seized my opportunity and went to his office. I said, ‘Listen, just hear me out, that's

all I'm asking.' I explained to him my concern. I wanted to let him hear my piece."

- EXPANDING BUSINESS VENTURE: "We started something in Alberta about building some teams and hiring a couple of people just to get myself out of that comfort zone and taking that extra step...Before I was thinking, should I spend that money, should I do this? Do I really have to get myself uncomfortable to do this or send someone?...This (*Adaptive Courage*) helped me make that decision quicker. I was thinking of doing it but you made me think, 'Why wait? Let's go do it.' "
- PRESENTING TO FOREIGN INVESTORS: "Last week I was presenting to a group of Asian investors who had significant wealth and were coming to Canada to invest in real estate and stuff...Even though I feel confident in presenting, was the delivery going to be appropriate for that culture? I found that a bit nerve-racking at first. At the end of the day, this is a fear that you have, for me, it was a fear of not being able to deliver...would I deliver in a way that met their expectations. And they are looking to me as an expert in the field. And so it was about how I get past that fear."
- DEALING WITH DISAPPOINTING RESULTS: "The end of last year was a small deficit and we had a disappointing first quarter...It was very difficult going into that board meeting with yet again disappointing results...I left there feeling like we didn't give it our best shot...And I got thinking about this, *Adaptive Courage*. How do I deal with this?...And of course, my saving grace in all this was the prayer time that I had about all this and how I'm going to deal with all this."

From initial assessments, the use of the *Adaptive Courage* model among participants demonstrated a considerable benefit to the leader and adaptability to the leader's unique environment.

Rating Components of *Adaptive Courage*

Although *Adaptive Courage* seemed to be a profitable endeavour for leaders from preliminary reports, it was imperative to explore in more depth the

five major components that made up this model. Table 12 details participant responses to these *Adaptive Courage* quadrants.

Table 12: Responses to *Adaptive Courage* Components

	Yes	No	Not Sure	% Yes
Was the “Ensnared Opportunity” component of <i>Adaptive Courage</i> helpful in changing the way you rationally think about your leadership fear?	9	1	0	90%
Was the “Humble Confidence” component of <i>Adaptive Courage</i> helpful in reassuring that you will prevail through your leadership fear?	10	0	0	100%
Was the “Selective Vulnerability” component of <i>Adaptive Courage</i> helpful in encouraging you to share your leadership fear with a safe person?	8	2	0	80%
Was the “Incremental Tenacity” component of <i>Adaptive Courage</i> helpful in taking the next action step to overcome your leadership fear?	10	0	0	100%
Was the “Simple Transcendence” component of <i>Adaptive Courage</i> helpful in experiencing a greater sense of calm and perspective through spiritual practices?	9	1	0	90%
Total Average	9.2	0.8	0	92%

n=10

The components of *Adaptive Courage* received consistently high evaluations (ranging from 80%-100%) and resulted in a markedly high total average (92%). As explained in Figure 2 – Components of *Adaptive Courage* in Chapter 4 of Research Methodology, each of the various quadrants address a different symptom of fear. This table verifies the success of each component in supporting leaders to manage their fears. I asked participants to explain their reasoning, “**Why each particular component of *Adaptive Courage* was helpful?**”

- COMPONENT #1 - ENSNARED OPPORTUNITY:
 - “It *de-personalizes* my attachment to the situation and allows me to rationally view it from the other person's lens or the situation lens.”
 - “It's helped me to be *less emotional* about decisions for the good of the organization.”
 - “It was *creating the positive* out of you where you are missing an opportunity. Just in writing it down, it helped me understand actually what to change to make it an opportunity.”
- COMPONENT #2 - HUMBLE CONFIDENCE:
 - “I found it *reassuring*, giving me that, ‘We'll get there, we'll get there. We may have setbacks, but we're going to make it happen. We're going to get there.’ ”
 - “...by going through this, I started understanding that God made me perfect the way I am, I just have to *believe in my ability*. That's the confidence about myself. I'm not putting anyone down but saying "I'm the best way I am.”
 - “Because *I've been there*. I know that with time, lots of things change. Having had those gut feelings of inadequacy and failure in the past that they will pass. Just a bit of a cycle...So, that was helpful, that was definitely helpful - that quadrant.”

- COMPONENT #3 - SELECTIVE VULNERABILITY:
 - “I always find that *being real with people* and being able to show the tough times I had, and the challenges I face as well, or even my own shortcomings. It really helps me gel a team together...”
 - “Sometimes venting helps you calm down and be more introspective of all the different factors...Vocalize it and *share the burden.*”
- COMPONENT #4 - INCREMENTAL TENACITY:
 - “Keep on *attacking one little piece* and build on success or learn from failure and keep moving on.”
 - “Goes back to that concept, what can I influence? *What can I control?* If there's something there I can impact, then I'll deal with that.”
- COMPONENT #5 - SIMPLE TRANSCENDENCE:
 - “Simple Transcendence is *all the way through* your leadership. There's not one point at which I could say, ‘I'm not needing that.’ Whereas with the others I could say ‘Yes, I don't particularly need to focus on that right now’ but I think that I need to be focused on this all the time.”
 - “The spiritual process started eight months ago. I started doing things more spiritually - every Sunday going to temple, doing my prayers, reading something spiritual...I pray every morning before I start any work. That gives me *extra strength.*”
 - “Just because I have felt the *Lord's presence* in all of this...He already knows. He's got my best interest at heart. It's going to work out.”

These quantitative and qualitative results again indicate *Adaptive Courage* and its five components brought value to the leader in the management of their fears.

Top Leadership Fears and *Adaptive Courage*

Although results indicated a favorable response to the overall experience of *Adaptive Courage*, the next step was to determine if there were any differences

from the baseline fear intensities. Table 13 compares Pre/Post-*Adaptive Courage* ratings of both Leadership Fear # 1 and #2.

Table 13: Fear Intensity Ratings Pre/Post *Adaptive Courage* Application

	Pre-Rating	Post-Rating	Difference
#1 Leadership Fear	2.55	2.15	- 0.40
#2 Leadership Fear	2.40	2.10	- 0.30
Total Average	2.48	2.13	- 0.35

n=10

Rating score = 1 (slight), 2 (mild), 3 (significant), 4 (extreme)

The difference between the Pre/Post ratings were not sizeable, however participants' response show a moderate decrease in the overall average (-0.35). Additionally, this reduction was consistent with both Leadership Fears #1 (-0.4) and #2 (-0.3). Participants **explained why their rating indicated only a slight diminishing in intensity.**

- REALITY OF FEAR: “I would drop it down to 'Slight' because in the back of your mind there's always something there.”
- NOT GETTING WORSE: “Just because under the circumstance it's still there and the pressure that I'm putting on myself. But it's still definitely helping me - nothing has escalated worse out of control. It definitely makes me feel like I have more control over the boat that I'm steering.”
- WORK IN PROGRESS: “I can still work on it. But it's definitely come down and I'm definitely more aware of it.”
- BENEFIT OF FEAR: “There's always a possibility of things getting out of control. In my perspective, to have a slight fear is not a bad thing - it just keeps you more aware, more heightened.”

- HOW YOU HANDLE IT: “I don’t think those things change but it’s how you deal with them. It’s how you overcome them that make a difference. Some things will always be lurking but it’s how you address them.”
- ABOUT MINIMIZING, NOT ELIMINATING: “That fear will always be there depending on what it is. If people are well-informed about the subject then the fear is minimized.”

Despite modest quantitative reductions in fear intensity, the more crucial aspect was that there was still indeed a lessening of the fear experience for leaders through *Adaptive Courage*.

Spirituality and *Adaptive Courage*

I obtained baseline ratings not only for fear intensity but also for personal spirituality as well. These ratings previously showed that spirituality was a priority that helped bring perspective to leaders in the midst of their fears.

Table 14 exhibits ratings of participants for the combined application of spiritual practices with *Adaptive Courage*.

Table 14: Ratings of Spiritual Practices with *Adaptive Courage*

Statement	Rating	# N/A Responses
As I worked through <i>Adaptive Courage</i> , I found it helpful to pray.	3.0	2
As I worked through <i>Adaptive Courage</i> , I found it helpful to meditate.	3.11	1
As I worked through <i>Adaptive Courage</i> , I found it helpful to reflect on spiritual readings.	3.11	1
Average Rating	3.07	-

n=10

Rating score=1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), 4(strongly agree), N/A

Participants agreed solidly that spiritual practices were important to leaders in managing their fears even while using *Adaptive Courage* concurrently. Interestingly, they now ranked prayer the lowest of the spiritual practices (3.0) as compared to previous scores, albeit still in the agreement range. Perhaps prayer had not yet been firmly established in their busy life routines. This may also suggest how prayer is valued yet there may still be a gap in taking action on it.

When asked to explain their responses as to **why these facets of personal spirituality were helpful in conjunction with *Adaptive Courage***, here were some of the participant responses:

- “The tools are there but the filtering and the use of those tools outside of prayer - sure they work, absolutely they would work for a technical person to use them but I think the value of it is that the prayer becomes transformative to me.”
- “Definitely. I can't do everything by myself.”
- “For me, the praying, meditating part was definitely an important component of it because it gives you support of something bigger and better and a calming effect.”
- “I find myself that I'm actually getting even better responses than what I normally did, by taking that moment of reflection. The trick is always finding the time.”
- “That's part of my routine so I would say there's some synergy with *Adaptive Courage* and spiritual readings.”

Overall, these results still confirm the earlier findings that leaders agree spirituality is certainly an essential factor in overcoming leadership-associated fears even in combination with *Adaptive Courage*.

Future Use of *Adaptive Courage*

Table 15 shows the rating for participants intending to use *Adaptive Courage* in the future to help overcome leadership fears.

Table 15: Participants' Future Use of *Adaptive Courage*

Statement	Rating
I will continue to use <i>Adaptive Courage</i> to help me overcome future leadership fears.	3.6

n=10

Rating score = 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), 4 (strongly agree), N/A

This rating indicates a firm agreement among leaders that they plan to continue using this model to help them in future leadership fear situations. When asked to elaborate on the **reasoning for using *Adaptive Courage* in the future to help overcome their fears**, participants replied:

- CATEGORY 1: PROVEN TO BE HELPFUL (6)

“It helps in building your skills. It's empowering you.”

“Because it works for me.”

“I was thinking again where on that scale would I be on the particular situation...it's a good tool.”

“I'm already doing some things.”

“I do plan on doing it and now that I get better at that one, I'll add the next one.”

“But the fact that I've been through this process, it'll probably come to mind.”

- CATEGORY 2: PROVEN TO BE RELATABLE (4)

“I think the model makes sense.”

“I finally have something that describes what I'm feeling, what I'm experiencing without me going to take a textbook. I love that this is that easy.”

“For me, it's a structured way to approach things...It provides a very logical approach to solving or tackling the issue.”

“I can put in my planner or on my wall to keep reminding me to work on that...So it becomes second-nature.”

I also asked participants, “**What is the likelihood that you would recommend *Adaptive Courage* to other leaders as a useful tool in managing their leadership fears?**” All 10 out of 10 leader participants responded favorably with the following responses:

- “Very High. I think the *simplicity* of the model is the thing that is really, really appealing...we know we have our fears, whether we're willing to deal with them is a whole different thing. What's unique about what you have on the table is because of the simplicity, you actually can *see change* come out of it...You can actually see change in your own.”
- I would definitely agree with that statement. I *shared it* with 2 other people...”
- “I just did! Strongly agree! I love the *simplicity* of it, the fact that a lot of it has been pared down to the *essentials*...I like this because of the simplicity. I don't feel like this is a huge burden. It already speaks to me, identifies some of the situations I've already been in.”
- “Absolutely. Very good possibility that I would *definitely refer* or suggest it to people.”
- “Strongly recommend it to everybody. We need to find our own strength. Need to *ground yourself* rather than being in reactive mode.”
- “Strongly agree. I already decided to *work with those on my team*.”

- “This thing helps them see things in a more *wider perspective*. This helps you develop a *results-oriented approach*.”
- “I would agree. I would recommend it. There's a lot of issues when you are a leader, doesn't matter at what level or what intensity. Not everybody knows how to deal with it...I would recommend it to someone. I think it's always *good to re-focus*. Although you may be doing this in the background, it's good to *understand the mechanics* behind it and it may help you in a situation.”

It is encouraging to see that *Adaptive Courage* will not only be used by these leaders going forward, but that they see such value in the model that they would recommend it to others.

Future Improvements of *Adaptive Courage*

When I asked participants, “**Are there aspects of *Adaptive Courage* that might be improved to better help overcome leadership fears?**” 8 out of 10 participants answered ‘No’. However, I collected other qualitative feedback from participants that will be helpful to consider for future development. The participants offered the following comments:

- CONSIDER VISUAL REMINDERS: “The tool is only as useful when I keep it in mind. It's one of those things you have to be very cognizant of and know it exists...I am visual so this (*Adaptive Courage* diagram) is what came up for me a lot - like the circle and the way it was broken out. For me personally, if I had the chance to take this and make it into something that can be on my desk so you wouldn't have to take it out and look at it so close - a little bigger. So as a reminder it's there.”
- CONSIDER CONTEXTUALIZATION: “Making some of these situational or contextual...I think that for some of the aspects of *Adaptive Courage*, I find it is quite issue-driven. Because what would make me afraid or vulnerable may be just something that has happened...If we could contextualize or make them more situational - if it's divided into 4-5 major areas and depending on where the leader is, they can find those areas that they fit into. For example, in my role as school leader, I look at school leadership in terms of relationship with the community and that's

an area then I would say I feel vulnerable...Maybe there are broader contexts that you could use so that somebody who works in business could identify that context as well.”

- CONSIDER LISTING FEARS: “The list you had with the different fears, if you had a page in this, I think it would be really great...I couldn't come up with that list myself.”
- CONSIDER APPLICATION CLARITY: “My honest opinion, it still requires a more clear understanding to the people about how to really use it. It's great, but it requires more clarity at certain levels...Nothing more to improve it. I think it's perfect. It just requires more clarity. More explanation to put together how it applies to real-life...Add the example of each level rather than just the set amount of questions. To understand them and their context better, then see how that can apply to them.”
- CONSIDER INDIVIDUAL BACKGROUNDS: “In terms of your perspective, your history, your background, is going to be a dimension which will vary each one of these quadrants. So where is the place you're coming from? What has been your experience? And is there something in your experience that is causing you to have these fears? Maybe that is something that should also be addressed.”
- CONSIDER INDIVIDUAL PROCESSING: “I think it would be very, very helpful to individuals who think academically. Those who are able to take their situation and look at it outside the box as opposed to in this box. I don't know if it's everyone's nature to be able to do that...So for people like me, I don't think this would be as useful as someone who could actually look at it objectively without their personal bias and being able to apply the teaching and the thought to the situation. I just think people are different in that sense.”

These constructive suggestions will be useful for any future development and iterations of *Adaptive Courage*.

Durability of *Adaptive Courage*

Depending on the original date of certain participant interviews, there was sufficient time lapse to follow-up with leaders over 6 months later. These follow-up inquiries occurred by phone calls or emails. I asked participants **whether there**

were any examples of how they may have applied *Adaptive Courage* since the original interview process.

Three participants responded:

- One leader had to go through re-structuring with multiple conversations and multiple staff. He noted that *Adaptive Courage* was helpful and “*ended up using the model and frame of Adaptive Courage multiple times. He needed to look it up and it gave him a pathway. Adaptive Courage helped him live it out.*” This leader later noted that “*he keeps Adaptive Courage on his desktop. It is really beneficial, like having the Coles notes. It is something in front that's accessible.*”
- Another leader described how he’s been challenged the last couple of months with changing the business to meet higher expectations, both from an internal company and external client perspective. He needed to work hard to change processes, procedures and the culture of his current leadership team, office and floor staff. He explained how his “*confidence in dealing with it all has risen to a new level, while still being able to remain humble enough as to not have anyone think ill of (him). (He) can easily link this back to many of the components of Adaptive Courage by being able to remain calm and rash while having to deal and or make decisive decisions. This gives (him) strength and determination to continue to use any fear of failure to continue taking steps forward. The continued stride forward has built momentum and also reassurance that the fear is only as strong and overpowering as he lets it get, and that (he) can control this.*”
- Finally, the last leader reported taking on a huge work project requiring vast resources of training and certification of employees and equipment. When his boss approached him, there was lots of fear. He asked if they really needed to do it as it was so much work and they had also tried unsuccessfully in the past. However, “*through Adaptive Courage, he started looking at the opportunity and what it could bring to the company. They've been missing out on opportunities like this in the past since they were not qualified. So Adaptive Courage helped him see the good without the fear element.*” This leader found this model very useful and “*believes that the more you use Adaptive Courage, the more it'll be ingrained into your thoughts. That way, you could use it on the fly and when you're not even realizing it.*”

It is positive to observe that *Adaptive Courage* was not only beneficial for leaders, adaptable to their unique leadership situations, but it displayed a durability factor that has retained its effectiveness over a fair length of time.

Additional Feedback for *Adaptive Courage*

Participants offered the following additional comments about their experience using *Adaptive Courage*. For a comprehensive list of feedback, please refer to Appendix 6.

- “Well thought out. I like that. There's great merit in it...in terms of the value of this in a leadership dynamic it could readily be implemented as a quick assessment tool...Really good piece.”
- “It's pretty straight-forward. It's logical. It seems like a good game plan. It's a very systematic approach to dealing with a fear.”
- “For me, the way you've laid it out, the questions that you've asked me, for me it's really good. I've repeated this many times, it's very logical, it's step-by-step approach to getting over something that's not discussed much...It's a taboo thing to tell people you have a fear, you feel people are going to judge you, they're going to belittle you, they're going to make fun of you...You can't get past it...If you go through this process, there'll be a lot more times that you'll be able to get past it than not.”

The research findings indicate that *Adaptive Courage* had a profound effect on the lives of the participants by helping them better manage their leadership fears. The following chapter draws conclusions and future considerations from this analysis.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The comments in this final chapter flow out of the results detailed in Chapter 5 of Research Findings and Analysis. The bulk of the chapter discusses five conclusions revolving around the themes of fear, courage and spirituality. Two considerations that warrant future research inquiry follow these conclusions. Finally, I provide some final thoughts to conclude the chapter.

Conclusions

The following provides five conclusions drawn from this research project. Two conclusions relate specifically to leadership fears, two pertain to *Adaptive Courage*, and one focuses upon spirituality.

Conclusion One: Leadership Fears Are Different Yet Common

The first inference from this research is that the types of fears associated with leadership are different for each participant. However, the actual fear experience is common to all. What may be a struggle for one leader may or may not be a similar hardship for another. When the participants defined what constitutes a leadership fear, it was apparent that the concept was not foreign to them (see *Top Leadership Fears* – Chapter 5). In this study, a few leadership fears

seemed to rise to the surface more than others, namely: Ineffectiveness, Incompetence, Uncertainty and Conflict. Three participants named each of these fears. Participants reported other fears twice; including Inexperience and Unpopularity (see *Table 7* in Chapter 5). Further experimentation with a larger sample size would confirm, refute, or modify the priority of leaders' greatest fears. Yet, even within this small sample of ten participants it is quite evident that leaders experience a wide assortment of fears. Some leaders even mentioned fears that I did not include on the original list. This again shows that there is no one fear that is universal to all.

However, even in this wide array of fears, there also seems to be some common themes that have emerged from the data (see *Top Leadership Fears – Chapter 5*). Three categories seemed to summarize the participant responses of what leadership fears are and the circumstances surrounding those fears:

- Expectation of performance
- Reaction from followers
- Perception of self or how the situation will impact them personally

Again, further study is needed to confirm these findings.

There is often a myth that leaders need to be unshakeable under every circumstance. There can be a sense of shame or stigma associated with leadership fears, especially since there may be unrealistic expectations placed on leaders to constantly have an outlook of fearlessness. However, such fears are common to humanity as evidenced in this research. Leaders should not feel any embarrassment in experiencing them. Each leader is unique, from their

personality and temperament to their background and history. As such, each leader will struggle with a uniquely personal combination of fears. Even the circumstances that lead to these fears are different for each leader depending on their situation (see *Top Leadership Fears* in Chapter 5). However, all the leaders struggled with some facet of fear that they experience contextually as a barrier that they need to manage. One leader may not wrestle with the same fear as another, but the outcome is that they each must grapple with some mode of fear to continue being effective in their leadership.

Conclusion Two: Leadership Fears May Not Be Debilitating Yet Can Be Disruptive

Leadership fears are disruptive even though they may not be completely paralyzing. Although fear may not literally prevent a leader from carrying out their responsibilities, a leader's fears may still compromise his or her optimal effectiveness. As seen in the research scores, participants rated the average of the top two leadership fears at a mid-point between Mild to Significant (see *Table 8 – Chapter 5*). Although the intensities of these fears were not extreme, they still represented substantial barriers that leaders need to address in their respective environments. A breakdown of various religious affiliations including Christianity, Other Faiths (including Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism), and No Religious Affiliation, showed varying fear intensities and that there was not one group that remained unaffected (see *Table 9 – Chapter 5*). An interesting observation is that the Christian group rated the highest in fear intensity of not

only one but both leadership fears. I will discuss this further in the *Considerations* section of this chapter.

While it is heartening to recognize that fear does not debilitate leaders, leaders cannot afford for their fears to distract them from their overall functioning. There is too much at stake, whether the leader is directing the cause of a non-profit mission or giving oversight to a multi-million dollar business venture. Leaders need to find optimal ways to minimize the intensity of their fears so that they can spend their best thoughts and energies leading their organization forward.

Conclusion Three: *Adaptive Courage* is Broadly Applicable Yet Uniquely Appropriated

Conclusions One and Two note that leadership fears are common and potentially disruptive to leaders, making it all the more imperative to support leaders in addressing these issues. Helping leaders manage these fears was the driving force in creating the model of *Adaptive Courage*. *Adaptive Courage* demonstrates a capacity to influence diverse types of leaders. It also has exhibited the ability to uniquely impact individuals even at a personal level.

I sampled an assorted demography of leaders (see *Table 1-6* in Chapter 5) in this study. The sampled leaders were:

- Young through to those past their retirement age
- Of either gender
- From varied occupational fields, ranging from administration to athletics

- Working in job positions from CEO to chaplain
- Of varied experience levels, ranging from months to multiple decades
- From numerous religious affiliations

As can be seen after the application of *Adaptive Courage*, the fear intensities of the top leadership fears identified among this broad sample of participants showed an overall reduction (see *Table 13* in Chapter 5). This comprehensive collection of participants attests to the quality of *Adaptive Courage* to shape leaders positively regardless of their respective profiles.

As leaders from diverse walks of life utilized *Adaptive Courage* it left a distinctly personal impression upon each leader. This fear management model supported leaders in their own unique ways (see *Experiences and Examples of Adaptive Courage* in Chapter 5). From helping leaders to remain level-headed during emotionally stressful moments to providing a tangible solution to an abstract problem. Two categories seemed to summarize the experience of *Adaptive Courage* for participants:

- Broadened perspective and objectivity
- Deepened focus and reflection

In rating the various components of *Adaptive Courage*, participants responded favorably to each component (see *Table 12* in Chapter 5). Nonetheless, depending on the leader, certain components were more meaningful to them than others. As each quadrant addresses a different symptom of fear, leaders will place more emphasis on certain components that resonate at a more personal level (see

Rating Components of Adaptive Courage in Chapter 5). When asked whether leaders would continue to use *Adaptive Courage* to help them overcome future leadership fears, the response was appreciably positive (see *Table 15* in Chapter 5). When asked to give a reason for their response, two categories seemed to encapsulate their responses:

- Proven to be helpful
- Proven to be relatable

In addition to that, all ten leaders commented how they would recommend *Adaptive Courage* to other leaders as a useful tool in managing their leadership fears, and in fact, a few already did (see *Future Use of Adaptive Courage* in Chapter 5).

Participants made a number of suggestions to increase individual impact and make future improvements to *Adaptive Courage*. These include considerations such as: more specific contextualization of the model, more clarity in how to particularly apply the model, and further mindfulness regarding the various backgrounds and history of individuals (see *Future Improvements of Adaptive Courage* in Chapter 5).

Collectively the feedback confirms the uniquely personal applications *Adaptive Courage* offered to participants. This model provided exceptional benefits to a wide demographic of leaders.

Conclusion Four: *Adaptive Courage* is Logically Structured Yet Situationally Flexible

Adaptive Courage provides a solid and reliable structure for leaders to help manage their leadership fears in a variety of situations. One repeated comment was how systematic, methodical and logical an approach *Adaptive Courage* was. A participant leader described how *Adaptive Courage* was framed in a memorable fashion and caused a cyclic form of thinking to help process his fears (see *Experiences and Examples of Adaptive Courage* in Chapter 5).

While this model provides an organized configuration for leaders to depend upon during their fear experience, the model also offers tremendous elasticity in adjusting to multiple leadership scenarios. In this project, participants used *Adaptive Courage* for numerous purposes, including: handling team conflict, preventing a suicide attempt, firing staff, engaging a superior in a tough conversation, launching company expansion, and delivering a key stakeholder presentation (see *Experiences and Examples of Adaptive Courage* – Chapter 5). *Adaptive Courage* has an application band-width for multiple leadership scenarios. Participants reported good results even six months later, revealing how *Adaptive Courage* had retained its effectiveness over a fair length of time (see *Durability of Adaptive Courage* in Chapter 5). *Adaptive Courage* not only offers a robust framework but is also a model that provides resiliency for an assortment of challenges that leaders must confront.

Conclusion Five: Spirituality Is Varied in Practice Yet Vital in Managing Fears

A key aspect of this project was to determine the extent to which a person's value of spirituality plays a role in helping them manage his or her leadership fears. After interviewing these participants, I concluded that spirituality is indeed a foundational aspect in managing leadership fears. Yet one's spiritual practices varied among leaders and were especially dependent on their religious affiliation. There was a substantial agreement among the leaders that spirituality is an important expression in addressing their fears (see *Table 10* in Chapter 5). Even after applying *Adaptive Courage* to their leadership context, participants indicated a compelling agreement for the use of spirituality (see *Table 14* in Chapter 5).

On the other hand, there was less agreement as to the practices of spirituality. While the Christianity group rated the highest in prayer and spiritual readings, it rated the lowest in meditation. The No Religion category rated the opposite, with meditation being the highest score while lowest on the other practices. This No Religion category also rated the highest in spirituality being a priority in life to help put fears in perspective. This reinforces literature that contrasts the difference between spirituality and religion. As evidenced, it is certainly possible for someone to not have any religious affiliation and still be very spiritual. Those of the Other Faiths category landed somewhere in-between with prayer and meditation ranking the highest for them (see *Table 11* in Chapter 5). In general, spirituality is essential to leaders in managing their fears, although

the extent to which leaders emphasize and value certain practices more than others depends upon their religious affiliation.

Considerations

The five conclusions detailed above relate to the results unveiled within the context of this current study. However, these conclusions do not mean that research into the themes of fear, courage and spirituality is complete. Rather, these outcomes open up research possibilities for future exploration. The following section includes two considerations worthy of further inquiry and experimentation.

Consideration One: Results Worth Investigating

The Christianity group rated the highest in fear intensity of not only one but both leadership fears. On average the Christianity group rated their fear over half a point higher than those of Other Faiths, and almost a full point higher than the No Religion category (see *Table 9 – Chapter 5*). This seems to indicate that Christian leaders are experiencing more fearfulness than all other leaders. At the same time, the Christianity group rated the highest in their reliance on prayer and spiritual readings than the other groups. They also rated the highest in their overall average of ratings on personal spirituality (see *Table 11 – Chapter 5*). The combined implication of these results is that Christian leaders are ‘doing’ the spiritual practices but are still ‘being’ afraid. They rely most on the ‘act’ of these spiritual practices, yet are still experiencing the greatest intensity of fear in their

leadership. In one sense, it is encouraging that they indicate such a high value for prayer and spiritual readings, but the results seem to indicate an outcome that is undesirable. There are a number of interpretations that might be possible. Perhaps these leaders may have been more transparent and vulnerable of their fear experience. Perhaps they had a greater degree of self-awareness or sensitivity as to the intensity of their fears. Or perhaps beyond the actual behavioural component of these spiritual practices, there may be deeper faith and trust issues undermining their disciplined action. Christian leaders may need to not only embrace the value of these spiritual practices but simultaneously step up to higher levels of trust and faith in the One that will empower them through these fears, the Lord Jesus Christ. These interpretations are not exhaustive and only further study with additional Christian leaders would confirm or refute these findings.

Consideration Two: Factors Worth Studying

It would be fascinating to test a number of other variables to determine its impact on *Adaptive Courage*. Several factors come to mind:

- A. *Culture & Ethnicity*: How would differences in culture and ethnicity affect *Adaptive Courage*? I conducted all of this research in the Greater Toronto Area. However, what if we applied *Adaptive Courage* to other cultures in other countries and continents beyond the North American context? How would people of varying ethnicities in other parts of the world respond to *Adaptive Courage*?
- B. *Non-leadership Positions & Fears*: It is evident that *Adaptive Courage* has made an impact on those in leadership positions. Yet, would the model be useful to people who are not in particular leadership positions? Would a stay-at-home mom, a secondary school student, or a nurse working in a hospital find *Adaptive Courage* helpful in overcoming their particular fears? They may not be experiencing leadership fears, however, there may be other fears that they struggle

with and it would be interesting to see how effective *Adaptive Courage* would be to them.

- C. *Another Researcher:* Up to this point, only I have taught and mentored the *Adaptive Courage* model. As I created and designed this model, it would not be surprising if I injected levels of understanding and enthusiasm into the mentoring interview sessions that might or might not be characteristic or replicable by other facilitators. If another researcher or facilitator were to teach and present the content, how would participants receive, implement, and value *Adaptive Courage*? Would participants' results and scores be any different?
- D. *Larger Sample:* As this project was conducted on only ten subjects, it would be beneficial to have a larger sample size to confirm or refute the *Adaptive Courage* findings.

Final Thoughts

It brings me great delight to see other leaders flourish. My desire as a researcher is to help others grow in their leadership, and I am thankful for the progress *Adaptive Courage* has made in the lives of these leaders to support them in their development. I have the utmost respect for how these leaders each boldly embraced their calling of leadership. They diligently fulfill their leadership responsibilities with excellence. I feel honored that these leaders would entrust me with their emotionally raw and vulnerable fear experiences. I count it a privilege to have had the opportunity to listen and learn from such a dynamic group of leaders.

This action research project not only benefited other leaders, it was also a relevant, personal, development opportunity for me. McNiff's insightful comments related to action research resonates greatly with me:

The idea of self reflection is central. In traditional forms of research—empirical research—researchers do research on other people. In action

research, researchers do research on themselves. Empirical researchers enquire into other people's lives. Action researchers enquire into their own. Action research is an enquiry conducted by the self into the self...A useful way to think about action research is that it is a strategy to help you live in a way that you feel is a good way. It helps you live out the things you believe in... (McNiff 2002, 6)

As mentioned in Conclusion One, leadership fears are different yet common to all the participants. I am no exception. I struggled with some of the very same fears as those leaders I interviewed. Hence, the design and development of *Adaptive Courage* emerges from a personally applicable situation to help manage leadership fears within myself.

When feelings of fear hinder me, it helps me immensely to guard my thoughts intentionally with positivity by focusing on the Ensnared Opportunity for the cause I am leading. The Bible says to “Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise” (Philippians 4:8). It is essential for me in the midst of fear to have a sense of reassuring Humble Confidence that I will eventually overcome the fear and that it will not defeat me. Scripture reminds me of this in that “I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need” (Philippians 4:13). Additionally, being able to share my fears with key people in my life through the process of Selective Vulnerability helps bring renewed perspective to what I am experiencing. I am thankful for my spouse and for the numerous fears I've been able to express to her over the years. Jesus himself shared his burdens with an inner circle of individuals while in the Garden of Gethsemane when “he took Peter and Zebedee's two sons,

James and John and began to be filled with anguish and deep distress. He told them, ‘My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and watch with me’ ” (Matthew 26:37-38). After those agonizing and tormenting times, Jesus resolved to take the necessary steps of obedience. He prayed that “if this cup cannot be taken away until I drink it, your will be done” (Matthew 26:42). Jesus exhibited such determination to complete his mission. I can follow His example of Incremental Tenacity that is unwavering in the face of fear. Finally, I always need to maintain a spiritual perspective and to be mindful of living with an outlook of Simple Transcendence. Even the great historical leader, King David, struggled with fear at times. His prayerful words are a reminder to me of the key source in overcoming leadership fears: “I prayed to the Lord, and he answered me, freeing me from all my fears” (Psalm 34:4). No matter how big the leadership fear may seem, God is bigger. He is the one that will ultimately provide the strength and courage to deliver me through all my fears.

I trust that *Adaptive Courage* will continue to become an even more detailed and verified model along with a more effective strategy in the years to come, and by doing so, will extend the development of an even broader demographic of leaders, including myself.

APPENDIX 1

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Please read this consent form carefully before you decide whether you want to participate in this study. Feel free to ask as many questions as you like before, during or after your participation in this research.

1. PURPOSE OF RESEARCH STUDY

The purpose of this research study is to support individuals in developing as courageous leaders by addressing fears associated with leadership. This study will provide a model called *Adaptive Courage* to guide the process of managing leadership fears. You are being asked to participate in this study to apply the principles of *Adaptive Courage* to your situation and to assess the tool's effectiveness. This study will also determine the extent to which a person's value of spirituality plays a role in managing his or her leadership fears. Your investment of time in this study will also help future leaders that may be struggling with similar issues.

2. RESEARCHER IDENTITY

My name is Wilson Leung and I am the researcher in this study. I am enrolled in the Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) Program in Leadership at Tyndale University College and Seminary. *Please be aware that I am not a trained counsellor, coach or psychologist. However, I am trained in ministry and interested in offering leadership development as a mentor. As such, this study will provide short-term leadership mentoring exclusively.*

3. VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

You are free to choose whether or not to participate in this study. You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty even after providing consent. Additionally, by participating in this research study, you do not waive any legal rights. There is no financial compensation for your participation in this research.

4. PROCEDURES

If you choose to participate, please be aware that there will be two separate one-on-one sessions. In the first session (today), you will be asked to answer questions involving basic demographics and personal spirituality in addition to describing any current leadership fears. The first session will also include teaching of *Adaptive Courage* to help equip you with tools to manage any leadership fears. You will then be given a 1-3 week timeframe to apply and practice these methods on your own. Following this application period, the second session will take place. That meeting will ask you to report on your recent experience and the extent to which *Adaptive Courage* was effective in managing any leadership fears. Both sessions should take approximately 1 hour each. You may also receive a brief phone call (no longer than 10 minutes) within 3-6 months to follow up on your progress. You have the right to decline answering any question(s) should you feel uncomfortable to do so. The interview sessions may be audio recorded and would be used for the purposes of ensuring complete and accurate note-taking. Audio recording is optional and if you do not wish your session to be recorded, please let the researcher know.

5. POSSIBLE RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS

Possible risks to you as the participant are minimal. Participating in this study may bring to mind thoughts and feelings about your personal leadership fears not previously considered. However, this risk is no greater than if you were to think about your leadership fears on your own initiative. Sometimes there can be a stigma or sense of shame associated with leadership fears, especially since there may be unrealistic expectations placed on you as a leader to have a fearless attitude. However, such fears are common to humanity and you should not feel any embarrassment in experiencing them. You may find that you have more awareness of stresses in your life after these sessions. Many people find that coaching or spiritual direction can be helpful.

6. POSSIBLE BENEFITS

There are potential benefits to you as the participant. As a result of the study, there may be an increased awareness that you are not alone in experiencing leadership fears. A significant aspect of this research project is also to provide you with practical principles to help navigate through your leadership fear experiences. Building relevant skills in this area has the potential to increase your effectiveness as a leader in your context.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

Your privacy and confidentiality will be safeguarded. Steps will be taken to ensure that your interview answers and responses are not associated with your

personal identification. Where appropriate, safeguards will include digital data encryption, password protection, or locked, limited access to identifiable information. These records will be kept private in so far as permitted by law.

8. PROPOSED USE OF DATA

Sharing of participant research data will be done in summary form to further protect your confidentiality. Specific names of religious institutions or organizations will not be mentioned to prevent any unintentional associations. Participants will be able to access a summary of the survey data either on-line, or through correspondence letter or email from the researcher. The results of the study will be used for the Doctor of Ministry Program and may be published for academic research purposes. Additionally, the results may be published for ongoing organizational or leadership development purposes. Any publication of the results will not give your name or include any identifiable references to you. After the study, data will be stored in a manner accessible only to the researcher.

9. AVAILABLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

This project has been approved by: Doctor of Ministry Research Ethics Board
Tyndale University College and Seminary
25 Ballyconnor Court, Toronto, ON.
M2M 4B3

Please contact the researcher with any questions about this study. If you have any concerns, contact Mark Chapman, Associate Professor of Research Methods at Tyndale University College and Seminary.

Researcher: Wilson Leung Phone: (416) 450-4700
Coordinator: Mark Chapman Phone: (416) 226-6620 x2208

10. AUTHORIZATION

I have read the information on this consent form. I understand the purpose, procedures and proposed use of data for this study. I am aware of the possible risks and benefits of participating in this research. I voluntarily choose to participate in this research study and know that I can withdraw my participation at any time without penalty.

Participant Name: _____
(PLEASE PRINT)

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 2

FIRST SESSION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

“What is a leadership fear?”

What are the top two leadership fears you identify with?

1a. LEADERSHIP FEAR TOP 2

Fear of INEFFECTIVENESS For example: feeling unable to produce good results	
Fear of INCOMPETENCE For example: feeling unqualified or lack of skill	
Fear of INSIGNIFICANCE For example: feeling unimportant	
Fear of INTIMIDATION For example: feeling that others are threatening to harm me	
Fear of INEXPERIENCE For example: feeling that I am not seasoned enough as a leader	
Fear of UNPOPULARITY For example: feeling that others will not like me for the decisions I make	
Fear of UNCERTAINTY For example: feeling unsure of the future	
Fear of LONELINESS For example: feeling alone under the weight of responsibilities	
Fear of FAILURE For example: feeling defeated	
Fear of CONFLICT For example: feeling worried of consequences due to interpersonal tension	
Fear of _____ (if not listed above)	

1b. This is an intensity scale. For the 1ST fear of _____, how would you rate the intensity of this fear?

Slight	Mild	Significant	Extreme
1	2	3	4

What are the circumstances that lead you to this fear?

1c. For the 2nd fear of _____, how would you rate the intensity of this fear?

Slight	Mild	Significant	Extreme
1	2	3	4

What are the circumstances that lead you to this fear?

1d. What approaches have you used to deal with these fears?

1e. To what degree have these approaches helped you?

Using the following scale, please rate the following statements in terms of its ability to help manage your leadership fears.

2a. *Spirituality (e.g. a sense of transcendence in everyday life) is a priority in my life that helps put my leadership fears in perspective.*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
1	2	3	4	

2b. *I rely on prayers (devout petition to God) to help calm me during the leadership fears I experience.*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
1	2	3	4	

2c. *I rely on meditation (reflection/contemplation) to help calm me in preparation for leadership fears I experience.*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
1	2	3	4	

2d. *I rely on spiritual readings to help calm me in preparation for leadership fears I experience.*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
1	2	3	4	

3a. Can you tell me which of these age ranges you fall into:

18-34 35-49 50-64 65 & over

3b. Please indicate which of these religious affiliations, if any, you self-identify with?

<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhism	<input type="checkbox"/> Judaism
<input type="checkbox"/> Christianity	<input type="checkbox"/> Sikhism
<input type="checkbox"/> Hinduism	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Islam	<input type="checkbox"/> I am not devoted to any religious affiliation

3c. What's the job title of your current leadership role? _____

How many years have you been in that role? _____

3d. What is your field of occupation?

Business, finance and administrative
 Natural and applied sciences
 Health
 Social science, education, government service and religion
 Art, culture, recreation and sport
 Sales and service
 Trades, transport, and equipment operators
 Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities

3e. How long have you been in leadership over your entire career?

1-14 years 15-29 years 30+ years

APPENDIX 3

SECOND SESSION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What was your experience using *Adaptive Courage*?

2a. Please list or describe in your own words the 5 parts of *Adaptive Courage*.

2b. Please give me an example(s) of when you applied *Adaptive Courage* and describe how it was or was not helpful.

3a. Was the “Ensnared Opportunity” component of *Adaptive Courage* helpful in changing the way you rationally think about your leadership fear(s)?

Yes No Not Sure

Explain.

3b. Was the “Humble Confidence” component of *Adaptive Courage* helpful in reassuring that you will prevail through your leadership fear(s)?

Yes No Not Sure

Explain.

3c. Was the “Selective Vulnerability” component of *Adaptive Courage* helpful in encouraging you to share your leadership fear(s) with a safe person?

Yes No Not Sure

Explain.

3d. Was the “Incremental Tenacity” component of *Adaptive Courage* helpful in taking the next action step to overcome your leadership fear(s)?

Yes No Not Sure

Explain.

3e. Was the “Simple Transcendence” component of *Adaptive Courage* helpful in experiencing a greater sense of calm and perspective through spiritual practices(s)?

Yes No Not Sure

Explain.

4a. From your response in the first session, you identified the fear of _____ as one of your top 2 leadership fears and you rated the intensity of this fear to be _____.

After applying *Adaptive Courage* to address this fear, how would you rate the intensity now?

Slight	Mild	Significant	Extreme
1	2	3	4

Please describe a specific instance that you experienced a decrease/increase of this particular fear using *Adaptive Courage*.

4b. You also identified the fear of _____ as your other top leadership fear and you rated the intensity of this fear to be _____.

After applying *Adaptive Courage* to address this fear, how would you rate the intensity now?

Slight	Mild	Significant	Extreme
1	2	3	4

Please describe a specific instance that you experienced a decrease/increase of this particular fear using *Adaptive Courage*.

5. Are there aspects of *Adaptive Courage* that might be improved to better help overcome leadership fears?

Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Now I'm going to read to you a series of personal statements regarding your experience of *Adaptive Courage*. Please rate the following statements:

6a. *I will continue to use Adaptive Courage to help me overcome future leadership fears.*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
1	2	3	4	

Explain.

6b. *As I worked through Adaptive Courage, I found it helpful to pray.*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
1	2	3	4	

Explain.

6c. *As I worked through Adaptive Courage, I found it helpful to meditate.*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
1	2	3	4	

Explain.

6d. *As I worked through Adaptive Courage, I found it helpful to reflect on spiritual readings.*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
1	2	3	4	

Explain.

6e. *What is the likelihood that you would recommend Adaptive Courage to other leaders as a useful tool in managing their leadership fears?*

Explain.

APPENDIX 4

SIX MONTH FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW QUESTION

Please give me an example(s) of when you applied *Adaptive Courage* the last few months and describe how it was or was not helpful.

APPENDIX 5

ADAPTIVE COURAGE WORKBOOK

Adaptive Courage

A System to Support the Development
of Courageous Leaders



Researcher: Wilson Leung

introduction

THANK YOU FOR participating in this research project. The purpose of this study is to support individuals in developing as courageous leaders by addressing fears associated with leadership.

Leadership fears negatively affect the way an individual thinks and feels. As a result, this adversely impacts their leadership actions. This project will provide a system called Adaptive Courage to guide the process of managing leadership fears in an effort to help individuals effectively lead themselves and their organizations forward.

This system is adaptive because it is unique to you and the leadership fears you are experiencing. In some situations you may need to apply all the various components of the system to navigate through your fear.

Other times, you may need to adjust the system to focus more on specific components to effectively overcome your fear. Depending on the intensity and duration of your leadership fear, it may necessitate a flexible, on-going application of the system, with each iteration needing to be modified to align with your moment-to-moment situation.

Please take the time to learn and integrate Adaptive Courage to your leadership context. The following pages are designed to help you review the system and reflect on how it might be applied to help you navigate through your leadership fear experiences.

I wish you continued success in your leadership endeavours.

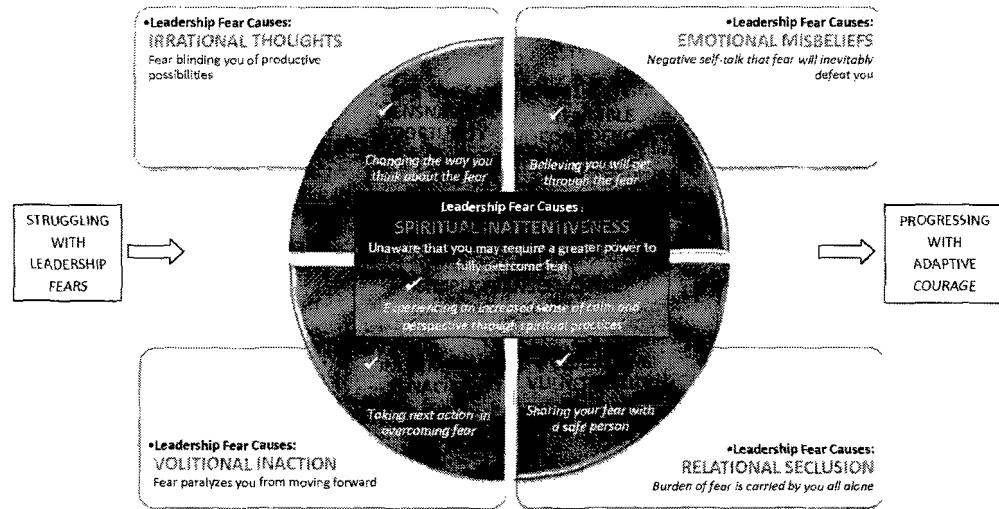
Warmest Regards,

Wilson Leung
Researcher, D.Min.(candidate)
416-450-4700

ADAPTIVE COURAGE | 3

system

Figure: SYSTEM OF ADAPTIVE COURAGE



components

Table: COMPONENTS OF ADAPTIVE COURAGE

Leadership Fear Canaries	Adaptive Courage Involves	Adaptive Courage Requires	Description
Irrational Thoughts	Ensnared Opportunity	REFRAMING	Reframe the fear more positively and productively
Emotional Misbeliefs	Humble Confidence	REASSURING	Reassure oneself of getting through the fear
Relational Seclusion	Selective Vulnerability	RELATING	Relate the fear to a safe person
Volitional Inaction	Incremental Tenacity	RESPONDING	Respond to the fear by taking the next action step
Spiritual Inattentiveness	Simple Transcendence	RECEIVING	Receive calmness and perspective in the midst of fear

ensnared opportunity

FEAR OFTEN HAS a way of blinding leaders to the complete picture with irrational thoughts. Leaders that let their fear overtake them may be deprived of an amazing opportunity to advance the vision of their organization. Leaders must realize that when fear is present, there is usually also a unique prospect associated with it.

The problem is that fear has a way of ensnaring that opportunity. Leaders need to adjust the focus from the dreaded fear they are experiencing and to free the trapped possibility that is waiting to be explored.

As leaders change the way they think about their fear, they are essentially reframing the challenge in a more positive and productive manner.

1. What great leadership opportunities has this fear ensnared?

2. How can you think about this leadership fear more positively?

3. What can you learn about yourself from any irrational thoughts that you have experienced due to this leadership fear?

humble confidence

AN OVERWHELMING ASPECT leaders can face when addressing their fear is struggling to know whether they will be able to conquer it. It is difficult to manage fear if leaders are riddled with emotional misbeliefs that obstruct any sense of inner certainty that they will eventually triumph over it. If leaders believe they will be defeated by their fear, this will ultimately become their reality.

Leaders must embrace the conviction that no matter how fearful they may feel due to their troubling circumstance, that they will surmount their challenges in the end. This is not a boastful, arrogant attitude but rather a quiet, humble confidence that they will persevere through it. Leaders need to have a heightened awareness of any negative self-talk regarding their fear while positively visualizing and reassuring themselves that they will prevail.

1. What emotional misbeliefs and negative self-talk is contributing to your leadership fear?

2. How can you reassure yourself that you will prevail through this fear?

3. How can you positively visualize the overcoming of this leadership fear?

selective vulnerability

SOMETIMES THERE CAN be a stigma or sense of shame associated with leadership fears, especially since there may be unrealistic expectations placed on leaders to have a fearless attitude.

However, such fears are common to humanity and leaders should not feel any embarrassment in experiencing them. Yet, many leaders still relationally seclude themselves regarding their fears and carry this burden in silence.

Leaders need not feel that they have to bear the weight of sorting out their leadership fears all alone. Leaders need to be astute as to an inner circle of companions that they can be selectively vulnerable to divulge their innermost fears without feeling like they are being judged or criticized. By relating their fears to a safe person(s), leaders can gain valuable input as to an accurate outlook of their situation in a caring and protected environment.

1. What leadership fears do you feel you are relationally secluding and carrying all alone?

2. Who is a safe person(s) you can share these fears with without feeling judged, criticized or misunderstood?

3. How can you approach this safe person(s) in the near future to express these leadership fears?

incremental tenacity

FINDING THE COURAGE TO wade through a leadership fear can often feel so insurmountable that it paralyzes leaders to inaction. Yet, the reality is that leaders do not necessarily need to find the courage to triumph all the stages of their fear at once. They only need enough courage, enough incremental tenacity to battle through that very next action step.

Without actually doing something, the fear has still prevented the leader from tangibly moving forward. This aspect is critical for leaders to understand. It is not until they respond in action that their fear is defeated. They need to figure out what productively overcoming their fears might look like, identify the next concrete step, and then commit to completing it.

1. What would the outcome of successfully conquering your leadership fear look like?

2. What is the very next action step you can take to reach this outcome?

3. When will you commit to completing that step?

simple transcendence

LEADERS MAY WELL discover that at some point, their human efforts and abilities of conquering fears can only take them so far. Beyond that, they may likely require a greater power that is outside of their control.

Leaders might possibly need a supernatural intervention to help overcome their naturally human leadership fears. Leaders could notice that all of their hard work in managing their fears still leaves a gap that can only be completely bridged through a sense of transcendence for even the simple concerns of everyday life.

Leaders who are attentive to spiritual practices such as prayer, meditation or spiritual readings will likely receive a greater sense of calm and perspective in the midst of their fears.

1. How can you be more attentive to spirituality as you face your leadership fears?

2. Is there a prayer or meditation that will provide a greater sense of calm during the leadership fears you experience? If so, please describe.

3. Is there a spiritual reading that will provide a greater perspective during the leadership fears you experience? If so, please describe.

inspirational thoughts

On courage...

"Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees all others."

- WINSTON CHURCHILL

"Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear - not absence of fear."

- MARK TWAIN

"I command you - be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged.
For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

- ANCIENT LEADER JOSHUA

Courage "is the mental and moral strength to venture, persevere,
and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty."

- GUS LEE

"Courage is the willingness to move in a direction in spite of
the emotions and thoughts that bid you to do otherwise."

- ANDY STANLEY

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power,
love and self-discipline."

- APOSTLE PAUL

"Courage is the foundation of leadership. All other leadership
values are brittle unless reinforced with the steel of courage."

- PETER KOESTENBAUM

"The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid,
but he who conquers that fear."

- NELSON MANDELA

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY:

Doctor of Ministry Research Ethics Board
Tyndale University College and Seminary
25 Ballyconnor Court
Toronto, ON. M2M 4B3

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APPENDIX 6

ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK FOR *ADAPTIVE COURAGE*

The following is a comprehensive collection of feedback from participants on their experience using *Adaptive Courage*.

- “Well thought out. I like that. There's great merit in it...in terms of the value of this in a leadership dynamic it could readily be implemented as a quick assessment tool...Really good piece.”
- “In terms of relative to where I am right now, it's all there. It's something I can very much adapt to...I definitely get the concept of it. I think something like this really hits home because there isn't one thing I couldn't relate to.”
- “This is great actually. It's a wonderful way to put things in - You sort of have your fears but you don't do anything about them because you have so many other things to do. At least this gives you a start to understand how to do something like that. You've done a wonderful job. Really well laid out.”
- “It's pretty straight-forward. It's logical. It seems like a good game plan. It's a very systematic approach to dealing with a fear or situation. It's pretty adaptable as everyone's different to deal with, every problem is different. Looks good.”
- “Very good explanation. What I like is that it focuses on our own inner world - How I overcome this, on what is limiting me, on what is really holding me back. Good that it draws on inner reserves. Good attempt.”
- “Love the alliteration there with the R's (Reframing, Reassuring, Relating, Responding, and Receiving). Very nicely done.”
- “Very good work. I think there is a good analysis you have done. I think there is little research in this area.”

- “Everything makes sense to me, everything is good...I feel that certain things I was doing, but maybe it was an unorganized way and I feel this is more organized way to work on those fears. The conversation with you helped me clear a little dust.”
- “I see where you are going with the model. I see the logical side of it...I think this packages it into a nice form for you...The fact that it feels more natural probably makes it easier to adapt...”
- “It really is a good tool...So I 'm doing a much better job at remaining calm which is part of this (*Adaptive Courage*). Over the last two weeks I've had a better sense of calm...”
- “For me, the way you've laid it out, the questions that you've asked me, for me it's really good. I've repeated this many times, it's very logical, it's step-by-step approach to getting over something that's not discussed much...It's a taboo thing to tell people you have a fear, you feel people are going to judge you, they're going to belittle you, they're going to make fun of you...You can't get past it...If you go through this process, there'll be a lot more times that you'll be able to get past it than not.”
- “This was useful. Gave me a different perspective. Things I don't think about consciously were brought to the forefront. Gave me a new dimension to think about and helps me focus on those things.”
- “It's good. For sure it is good. I've been reading a lot but I haven't found anyone who can put everything together in one place for you...But this is something that summarizes everything together...It's really good.”
- “The reality is changing and that's why this is helpful...the market right now is different but some companies are doing better because they look at the change and the need to adapt. So this *Adaptive Courage* is the right term. They need to adapt to the new change. The change that is taking place in the world is too fast and we are not catching up. Need to adapt to the new reality - that's what leadership is.”
- “I love the simplicity of it...It's a pretty adaptable model to work with. I think that's why I like it. So much of the technical stuff you read it becomes too complex and you get lost in the jargon and you go, ‘Yeah, I probably won't use it again’ but the very fact that I can repeat something...that speaks well to a model that I think can be translated into most people's realities.”

- “This helps me every single day because there probably isn't one of these that doesn't impact me every single day. And it's definitely helped me.”
- “What I really liked were the questions. To be honest, I like it. The more I use it, I see the bigger picture. If I keep using it, it'll sort of be innate. I actually think it's really great.”
- “I think it's structured in a very logical way. For me it works. It's good.”

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