

# Mandela's Way

Fifteen lessons on Life, Love and Courage

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**Richard Stengel is the Editor of Time magazine. He collaborated with Mandela on the 1993 Mandela autobiography and was co producer of the oscar nominated documentary on Mandela.**

**In Africa there is a concept known as ubuntu, a profound sense that we are human only through the humanity of others.**

**We long for heroes, but have too few. Nelson Mandela is perhaps the last pure hero on the planet. He hates to be late and regards lack of punctuality as a character flaw.**

**He wants to be liked, he likes to be admired, he wants you to come away from a meeting energized. This requires tremendous energy on his part, he gives more of himself to almost everyone he meets.**

**He will always stand up for what he believes is right, with a stubbornness and I have often heard him say “ this isn’t right”**

**Nelson Mandela has many teachers in life, the greatest of them all was prison. Prison molded the man we know and see today. Prison taught him self control, discipline and focus, the things he considers essential to leadership and it taught him how to be a full human being.**

**1. Courage is not the absence of  
fear**

**I can pretend I am brave.  
Fearlessness is stupidity. Courage  
is not letting the fear defeat you.**

## 2. Be Measured

**In the midst of turbulent situations, Mandela is calm and looks for calmness in others.**

**Control is the measure of a leader. People don't like to see a rattled leader, they want to feel that you are considering all the factors and your response as a leader will be measured.**

**Sometimes calm can be dull. Mandela would prefer being calm and dull than being exciting and excitable.**

**Even though Mandela was a stickler for punctuality, he would interrupt what he was doing for impromptu greetings or meetings.**

**3. Lead from the front.**

**‘It is important for a leader to take on independent action without consulting others and to present what he has done to the organization. The only question that the leader needs to answer is whether he has done what’s right for the organization.’**

## **4. Lead from the back**

**Mandela genuinely believes in the virtues of a team and to get the best from the team, they needed to partake in the glory of the achievements.**

**Leadership is about moving people in a certain direction by changing their thinking and actions.**

**When Mandela was president, he got everyone to air their views in every meeting, he spoke last, he spoke the least , but he listened a lot.**

## **5. Look the part**

**‘I never choose between stars or teams’ he said. It’s a tactless thing for a leader to do. I avoid putting any star above others since you forfeit the support of others immediately. In prison I would say, I support all of them, I support the best of them.’**

**6. Have a core principle-  
everything else is tactics.**

**Nelson Mandela is a man of one principle- exactly one – Equal rights for all, regardless of race, class or gender. Pretty much everything else is a tactic.**

**For Mandela, a transformational leader does not talk about polls or votes or tactics- he talks about the principles and ideas.**

## **7. See the good in others**

**Some call it a blind spot. Mandela sees almost everyone as virtuous until proven otherwise. He STARTS WITH AN ASSUMPTION THAT YOU ARE DEALING WITH HIM IN GOOD FAITH.**

**To Mandela , it pays to trust people, but even he admits that he has trusted people who have betrayed him.**

## **8. Know your enemy**

**Mandela understood that there were profound similarities between the African and the Afrikaner. Both suffered from a sense of insecurity. Both had been oppressed by the British.**

**Afrikaners are blunt and they respect bluntness in others. Mandela was both blunt and courteous.**

**Mandela used sport to unite a nation around a common vision. There were time , claimed his critics, that he seemed to spend more time easing white fears than relieving black hardship.**

**In a famous gesture of reconciliation, Mandela wore the spingbok jersey and cap to the world cup final where south africa was playing.**

**“in that moment ‘ wrote a critic, “ I understood clearly that the liberation was not about liberating blacks from bondage but liberating white people from fear.”**

## **9. Keep your rivals close**

**Mandela never made a great deal about loyalty. He expected it and was disappointed when it was not given. He wanted his rivals to think that it was in their interest to be loyal.**

**To Mandela, there was active disloyalty, and then there was unpredictability. The two are not the same but overlap. The emotional man is far more prone to be disloyal, to make an error in judgment. There was no way to repair insecurity, one had to take precautions.**

**10. Know when to say NO.**

**Mandela was not a man of maybes. He may be silent. He will delay a decision sometimes, In the end he will not tell you what u want to hear, just because you want to hear it.**

**11. It's a long game.**

## **12.Love makes the difference**

**13. Quitting is leading too**

**14.It's always both**

**15. Find your own garden**

**Mandela inspires a sense of trust.  
We trust a leader who is honest,  
able, and has a vision of where to  
go. We trust the leader who is the  
same in public and private.**