PNW Collegiate Leadership Conference 2017: Generation Activism

RHEA GONZAGA: Welcome to the Pacific Northwest Collegiate Leadership Conference. As you know, schedules are online. If you need it on paper, too, we have them. And all these people in these red leadership shirts-- leadership shirts-- are going to be helping out throughout the day. So if you have any questions or accommodations, let them know, and they'll let me know. So as we're starting off, we're going to get started with the keynote. And so I'm here to introduce Rudy Francisco.

RUDY FRANCISCO: Pullman, Washington, how are we doing? I said, Pullman, Washington, how are we doing?

So my name is Rudy Francisco. I'm a poet from San Diego, California. I almost forgot where I was from. I'm a poet from San Diego, California. Do we have anybody from San Diego in the building today? Oh! OK. OK. That's fantastic. That's fantastic. So what I'm going to do today, I'm going to do a few poems. We're going to talk a little bit about some of the experiences that I've had with leadership, and how that has helped me become the writer that I am today.

I want to do like a little warm-up poem real quick. Can I warm up? Is that fine? Can I do that? All right. So this is called A Few Things I Strongly Believe. If you believe in these things, you can snap your fingers. You can nod your head. If you don't believe in these things, you can not do anything. So here we go.

A few things I strongly believe. I believe that sour apple flavored anything is delicious. I believe that orange juice tastes better with pulp. You don't like pulp? No? I believe Cinnabon is made by angels. I like Arizona Iced Tea but 24 ounces of anything for a dollar might actually be poison. For real. I believe-- I believe that masculinity is a wet fish that most men are just trying to hold onto. And smiling before a fight is the quickest way to make your opponent nervous. I believe that music is easier to digest than medicine. I believe a good song can turn any room into a church. I believe that Whitney Houston's voice is all the proof I need to know angels exist. That's the end of that poem. You could clap.

So a little bit about me. People always ask how I got started in all of this. And I'll start from the beginning. So I was in-- I was a senior in high school. And in our senior English class, we were starting our poetry segment. And we're given the assignment to write a poem, bring it back, you get full credit. So I wrote this poem about this girl, named Rachelle Moss, that I had a huge crush on. I thought she was absolutely amazing. So I wrote her this poem, and I brought it back the next day.

Me and my friend, Samantha, we get to the class before everybody else does. And we're sitting down, and she's like, hey let me read your poem. So I was like, OK, cool. I give it to her. She
reads it. She tells me that it's good. The rest of the class files in, and we go through the entire lesson. And then right before the class ends, the teacher asks if anybody wants to read their poems out loud before we turn them in. So, of course, Samantha, she nudges me. She's like, hey, you should read your poem. And I was like, no. She said, no you should read your poem. I said, no. We went back and forth for a minute. And then she was like, well what if I read it for you? And I said, OK. You can read it.

So she gets up. And she's like, hey class. This is Rudy's poem. And I was like, that is not what we discussed. You had one job. So she reads the poem, and the class actually claps. And I had a class that hated everything. So the fact that they clapped for this was, actually, a big deal for me. And then, afterwards, my teacher, she pulls me aside, and she tells me that she thinks that I'm a good writer. And nobody had ever told me that before.

I think that some of the things that we forget is-- I think one of the main things that we forget is how important our words are. Like the fact that I had no ambition to be a writer. I had no ambition to even write another poem. But the fact that somebody else told me that it was good, it made me want to continue doing it. And I think that's one of the principles that we have to remember about our leadership, is that our words matter. And how we communicate with the people around us matter. The fact that she told me that it was good, made me want to write more. It made me want to be even better at it.

So I went off to college. And I became a resident advisor. Do we have any RAs in the building? OK. We got like two. That's what's up. Maybe a little more back there. So I became a resident advisor. And I went to my resident director, because as an RA, you have to put on programs. And I had no idea what kind of programs to put on. So I went to my resident director, and I expressed this to him. And he was like, well, what do you enjoy doing? And I said, well, I really enjoy writing. And he's like, well, why don't you host an open mic for the students? So I was like, OK, cool. I could do that.

So I hosted this open mic. And a whole bunch of our students came, because we had a very small campus population. We have, probably, maybe, 1,000 people on our campus. And we had like 300 people there, which was crazy. And a few of my friends from high school, they came, as well. And they, actually, read a few poems. And I didn't know that they wrote. So we had a huge conversation about it, afterwards. And they were like, hey, there's this open mic in North Park, which is our art district. And they said, let's go. And I was like, OK, cool. I'll go, but I don't want to perform. And they were like, yeah, yeah it's fine. Don't even worry about it.

Fast forward. We're at the open mic. And how open mic works is, the host gets up, introduces the next person. That person does a poem. That person sits down. Host gets up and introduces the next person. So in the middle of the show, host gets up and he's like, all right, so next on stage, we have Rudy Francisco. And I was like, that's crazy. There's another Rudy Francisco. What are the odds? And they were like, oh, so we signed you up. And I was like, so this friendship is over. And they said, well, I mean, you still got to do a poem. We're all waiting. So I get up. And I only had one poem at that time. And it was a poem that I wrote one day because--
How many people have ever seen HBO Def Poetry? Like two people? Awesome. So HBO Def Poetry was a series in the early 2000s. And it was the first time you saw spoken word poetry on TV. And I was in my dorm one day, and I randomly stumbled across an episode of it. And I had no idea what it was, initially. And at the end, it was like, the host says, thank you for coming out to HBO Def Poetry. And I like, oh, wow. They were doing poems. And I had never seen poetry like that before. So I was like, I want to write something. So I went home, and I was writing, and this is what I came up with. This is also my first spoken word piece. The poem that I did when my friends signed me up without my permission. And here we go.

I wanna write a poem. But I want it to say what you're thinking. I wanna patch up the holes when your boat starts sinking. I wanna write that "one of a kind" poem, that "free your mind" poem, that "I like how you made that rhyme" poem, that "I like that last line" poem, that "Can I hear that one more time? (That is, if you don't mind.)" poem. I wanna write that "she's kind of fine" poem, that "I wish she was mine" poem, that "I wanna ask her out, but I'm on my last dime" poem, that "what should I do, please give me a sign" poem. I wanna write that, "so heartfelt, I think I know him" poem, that "This is so amazing! I gotta go find all my friends so I can show them" poem. I wanna write about everything that I've ever wanted to be. I want to write a poem so beautiful that my parents might actually start to agree. I wanna write about you, about us, about everything from cars and trains to riding the bus to the trailer and trust the mistakes and heartaches. I wanna talk about when I first learned to drive and I was so scared to let my foot off the brake. I wanna talk about battles, about wars, about victories and losses, about ethnic cleansing, genocide, and laws penetrated by burning crosses that burnt down churches. I wanna write two poems for every one who has ever been told they were worthless. I want my metaphors and similes to part oceans, rivers, and seas. I wanna write love poems so sweet that the ink on the paper attracts honeybees. I wanna speak the unspoken. I wanna face everything in our world that's broken. I wanna be the one that performs the Heimlich maneuver as soon as our society starts choking. I want my words of inspiration to inspire somebody else to be inspirational. I want the motivation in my voice to motivate somebody else to be motivational. I want my phrases to be published, documented, and quoted. I want people to recite my work ten years from now and have critics say "That was cool, but it wasn't nearly as good as he first wrote it." You see, I want what husbands to thank my poems for the heart that they stole. And I know that this, is just some shameless attempt to petrify my soul but honestly - I don't want to be forgotten. You see, I don't need fortune. I really don't need fame. I just want people to know what I stood for and why I came. I refuse to die a mere occupant of the Earth, a John Doe, yet another faceless man out there with no name. I refuse to be just some other man. I wanna walk for centuries, and leave my footprints in the sand for the world to see. I wanna be cremated into ashes of rhymes and poetry. I'm just feeling like one day, they're gonna love me. I don't share my emotions too often. But poetry will allow me to die with my heart on my sleeve. They never saw me coming, but I'll make sure they grieve. When I leave. Thank you.

So thank you. Thank you. So that was my first spoken word performance poem. And after that, I fell in love with being on stage. And I looked for more opportunities to do it. And what's really crazy is that, later on, of course--- and I'll go into further detail--- that later on, it became my
profession. And I often think about how different my life would be if it wasn't for my friends who signed me up without my permission. So I think, sometimes, we tell ourselves things that are counterproductive. For a long time, I was telling myself, OK, I'll get on stage, and I'll perform when I'm ready. And what does that even mean? And I think, sometimes, we use things like that to talk ourselves out of challenging ourselves. And I think it was so amazing that my friends were just like, you know what? He's going to do it. So sign him up. And for a long time, that was the only poem that I had. I would just do that poem all the time. And my friends, they were like, you should probably write another poem. And I dived deeper into the art form. And what's really interesting is that--

So before I was doing this full time, I used to do statistical analysis, which is not like poetry. And I was full-time in a PhD program in Industrial and Organizational Psychology, which is also not like poetry, either. And I fell in love with writing and performance along the way. And I got to the point where I couldn't be traveling two weeks out of the month, and still work full-time, and still be a full-time student. So I decided to take a break from my program. And I decided to leave my job and do poetry full time.

So when I told this to my mother-- so a little bit about my family. So my mother and my father, they're both from Belize, which is in Central America. And my mother, specifically, is from Barranco, which is a really small village. And in Barranco, either you're a fisherman or you're a fisherman. There aren't a lot of options, is what I'm saying. So the idea of doing art full-time, that wasn't even something that my mother imagined as a possibility. My mother grew up without electricity. You know what I mean? And her village, to this day, still doesn't have electricity. So the idea of doing art full-time is just such a foreign concept to my mother.

So one day, I called her, because I felt like I had to tell her. So I called her. And I said, hey Ma. So I'm going to take a break from school. Hold on. And I'm going to leave my job. Hold on. And I'm going to do-- I'm going to do poetry full-time. And she was-- the phone went dead silent. I thought she either hung up or had a heart attack. I didn't know which happened. And I waited. And she says, well, I don't know you to make a lot of bad decisions. So if this is what you want to do, I trust you. And, initially, I was on the fence. I wasn't sure if I really wanted to do it full-time. But the fact that my mother supported it, that was what gave me that extra push to do it.

So this is what I do full-time, now. And what's really interesting is that, I've come across some very interesting conversations along the way. I remember, I was on a plane. And this guy next to me, we were just having a conversation. And he says-- so he's like, so what do you do for a living? And I was like, oh, I'm a full-time poet. He was like, oh, wow. And I said, what do you do for a living? And he's like, oh, so I organize food so that it looks good in pictures. And I was like, excuse me. He's like, yeah, that's what I do. And I was like, wait, so you don't take the picture? He was like, oh, no. I don't take the picture. And I was like, so you don't cook the food? He's like, oh, no. I'm not a chef. And I was like, so you just organize it? He was like, yeah, man. I love it. It's my passion. And I was like, oh, right. He had a business card and everything. I forget what his actual title was, but I was like, you know what?
What's really fascinating to me is that, even to this day, I think, at times, we still see that there--we have this perception that there are only a few professions available, like doctor, lawyer, and what have you. And I think what's really amazing is that if you're passionate about something, if you love something, there is a way to make a living doing it. And I know a lot of you are in the process of figuring out what you're going to do for the, potentially, for the rest of your life as a career. And I know, sometimes, we're very tempted by the idea of, oh, let me figure out something that's going to make me the most money. But what's really fascinating is that there are so many professions out there. And there are so many people who have so many different interesting passions, that they figured out a way to make a living off of those passions. So if there's something that you're really, really passionate about, something that you love, I challenge you to figure out a way to do that as your profession.

There is nothing like waking up in the morning and saying, you know what? I get to go to work today. Instead of, wow, I have to go to work today. Those are two very different statements. And since I decided to do this full-time, I wake up, and I'm just so excited. Even on days where I only sleep a couple of hours. Sometimes, I'm on 5:00 AM flights, and-- Or I have to drive far distances to get to where my performances are. But throughout the whole time, I'm just like, wow, I get to do this. And there's nothing, there's absolutely nothing like that.

Also, as a side note-- I said, the interesting conversations that I have with people-- so I was doing a show in Poughkeepsie, New York. And one of the students, he had asked me, he was like, what were you like in high school? And I was like, I was really shy, really quiet, super awkward. How many of you were awkward in high school? How many? Everybody. That's awesome. I feel like I'm amongst my people. So he had asked me, he was like, so what were you like in high school? And I was like, I was really shy, really quiet, super awkward. And he says, so what did you do to transition out of your awkward teenage phase? And I was like, well, I became an awkward adult. And he said, so there's no hope for me? And I was like, uh, I don't know your situation.

But he had asked me, he was like, what would you say to your younger self if you could? And I think, as leaders, it's very important to be reflective. I think, sometimes, we're in these leadership positions, and we're giving people tasks, and executing tasks, as well. And I feel like, sometimes, we don't really take the time to be reflective. And we need to have a lot of inner dialogue, as well, about the things that we're doing, how effective they are, and what have you.

So I decided to write this poem. And, initially, it was a letter to myself, in the present. And then I was like, you know what? I think it will be really fascinating if I wrote a letter to my younger self. So this is A Letter To My Younger Self. If you're ready for the poem, say let's go.

If you were to find an old calendar, strap it to a hospital bed, tie it down by its week-ends, C-section the belly of 1999. There, you will find a teenage version of me. Back when I was a tsunami of awkward moments splashing against the shoreline called Rachelle Moss. A young lady who introduced my jaw to the floor whenever she floated into our first period classroom. This girl, she was a dandelion seed on a wish, she was a dream I never thought would turn flesh
and green, but wire hangers like me, let's just say, we don't become captain of the football team. The only thing that we're good at is stopping ourselves from saying "I like you" to a girl that holds the remote control to our smiles. We are blurry silhouettes against the backdrop of everything popular, often wearing our skin like a costume of someone we didn't feel comfortable pretending to be anyways. We swallow earthquakes, and then we tremble at the smell of perfume. We are bashful, we are tongue tied, and we are nervous in high definition. So the question is, if a boy falls for a girl that's out of his league, and there's no one around to hear him, does he make a sound? The answer is "hell" and the first two letters of "nothing." When I was a senior in high school, I was a pocket full of chalk dust. I was elevator music on a CD that started like a Volkswagen with a really bad transmission. At this age, I was a ballot box stuffed full of everyone's opinions except for my own. My swagger was like watching a Walkman trying to swallow a DVD. At this age, I walked as if I was concerned with how the ground would feel about my footsteps. And if I could just find a way to write a letter to that boy, that old sweater with itchy sleeves that I will someday grow out of, I would say, I would say there will be days when you feel like a Peacock without feathers. You will feel flightless and undeserving of attention. But listen, you have to stop getting out of bed like you're an oil spill. You're not a flat tire at 2 am so stop acting like an accident. Rudy, you're not an accident. Rudy, you're an apple on a pine tree in a room full of lemons. And you come from a long line of Swiss Army pocketknives. Men who are small, sharp, and dangerous when not handled carefully. Some days I wish that my arms were 12 years long so I could reach all the way back there, grab you by the chest, punch you, and say listen... You are the main character in a movie that I watch every time I see the inside of my eyelids. I told myself that I wouldn't spoil the ending but I will tell you this. Your story starts off really slow But, it does get better. You don't have to believe me. Someday you'll see for yourself. And when you see Rachelle Moss at the senior prom, ignore the washing machine in your stomach. Tell her that she looks beautiful tonight. Extend your arm like a drawbridge to a castle that no one has visited in years. Say to her "Will you dance with me?" She says yes. Thank you.

How are we feeling? You all still good? All right. So next story. So the next poem I'm going to do is called My Honest Poem. And not that my other poems aren't honest. I think what's really important about leadership is also being honest. Not only with the people around you, but being honest with yourself, as well.

And I remember, when I was first really getting into performing. And I was getting into doing competitions. And a good friend of mine, Richard, Richard doesn't like poetry. But he supports me. So one day-- because I had started garnering a pretty large following in our community, in our poetry community. And he tells me-- so we're in a car, or we're driving-- I'm dropping him off. This is after a show. And he says, yo, Rudy. I don't understand any of your poems. And I was like, you've been watching me for four years. He's like, yeah, man. I just clap when it's over, you know, because-- And I was like, OK. And then he was like, you know what? You've become somebody in our community that people follow. That people want to be kind of like. Because this is at a time where I had just really started doing shows. And I was getting a pretty large following. He's like, yo, you're a leader in our community. And I think you're doing our
community a disservice by not being honest in your poems. He was like, the Rudy that I know, I don't really see on stage.

One thing that he told me, he was like, all of your poems are about-- and this is at the time-- all of your poems are about saving people. And they're all very political. And he was like, yeah, that is a part of you, but there's so much of you that never makes it to the stage. I want to see you bring some more of that. And I was like-- and I never really noticed that. He was like, people are watching you. And if you're more honest, it's going to make the people who are up and coming, it's going to challenge them to be more honest, as well. He's like, that's what being a leader is. It's setting the example. And I was like, huh, OK. So I wrote this poem called My Honest Poem.

And another story. I saw this thing called the Individual World Poetry Slam. And it's the biggest individual poetry slam in the world, which is why it's called that. And how you can get in is either you have to win your city slam series, or you can show up the day before the world slam happens. They have this thing called a Last Chance Slam. And if you win the Last Chance Slam, you get an automatic bid into the world slam.

So the first year I competed in it, I took-- out of the 80 poets, I took 17th, which I thought was cool. But I knew that I had a lot to work on. Then the next year, I took third. And I was like, OK, I'm coming up. But I knew that I still had a lot to work on. And I think that's-- also, another principle of leadership is constantly looking at what you have to work on. Not only looking at your successes, but what are some of your challenges. What are some of the opportunities that you have to get better? And one of the opportunities that I saw is that I felt that my writing wasn't as strong as it could be.

And I read this book called The Music Lesson by Victor Wooten. And it had so many principles about performance in there, though, it was about a man who's a bass guitarist. So many of the principles apply to performance. So I read that book. And I was like, OK, I'm going to compete in the world slam, again, this coming year. And what happened was-- so I had missed my city slam series, because I was traveling. So I had to do the Last Chance Slam. So what I was going to do was, I had a few shows in Virginia. And the Last Chance Slam and the world slam was happening in Charlotte that particular year. So I was like, OK. I'm going to do my shows in Virginia, and then I'm going to go to Charlotte. And then I'm going to get in the Last Chance Slam. That was the plan.

So I do my shows in Virginia. I buy my train ticket. My train's supposed to leave at 8:35. I woke up at 8:40. Missed my train. So I'm looking up other train times. There's nothing that's going to get me there in time. I'm looking up flights. I'm looking up buses. There's nothing that's going to get me there in time for the Last Chance Slam. So my friend, Megan, she calls me. She also lives in Virginia. She's like, oh, hey, so you're on your train, right? So I'm like, so this is what happened. I was like, I just woke up. And she starts cussing at me, immediately. To the point, too, where I'm like, yo, like chill. You don't know me like that. She's like, so what are you going to do? And I was like, well, I looked up trains. I looked up pretty much any mode of
transportation that I could possibly take, at this point, and there's nothing that's going to get me there in time. I would have to leave right now. So you know what? I'm just going to get a flight, and I'm going to go home. And I'm going to try again next year. And she's like, absolutely not. I'm coming to get you. We're driving to Charlotte. And I was like, or that. Like that's even better.

So we get to Charlotte just in enough time for me to put my name in the hat. Because how it works is, Last Chance Slam has only 12 slots. And there were 25 people who wanted to sign up. So the probability wasn't looking great. So I put my name in to see if I was, actually, going to get in. And they put all the names in the hat. They pick out the first name, and it's mine. And I'm like, that's fantastic. And then a good friend of mine, his name gets called second. So I'm like, ooh, it's about to be real interesting.

How slam works is that it's five judges. They drop the high, they drop the low, they add the middle scores. So a perfect score is a 30. So first round, he goes up. He gets a 30. And I'm like, it's about to be a long night. I go up. I get a 30. I'm like, OK, so we in the game. Second round, because it's three rounds, total, he gets up. He gets another 30. And he looks at me like, so what are you going to do? I go up. I get a 30. And I'm like, oh, so that's what I did. So we're neck and neck. In the last round, I go up. I get a 30. He goes up and he gets a 29.9. So I consoled him and I celebrated at the same time. And that year, I became the first poet to win the Last Chance Slam, get into the world slam, and then win the world slam. So you can clap it up for that. So this is My Honest Poem. Here we go.

I was born on July 27th. That makes me a Leo. I don't know what that means. I'm 5 foot 6... And a half. I weigh 175 pounds. I don't know how to swim, and I'm a sucker for a girl with a nice smile and clean sneakers. I'm still learning how to whisper. I'm often loud in places where I should be quiet, I'm often quiet in places where I should be loud. I was born feet first and I've been backwards ever since. I like ginger ale... A lot. I've been told that I give really bad hugs. People say that it feels like I'm trying to escape. Sometimes, it's because I am. Secretly, I get really nervous every time someone gets close enough to hear me breathe. I have this odd fascination with things like sand castles and ice sculptures. I assume it's because I usually find myself dedicating time to things that will only last a few moments. It's also why I tend to fall in love with things that won't love me back. I know it sounds crazy but it's actually much easier than it seems, and to honest, I think it's safer that way. You see, relationships, they often remind me that I'm not afraid of heights or falling, but I'm scared of what's gonna happen the moment that my body hits the ground. I'm clumsy. Yesterday, I tripped over my self-esteem, I landed on my pride, and it shattered like an iPhone with a broken face. Now, I can't even tell who's trying to give me a compliment. I've never been in the military but I have this purple heart. I got it from beating myself up over things I can't fix. I know this sounds weird, but sometimes, I wonder what my bed sheets say about me when I'm not around. I wonder what the curtains would do if they found out about all the things I've done behind their backs. I've got a hamper that's overflowing with really, really loud mistakes, and a graveyard in my closet. I'm afraid that if I let you see my skeletons, you'll grind my bones into powder and get high on my fault lines. Hi, my name is Rudy. I enjoy frozen yogurt, people are watching, and laughing for
absolutely no reason at all, but I don't allow myself to cry as often as I need to. I have solar-powered confidence. I have a battery-operated smile. My hobbies include editing my life story, hiding behind metaphors, and trying to convince my shadow that I'm someone worth following. I don't know much but I do know this. I know that heaven is full of music. I know God listens to my heart beat on his iPod. It reminds him that we still got work to do. Thank you.

How are we doing? Are we still good? So this next poem is-- so I have a daughter now. Not like now, she's like a year and a half, but she's still new. And she's teaching me so much about life. And specifically, she's teaching me a lot about what it means to be a man. I think, at times, as young men, we're taught really problematic things. And I think, what's really going on in my life, right now, is that I'm deconstructing a lot of these things. So here's a poem about that.

And the article says that the Mexican government confiscates approximately 30,000 illegal firearms per year. When the guns are taken, they get dismantled, and the metal is used to make other types of weapons that will later be utilized by their military. In 2012, Pedro Reyes, an artist from Mexico City, convinced his government to donate the guns to him. And he turned them into musical instruments. So, somewhere, there's a tambourine, a drum set, a guitar, all made out of things that were used to take people's lives. But now, they create a sound that puts life back into people's bodies. Which is to say a weapon will always be a weapon, but we choose how we fight the war. And, from this, I learned that even the most destructive instruments can still create a melody we're dancing to. And, sometimes, don't we also call that a battle? I wonder how long it took to convince the first rifle that it can hold a note, instead of a bullet, but still fire into a crowd and make everyone move. When I was six, I was taught how to throw a punch. In the '80s, that was the anti-bullying movement. The first time one of my classmates took a yo mama joke a little too far, I remembered my training. So I turned his nose into a fountain. My fist five pennies. I closed my eyes. I made a wish. I came home with bloody knuckles, and it was the first piece of artwork my family hung on the fridge. I remember staring at my hands the same way you stare at a midterm when all your answers are correct. I didn't know what class this was, but I did know I was passing. And isn't that what masculinity has become? A bunch of dudes afraid of their own feelings. Terrified of any emotion other than anger. Constantly yelling at the shadows on the wall. But still haven't realized that we're the ones standing in front of the light. We learn how to dodge a jab. We learn how to step in before we swing. We learn the heart is the same size as the fist, but we keep forgetting they don't have the same functions. We keep telling each other to man up when we don't know what that means. We turn our boys into bayonets. We point them in the wrong direction. We pull their triggers. And then we ignore all the damage they're doing in the distance. The word repurpose, means to take an object and give it amnesia. It means to make something forget what it's been trained to do, so you can use it for a better reason. I am learning that this body is not a shotgun. I am learning that this body is not a pistol. I am learning that a man is not defined by what he can destroy. I'm learning that a person, who only knows how to fight, can only communicate in violence. And that shouldn't be anyone's first language. I'm learning the difference between a garden and a graveyard is only what you choose to put in the ground. You see, once, once, I came across a picture of a strange looking violin. The captain said that it was made out of a rifle. I thought to myself, you know, some day that could be me. Thank you.
How are we doing? We good? All right. So this is my last poem. So throughout the past, oh say, 15 years. I've been a resident advisor. And I was, actually, I was president of my undergraduate student government. And I was in charge of pretty much restructuring the entire undergraduate student government. Because once I got into office, I realized that our charter and our bylaws were super outdated, our election process, everything. So I had to do a complete overhaul.

And I worked really closely with our Dean of Student Affairs. And how I ended up in the PhD program to begin with is, so one, I didn't want to be an adult, yet. Which is not a good way to choose your graduate schools. But I was like, well, I'm already living here for free. I wasn't ready to be an adult. And I was like, you know what? I do enjoy psychology. And my Dean of Student Affairs was like, well, I mean, if you want to stay and help restructure the graduate student government, I'll get you into any program that you want. I'll write you a letter of recommendation. You're pretty much in. So I was like, all right. Let's just do that. And I ended up being president of my graduate student government, overhauling that, as well. And then after I left school, and I left my job, I started running a poetry venue in San Diego. And I've been doing that for the past five years or so.

So one thing that I've learned so much about leadership is that, sometimes, the small things-- I know, sometimes, we have little hiccups every now and then, where things don't get executed the way that we want. Or things kind of don't pan out the way that we'd like it to. And I've learned that we can't let those things get us down. We can't just sit and complain about those things. We have to figure out ways in which we can fix them, especially if they're important to us. And if they're not, then you have to let those go. And I've been thinking a lot about the small things, at times, that I find myself complaining about. And I wrote this poem. Here we go. I wrote it for me, but, also, I suppose it applies to other people, as well. Here we go.

The following are all true stories. May 26, 2003 Aron Ralston was hiking, a boulder fell on his right hand. He waited four days, then he amputated his own arm with a pocket knife. On New Year's Eve, a woman was bungee jumping in Zimbabwe. The cord broke, she then fell into a river and had to swim back to land in crocodile infested waters with a broken collarbone. Claire Champlin was smashed in the face by a five pound watermelon being propelled by a slingshot. Matthew Brobst was hit by a javelin. David Striegl was punched in the mouth. By a kangaroo. The most amazing part of these stories is when asked about the experience they all smiled, shrugged, and said, "I guess things could have been worse." So go ahead. Tell me that you're having a bad day. Tell me about the traffic. Tell me about your boss. Tell me about the job you've been trying to quit for the past four years. Tell me the morning is a townhouse burning to the ground. Tell me the snooze button is a fire extinguisher. Tell me the alarm clock stole the keys to your smile, drove it into 7:00 AM, and the crash totalled your happiness. Tell me. Tell me, how blessed are we to have tragedies so small it can fit on the tips of our tongues? When Evan lost his legs, he was speechless. When my cousin was assaulted, she didn't speak for forty eight hours. When my uncle was murdered, we had to send out a search party to find my father's voice. Most people have no idea that tragedy and silence often have the exact same
address. When your day is a museum of disappointments hanging from events that were outside of your control, when you find yourself flailing in an ocean of "Why is this happening to me?", when it feels like your guardian angel put in his two week notice two months ago and just decided not to tell you, when it feels like God is a babysitter that's always on the phone, when you get punched in the esophagus by a fistfull of life, remember that every year two million people die of dehydration so it doesn't matter if the glass is half full or half empty, there's water in the cup. Drink that shit, and stop complaining. Muscle is created by repeatedly lifting things that have been designed to weigh us down. So when your shoulders feel heavy, you gotta stand up straight, you gotta lift your chin, you gotta call it exercise. Remember that life is a gym membership with a really complicated cancellation policy. Remember that you will survive. Remember, things could be worse. Remember, we are never, ever, ever given anything that we can't handle. When the world crumbles around you, you gotta look at the wreckage and then build a new one out of all the pieces that are still here. Remember that you are still here. The human heart beats approximately four thousand times per hour. Each pulse, each throb, each palpitation is a trophy engraved with the words "You are still alive." You are still alive. Act like it. Thank you. That's my time.

**TAMARA CROOKS:** Encore. Funny you say that. There will be a slight encore. Not me. Hello, my name's Tamara Crooks. Some of you know me. My name's still Tamara Crooks. I'm a leadership coordinator in the leadership center and student involvement. It is my pleasure to welcome you all here. And thanks so much for being here. That was Rudy. Can we have one more round of applause for Rudy. That was awesome. I have a few quick announcements, and then we'll be breaking for Workshop Block 1. Rudy's workshop will be in this room. So if you do want a bit of an encore, Rudy's workshop will be in this room.

**RUDY FRANCISCO:** And I think that's a really beautiful experience. And since we have so many international students, we wanted to do that for our student population. So we would do that once a semester. We also put on-- I forget what the company was called, but they have those huge boxing gloves. And people could get in the ring, and they could box a little bit. Of course, nobody got hurt, because they were super heavy and large. But those are some of my favorite programs that I put on. Yes.

**AUDIENCE:** What's your inspiration?

**RUDY FRANCISCO:** My inspiration. So I have a lot of different inspirations for various reasons. So, of course, my mother. Just because watching her-- because my mother, like I said when I was doing the keynote, my mother grew up without electricity. So it's awesome to see-- She knows how to use a computer. She's super into electronics. And she didn't have any of that for most of her life. So watching her just adapt to things so quickly has always been an inspiration for me. It made me realize that we don't really have a whole lot of limitations if we're willing to take the time to learn. So it's my mother.

My father, super brilliant man. He has a million degrees. One time, I was in the shed, and I was opening boxes, because I was looking for something. And I found a box of my father's degrees.
And he has a degree-- these are just the ones that I remember. He has a bachelor's in Agriculture Psychology, Sociology, Business. He also has an MBA. He has a master's in Human Resource Management. He has a real estate license. He has a certificate in Hypnotherapy. He also has-- my dad also has a JD, because he wanted to practice law for a while, as well. So he just went to school his whole life. And I think that's super inspiration, just because, even when he was old, he still wanted to learn. And that's super inspiring to me, because, like me, I always want to learn new things, because I saw my father always learning new things.

Also, I'm a huge fan of Chance the Rapper. So he's also an inspiration to me. And one of the things that I love about Chance is that, I think, at a time like this, where there's so much going on in our world, there's so many things that are depressing. And I think it's amazing to see somebody make music that makes you feel joyful. And I feel like there isn't a lot of that, especially not in hip hop. Hip hop is a lot about being in the club, throwing money, whatever. But to see Chance just be joyful. Listening to his music just makes me smile. And I think, right now, we need that so much. So Chance.

Who else? I'm a huge fan of Cornel West. I read a lot of Cornel West. But I think those are my biggest inspirations, as far as people that I look up to. Also, as far as writers go, I'm a huge fan of Javon Johnson, who's a brilliant writer. Imani Cezanne, Terisa Siagatonu, those are some of the poets that really come to my mind when I think about the poets who inspire me. So all of those people are my inspirations. Yes.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

RUDY FRANCISCO: Yeah, I think so. I think it's helped me in a lot of ways, because, before, I didn't really speak to people. I was-- like I said, I was super shy, really quiet, really awkward. And I think becoming a writer and becoming a performer has made me a lot more comfortable in front of audiences. And I think, at least, with me, I'm not-- I always get stage fright a little bit. But I figured out how to handle it, just because I've been in front of people so often. So I think it does. I think it allows you to practice in front of people. And, I think, once you-- when you practice anything over and over again, you naturally just get better at it. Yes.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

RUDY FRANCISCO: So it varies. So I try to write at least-- I try to make time to write every day. Now, that doesn't always happen, but I always set aside an hour a day that is designated for writing. Now, if writing happens in that hour, than it does. If it doesn't, then that's fine, as well. But what I noticed, at times, if we don't make the time for things, they just don't happen. So I try to do that. But how my poems usually come about is, I wake up, it's like 4:00 in the morning, and I'm like, oh, I need to write that down. That's how most of my poems start. So I write it down. I'm either typing it in my phone or on my laptop real quick. And then I read it, and I'm like, OK, that sounds good. And then I wake up, and I'm like, what is this? Because, a lot of times, it looked good when I went to sleep, but when I wake up, I'm like, I don't know what I'm saying here. So then I have to go back, and I have to kind of shape it. And how I shape it is I ask
myself questions, as if I’m not the person writing it. Because, I think, sometimes, when we write something, there are parts that only we understand. Which is fine if that’s your goal. But if you want to perform it in front of people, and you want you to get the whole thing, sometimes, you’ve got to provide context in certain places. So that’s that next phase of writing, is to go through it and give context to certain things that, I think, may not be as clear. And then figure out how I want to wrap it up. That’s usually the process. 

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

RUDY FRANCISCO: Yeah, I think the most impactful way I’ve seen diversity come together is recently. I think whenever marginalized groups feel under attack, I think they often bond together. They see that, OK, we have a common threat. And I think, right now, I’ve seen so much of that, where people who are from various groups, who don’t normally even interact with each other, feel that we are at a time in our lives where there’s so much uncertainty. And there’s so many people who don’t feel safe that we’re like, OK, we need to stick together to make sure that we all survive. And I think that’s a beautiful thing that I’ve seen, lately. And I think we can continue to do that by dialoguing across groups, because even though I feel like it's happening more now, I don't think it's happening enough. I think, at times, we still see our own struggles as our own struggles, and not realizing that our struggles are, actually, very interconnected, even more so than we actually give credit. So I think dialoguing across cultures is super important. And across groups, just so that-- because I think, at times, like I said, we feel alone, when, in actuality, we're not. Yes.

AUDIENCE: Does Rachelle Moss know that you still tell stories about her?

RUDY FRANCISCO: Kind of. So this is the story. He asked if Rachelle Moss still knows that I tell stories about her. So crazy story. I ran into Rachelle Moss about eight months ago. So I ran it to her in the mall. And we said, hello, and whatnot. And she's like, oh, so what are you up to now? I was like, oh, I do poetry. And she's like, oh, that's cool. I was like, yeah, I have this poem about you. She's like, what? And I was like, oh, don't even worry about it. It's not-- but she's like, there's a poem about me? I was like, yeah, you know, I had a crush on you in high school. But, you know, it's not a big deal. Let's not make it a thing. Because she's also married, and I didn't want to make it awkward. But, yeah, she does know that there is a poem about her. Yes.

AUDIENCE: Have you ever worked with or met or, if not, would you work with Sarah Kay?

RUDY FRANCISCO: Yeah, I know Sarah. Yeah, so all the poets on YouTube, we all know each other. So, yeah, I've actually done a couple of shows with Sarah Kay. And she's awesome. She's amazing. But, yeah, I'd be open to doing it again. And every now and then, sometimes, like when I get booked at universities, sometimes, they'll book two poets. And, usually, we know each other. So a lot of times, I do end up working with other poets. And, also, there's the national poetry slam which happens every August. And there's usually five people to a team. And we spend the entire summer writing poems together, and performing together. So there is a lot of collaboration that happens. Yes.
AUDIENCE: Do you ever run into writer's block, [INAUDIBLE], or some type of rut that you may be in? Is there any specific techniques that you've used to stay creative?

RUDY FRANCISCO: Yeah, yeah. So writer's block is a natural thing that just happens. And, usually, what I try to do is, I try not to force it. I believe that poems will start and finish themselves when they're ready to be started and finished. So if I come across writer's block, usually, I'll just take a break. I'll go for a walk. I'll read. I'll watch poetry on YouTube, or I'll read poetry. So those are some of the things that I do, and if nothing comes, then I just let it rest until it's ready to be finished. I think, sometimes, we want to rush things. We want things to be done right away. And, unfortunately, that's not really how art works. You know what I mean? So I just try to be patient with the process and let the poem finish and start itself whenever it's ready to do so. All right, here.

AUDIENCE: You share a lot of personal and emotional moments of your life through your poetry. How do you handle that feeling of vulnerability in front of all your audiences?

RUDY FRANCISCO: Yeah, she asked how I handle the feeling of vulnerability in front of audiences. And what's really interesting is that I don't know any of you. So it's, actually, a lot easier, because I could just tell you all my business and then, all right, you all have a good day. And then I'm gone. I think what would be a lot more difficult, if it were people that I knew, people that I saw everyday. I think that's even more challenging than performing in front of strangers. So with strangers, to me, I don't see it as a big deal, because, for the most part, I see people once and then I leave. I think the more challenging part is, actually, performing in front of people that you know that you're going to see again, because then they have follow-up questions. They're like, oh, so you said such and such. So what did you mean by that? And then you have to answer. So I think performing in front of people that you know is, actually, a lot more difficult. Yes.

AUDIENCE: How do you decide on like topics that you want to like write about?

RUDY FRANCISCO: So for the most part, I write about whatever comes to mind. But every now and then, I have friends who are also writers, and they give me writing prompts. So when I can't think of anything to write about, when I feel like I'm out of subjects, I'll have-- I'll just contact one of my friends and be like, hey, I'm kind of stuck. Do you have a writing prompt for me? Something that you would want to see me add to my arsenal of work already? And they'll shoot me a topic. And then, sometimes, I'll just write it. Or you can also look up writing prompts, too. You just put in writing prompts in Google, and a million of them pop up. There was a question over here. Yeah.

AUDIENCE: What kind of [INAUDIBLE]?

RUDY FRANCISCO: You know, I think my biggest goal is to let people know that they can also do this. Because so many people are terrified of speaking in front of people. So many people are terrified of sharing their writing. There are so many people who write who would never even
admit it. And I think my biggest goal is to let people know that there are people who would love to hear your story. And there are people who are going through the exact same thing that you're going through, who also need your narrative. I think one of the reasons why I fell in love with poetry is because I saw somebody do a poem about something that I was also going through. And I felt like I wasn't alone anymore. So a lot of this is my way of kind of just paying it forward. I think my secondary goal, in all of this, is to debunk the idea that you have to be a starving artist. Because a lot of poets, even a lot of poets in our community, don't really believe that they can make a living doing poetry full-time. And that's not true. I have several friends who, this is what they do. And, also, myself. And I think with the impact that we're having on our communities, and going out and letting people know you can do this full-time, and this is how you go about doing it. I think that's also a secondary impact that I would like to have, to the point to where, one day, I want to see and/or hear a kid say, you know what? When I grow up, I want to be a poet. And have nobody snicker about it. That is, of course, it's a long way out. But I think that's one of my goals, as well. Yes.

AUDIENCE: When you were first getting started, how did you build your confidence and know when a poem is good?

RUDY FRANCISCO: You know what [INAUDIBLE]? I still don't know. I'm still working that out. So a lot of it is just trial and error. When I write something, sometimes I think it's good, and then the next day I'm like, this is terrible. So a lot of it's trial and error. I try stuff out in front of an audience. The open mic scene is, actually, a really good place to just try stuff out. So whenever I have something new, I'll go to an open mic and I'll do it. And I'll see how the crowd reacts. I'll see how I feel about it. And then I'll adjust accordingly. So, sometimes, I honestly don't know. So a lot of it is just trial and error, for me, and adjusting along the way.

We'll go-- oh, you already asked one already, right? So I'll come back to you. What about here.

AUDIENCE: How long does it typically take you to memorize [a poem]?

RUDY FRANCISCO: Memorizing, actually, doesn't take very long. Because, I think, we retain a lot more information than we actually realize that we do. I'm pretty sure anybody in here could do 30 songs, right off top. Just because you've heard them so many times. You've sang along so many times. So, with me, I'll go through and I'll edit for weeks at a time. And by the time I'm done editing, it's pretty much already in there. So my last phase is just getting up and performing it over and over again, until I have it solidified. We'll go here.

AUDIENCE: Have you ever done any other types of performing, like theater or [INAUDIBLE]?

RUDY FRANCISCO: I haven't. Just because I feel like I could only be myself. I don't really know how to be anybody else, but I would be interested. But, also, I have stage fright, and I'm also awkward. So I don't know. As of right now, poetry is the only art form that I dabble in. Maybe someday. Go right here.
AUDIENCE: What have you done to perfect your delivery [INAUDIBLE]?

RUDY FRANCISCO: He said, what have I done to perfect my delivery. I don't think it's perfect. I'm still working on it. But I perform in front of the mirror a lot, actually. So I try to look at myself to see what I do while I'm performing. Sometimes, I watch videos of myself, which I hate watching myself. I have to do it just to see what I look like when I'm on stage. And I'm always in constant critique mode. So I think that's what's really helped me throughout the years. And, also, over the summers, we're prepping for nationals or whatnot. So we do a lot of feedback sessions, too. So that has also helped. So I think all of those things have helped me hone my performance. We'll go here.

AUDIENCE: Have you ever gotten into commissions?

RUDY FRANCISCO: Commissions? Yeah, actually, I have. So every now and then, not very often, every now and then, I'll get contacted by an organization. And they'll ask me to write something for one of their events. Or I've been asked to write for commercials. None of them have been picked up, yet. But every now and then, a company will hit me up, and they'll ask if I could write a poem about their product. And I've done that a couple of times, but only with products that I would actually use myself. Nothing that-- it would be difficult for me to write something for something that I didn't believe in. Any other questions? Yes.

AUDIENCE: Have you ever heard of the program Louder Than a Bomb?

RUDY FRANCISCO: Yeah.

AUDIENCE: Would you use like your experience in student leadership to recommend or like advocate for it and like programs such as that? [INAUDIBLE]

RUDY FRANCISCO: Yeah, so Louder Than a Bomb, for those who aren't familiar, is a-- they're a youth organization in Chicago. And they put on-- well, because it's ran by YCA, which is Young Chicago Authors-- and they put on Louder Than a Bomb, which is a tournament. It's a poetry slam. They have several of them. The biggest one in Chicago, they have like 100 teams, I believe. And then they have them in seven or eight other cities, as well. And they also have a curriculum, as well.

So there are also other organizations that also have curriculum. Say Word in LA has a curriculum. Get Lit has curriculum. Sacrificial Poets in North Carolina also has curriculum. So there are quite a few of these organizations around the country, Louder Than a Bomb being the most popular one.

But I do recommend it, because I think a lot of teachers at the high school level are interested in implementing spoken word into their curriculum. But they don't really know how to do it. So I think adopting a spoken word curriculum, like Louder Than a Bomb, definitely helps them make that transition a whole lot easier. So I do recommend it. Louder Than a Bomb or--
because all of them are different. So I think going out and finding out which ones are best suited for what you would like to do.

I believe that there should be some research done, as well. I think some people, they just default to whatever they know. And I think it's important to do research on all the programs and find out which one works best. Any other questions? OK. Going once, going twice. All right.

**SARA WYNNE:** So I am currently a health educator here at WSU, which means that I do a whole bunch of different workshops on topics related to health and that's a holistic view of health. So I do stuff that's on physically staying healthy, flu, stuff like that. I also do sexual assault prevention stuff, suicide prevention, stress management. Today, we're talking about self-care, self-compassion. And so I'm really happy to see this many people here, today. That you're interested in these topics, because it's not something that's talked about a whole ton. But it's really going to help make you a holistically healthier person, body and mind. So let's get into it.

Why does this matter? Why should you care about self-care and self-compassion? Well, every year at WSU-- every two years-- Health & Wellness Services does a survey called the National College Health Assessment. And we get information from thousands of students across the campus on things that are affecting their health. And here's some of the statistics that we found. 83% of our students are feeling overwhelmed with everything that they have to do. So this could be school things they have to do, school obligations, life obligations, trying to make the finances work, whatever. Our students are feeling overwhelmed at some point during the year with the amount of stuff that they have to get done. So if you’re in that boat, too. Your thinking, yeah, I'm volunteering. I'm a leader and, whew, it's a lot. Hey, you’re not alone, right. There's other people out there.

We also know that when people are feeling overwhelmed, some of that has to do with academic difficulties. So 46% of our students said, yeah, I had some trouble in one of my classes last year. I’m having some trouble, whatever, getting those test grades, writing the papers, writing the lab reports. So that's a fair portion of our student population here, as well.

And what happens when people are overwhelmed and they're really struggling with class work? Well, they don't sleep as much. So 90% of students who responded to this survey said that they went to class sleepy at least one day a week. So we're not getting the amount of sleep that we need, because we're trying to cram in all the other stuff I'm trying to do, and my extracurriculars. And that can lead to some physical and mental sicknesses and illnesses. We know that sleep is important to us.

So maybe related to this, we have another 50% of our students who had high or tremendous amounts of stress over the last year. And, even more shocking, 56% of students reported having overwhelming anxiety at some point over the last academic year. So, wow. We have some students who are really struggling here in college. This isn't just at WSU. This is kind of--colleges across America have similar numbers, here, and are struggling with trying to balance everything.
And that's where self-care and self-compassion really comes into it, because I can't make these numbers go away. I can't magically take away your stress. But I can help you deal with it a little bit better and say, you know what? What do I need to take time for in order to mentally prepare myself for moving forward. And so that's what I'm going to talk about today. Not how do you get rid of your stress, but how can you frame it in a way that's going to make you productive. And how can you balance out the things that you need to do to make yourself the best possible student leader that you can be. So that's what we're getting on board with today.

OK, so I have a question for you. What are you stressed about right now? What's stressing you out? I'd love a couple of hands up, here. Yeah. Your responsibilities. Can you be a little more specific? Right, OK. So I've got academics, extracurriculars, job as an RA. All right. What else are you stressed about? Yeah.

AUDIENCE: Cost of college.

SARA WYNNE: Cost of college. I feel that. Yeah. Out-of-state. Hey, I'm international. Do you know where I'm from? Canada. Yeah, it's the same accent. So I feel those tuition fees. What else are you stressed about? Let's get one more. Yeah.

AUDIENCE: Like family and friends.

SARA WYNNE: Sure. Family and friends, relationship stressors, as well. Great. So we've got a variety of answers here. We got some school obligations stuff. We've got some financial stressors. There's some relationship stressors in there. And those are all things you're going to have throughout your life. And they're not going to go away. You're always going to have some stress about your work, or your school, and your friends, and your relationships that you're with, and how you're paying for everything. And so these things can affect each other. And, often, we only think about the stress of that test coming up, or the stress of writing a resume for that specific job. And that's the main focus that you have. We have to think holistically. Yeah, my whole life is kind of battling for my attention, here. And that can all add up together.

I've got another couple questions for you. On a scale of 1 to 10, how stressed are you right now? Just yell out some numbers at me. 10, 4. This scale's 1 to 10. I know this says 11. I got a zero, a three. OK. So we've got a range, here. What was the highest point of your stress? Let's say last semester. This semester is pretty early on. Highest number you got to? 11. What? Your first semester? Well then how stressed are you right now? Or how stressed have you been this semester? 10. Yeah, like can't deal with it anymore. I really like this graphic, especially because of the hands. I can just really feel that stress. Of your, I don't know what to do with my hands anymore, but they're definitely clenched in some like not normal way. I can relate to that.

So now I have another question for you. What number of stress are you capable of dealing with and still getting stuff done? So I can get up to this number, and I'm still OK. I'm trekking through it. I'm getting things done. Where's your number of what you can deal with? 4, 8, 7, 10. I think that we need to recalibrate if we're on a 0 to 10 scale. Maybe we have to recalibrate where our
10s are at. So what I can hear from this room, though, is that we have different levels of stress that we can cope with. And that's normal. That's natural.

And so my whole stress management technique is not getting rid of stress, because it's going to be there. But saying, how can I take the stress that I have and still be productive? How can I take the stress that I have, and say, this is OK. It's good for me. It's motivating me to work harder, and I can deal with it. And then maybe you can move from a three is where I can't cope anymore, and I need some help. To moving to a five. To moving to a seven. And being like, yeah, I can be at a 7 or at a 10 on this stress scale. And I'm taking names and I'm getting stuff done. Because I'm capable of coping with that. And that's kind of the stress management trick.

So we know that stress is not inherently bad for you. This is a thing. It's called the Yerkes-Dodson Curve. And they did stress experiments—Yerkes-Dodson did stress experiments with rats. The same thing has been found in humans. What they found is that we need some stress in our lives in order to be really, optimally good in our performance. In order to be achieving things, having high quality performance, good problem solving skills. If I don't have any stress, I'm bored, I'm tired, I don't want to get out of bed. That's that like summer that I had off from college, and I thought, this is going to be great. And then I just wear pajamas and didn't get out of bed until 2:00. And I hated my life, because I had nothing motivating me to get going.

So we need to have some stress in order to be really, optimally at our peak of performance. I'm good at problem solving. I'm thinking critically. But if I get overstressed, here, I start to be ineffective. My problem solving skills, they get a little worse and making crazy decisions. You'll be like, yeah, it'll work. And everyone knows that's not a great time.

And this is also where you start to get more sick, physically and mentally. You're more tired. You're just not effective. So you have to find where is your peak level of stress. What can you handle. And then try to stay there. And then know how can I balance what's going on in my life, in order to stay somewhere within that spectrum. Of where I'm really good, I can handle what's being thrown at me. And that's going to be different person-to-person. But you can build skills so that you can take on more stress and still be at the optimal level.

So I've been talking a lot about stress management. I want to know, what do you do to deal with your stress? How do you cope with it? Apparently, if you Google stress management, you get a bunch of white ladies just biting on some computers. And I haven't personally tried this technique, but Google Stock Images would tell me that it's a winner. But what are you doing? What are you doing to manage your stress?

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

SARA WYNNE: [INAUDIBLE]. What else?

AUDIENCE: Music.

AUDIENCE: Crying.


AUDIENCE: Work out.

SARA WYNNE: Work out. Great. So we got a whole wide range of activities I'm hearing, there. And we all have some things that we like to go to, that make us feel a little bit better, in the moment. To help cope with that stress.

But I want to think about framing what we're choosing as our stress coping mechanism. And is this way that I'm dealing with my stress, is this actually helpful in the long run. Is this helping me address the underlying issues that I'm having, that are making me stressed? Is this moving me forward in a place that I want to be? Or is it unhelpful? Maybe I feel better in the moment, but this isn't actually moving me toward solving my problem. This isn't helping reduce my overall stress.

So I have some examples, here. Lots of these are what you told me. Lots of them are not. What I want you to do, I'm going to give you just two minutes. Turn to a partner next to you. And if you're just watching in today, on our Global Campus, go ahead, think these through. You can say them aloud if you want. Turn to the person next to you and say helpful, unhelpful. Why? Just going down this list. Talk to each other.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

SARA WYNNE: Hey, thanks for participating. Great. So let's run through a few of these. And you can help me out here. Let's start with exercising. I heard that from a couple people in the audience. Helpful, unhelpful?

AUDIENCE: Helpful.

SARA WYNNE: Helpful, helpful, why? Go ahead.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

SARA WYNNE: OK, you're letting go of the stress. Why else is this helpful? Yeah.
AUDIENCE: It makes you more healthy. And it allows your blood to kind of flow. And it allows you to think.

SARA WYNNE: Sure. So exercise is making you physically healthy. We also know that exercise really affects your mental health. So it's making you more mentally healthy, as well. Great. So this is a helpful thing to do for my body, that's going to be-- if I'm in better shape, mentally and physically, I'm better able to deal with stress.

All right, what about drinking a nice old bottle of wine? Now, I know not all of you are 21. OK, so this is a hypothetical bottle of wine. I'm over 21, so it's OK for me. Is this helpful or unhelpful for me?

AUDIENCE: Unhelpful.


AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

SARAH WYNNE: Sure. So it can become a behavior that I'm turning to you, and maybe more of a problem there. Why else might this be unhelpful? Yeah.

AUDIENCE: Because alcohol is a depressant.

SARAH WYNNE: Alcohol is a depressant. That's true. So maybe the first glass of wine I'm feeling OK. And then, by the time I get to the end of that bottle, well I don't feel any less stressed. I'm just a little sadder about it. Sure. Yeah.

AUDIENCE: Unlike exercise, where you could just run a mile, like 10 to 15 minutes and come back and be more productive. You might get drunk and then have a hangover in the morning. [INAUDIBLE].

SARAH WYNNE: Right. This might lead to other consequences, after, that are still not helping you with my stress. What about ignoring the problem and watching some Netflix?

AUDIENCE: Unhelpful.

SARAH WYNNE: Unhelpful. Why unhelpful?

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

SARAH WYNNE: Sure. So talking with your family, parents-- or your family or your parents. They're close to you. They're going to let you talk things off-- get it off your chest. Maybe give you some advice. Hear you. Hear what you're saying. Yeah, and, also, maybe this is something that's really valuable to you. And this is a relationship that you're then building by calling them. How about taking a nap? Taking a nap? Helpful or unhelpful? Why helpful? Who said helpful?

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

SARAH WYNNE: Yeah, why helpful?

AUDIENCE: Because you can clear your mind.

SARAH WYNNE: You can clear your mind. OK. What else? Why else is this helpful? Yeah.

AUDIENCE: Sometimes you're pulling all-nighters to study and that's not good.

SARAH WYNNE: Right. Sometimes I need that sleep. I'm just not functioning, because I'm really tired. And I need to get some sleep in. Who said unhelpful? Yeah, why unhelpful?

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

SARAH WYNNE: Right. So is it a, I really need some sleep. Or is it kind of like ignoring it and watching Netflix. Ignoring it and having a nap, and being like, I'm just going to sleep. And then I'll deal with this later. So we have to consider, well, what are my underlying motivations, here? Why am I taking this nap? Do I need it? Is this going to help me feel better? Or am I just like taking off two hours of my day and snoozing in my bed with my cat?

So we can do this with all the rest of them. I'm not going to go through all of them, but if you can weigh this out. I'm feeling stressed. I want to do something about it. Well, let's weigh out, is this actually helping me to deal with my stress, or is this actually moving me farther away from a solution, here. And some of these can be both. Exercising can be both, as well Yeah, going for a run, hitting the gym, playing a game of like basketball, or whatever, with your friends, that can be really helpful. But if I'm going to the gym for two hours a day, every day, because I just don't want to deal with my problems, maybe that's not as helpful. So you have to kind of think about why am I doing this? What's the result going to be?

So you can ask ourselves these questions. Does it move you closer towards a value that you have, something that's important to you? Or towards a goal? Is this addressing those underlying problems that are causing my stress? Or is this really just temporarily making me feel better? And sometimes we like to go for that temporarily, well, you know what? The ice cream tastes real good, so I'm going to eat it. And that's not a bad thing. You can do that sometimes. But know this isn't solving the source of my stress. This isn't helping me fix this problem at all.
So this brings me on now—this is kind of stress relief. But this ties really closely to self-care. So what is self-care? Anyone want to give me an estimate? Approximate definition? I don't need an exact definition. Yeah.

**AUDIENCE:** Like behavior that you take specifically to care for yourself or like to help relieve symptoms of stress.

**SARAH WYNNE:** OK. So steps that you take to take care of yourself and help relieve symptoms of stress. Yeah. What were you going to say?

**AUDIENCE:** [INAUDIBLE]

**SARAH WYNNE:** Making sure your basic needs are met. Yeah. So self-care includes any intentional action that you do to take care of your physical, mental, or emotional health. And so this might be, I'm feeling stressed, so I'm going to do some self-care. But also has to do with just those basic needs. Am I taking care of myself, as an adult. And a lot of these tend to be similar to those stress relief activities, but there's other things that we do for self-care, as well.

So, sometimes, especially here in America, when we think of self-care, we think of treat yourself. Right? Not feeling so good. I'm going to go get a manicure, going to go buy those nice shoes I've been looking at, treat myself to a nice meal out. I deserve it. And that's fine. And you do deserve to treat yourself to things, sometimes. Is this helping you? Is this moving you towards something that you value or towards a goal that you have? Maybe. Maybe not. Maybe if the goal is owning those sweet shoes.

But really how we need to think of self-care is like Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Are you familiar with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs? Yeah? If you're not, right on the screen here. OK. So, first of all, we need to meet those basic needs. Have I eaten today? Have I eaten vegetables today? Have I had a full night of sleep? Have I had water? Have I showered in the last day or so? And then I move up. What about my psychological needs? Do I have close family relationships? Have I called my parents recently? Have I called my sister recently? Have I spent time with my friends? Because I need those social interactions. And then I can move up from there. Self-fulfilment. Am I volunteering enough? Am I living up to my own potential? Am I achieving higher goals that I have? But I can't achieve those higher goals of, I want to do all of these extracurriculars, and I want to get a 4.0 GPA, and I want to be leader of this organization, if I'm not meeting those basic needs. Because that whole tower comes tumbling down. So we need to think about, am I doing those basic needs first? And I can build up from there. And self-care really involves all of those things.

So here's another way that we can frame self-care. First of all, we need to meet those basic everyday needs. And so this involves things like brushing your teeth regularly, showering, taking the medicine that you went to the doctor to take, making an appointment to go see the doctor, or the counselor or the psychiatrist, to get that help that you need. Those are your basic needs. And we have to do those first.
And then we have our physical needs. Sleeping, eating healthy food, taking care of my body, exercising. If my body is not healthy, I can't do a lot of other things. And I don't mean that your body has to be fully able, but you're taking care of yourself in the way that you need to take care of yourself. I have my mental and my emotional needs. And so this might be expressing gratitude to other people. This is a great way to make yourself feel happier and more connected to the people around you. Recognizing that was really helpful and I appreciate it. And telling someone that. Wow, you did this for me and that was great. I just really appreciate having you in my life. Spending time with friends. Taking time to laugh. Laughing is really good for you. It's really good for you physically. It reduces rates of heart attack. It reduces rates of cancer. It makes you feel better, too. So if you're finding that you're really stressed, or you're not taking care of yourself. Have a little laugh break. It's a good time.

And then after we do those things I can really think of, also, about my spiritual and self-fulfillment needs. And so this comes down to, what do you value? What's important to you? And then doing things in line with that. So that can be volunteering to a cause that's important to you. It could be something religious like going to church, meditating, something that you really value. And you're saying this has meaning. And by me doing this activity, I'm making my life meaningful. And if I can find self-care activities that address all four of those, you're doing great. You're taking care of yourself holistically, in a way that's going to make you a lot healthier physically, mentally, emotionally. And that's what's self-care's about.

So it's all about finding what works for you, and making a decision that, yeah, I am going to take time. I'm going to do one of these activities. So what I want you to do now, one more time, turn to the person next to you. If you're at home, and there's someone with you, turn to them. If not, maybe jot it down. What are one or two activities that you'll do this weekend to practice self-care? Turn to the person next to you.

So we're going to move on here to self-compassion, and what does self-compassion mean. So self-compassion is comprised of three different things. The first one is self-kindness. And so this means being understanding when something goes wrong, rather than being critical. You're not going to be successful all of the time. We're all going to have little slip-ups, little failures. And that's normal. That's how we grow. So if you're teaching your cousin or your nephew, let's say, how to ride a bicycle. And they fall off the bicycle one time. Are you going to be like, you're a loser. You can't even ride a bike. Don't even try again. You're never going to make it. It takes a little while to learn how to ride a bicycle. Right? And so the same thing goes when we're learning new things. We're not going to get it right always the first time. Sometimes it takes a while. And so be understanding rather than being like, I should have done better. I should have got an A. I should've whatever. Well, maybe you will again. We have to show a little more understanding. So this self-kindness aspect.

Another aspect of self-compassion is recognizing common humanity. So knowing that I am more similar to other people than I am different. That my struggles relate to other people's struggles, as well. And that I am not just one person, here, doing my own thing, and no one understands me. I'm connected to this humanity and that my struggle is a common human
struggle. And that I'm not the only one doing these things. So the experiences that you have, and the experiences that you're going through. We can think about how is this connecting me to other people, rather than thinking of it as separating. So sometimes we get into our headspace, and we think, I'm the only one. No one can understand. No one's in this position. And, yes, you are unique. But the things that you're going through, other people are experiencing, as well. And so trying to frame it as, well, how can I relate this to other people?

The last part of self-compassion is mindfulness. And mindfulness kind of a buzzword right now. We're going to talk about it a little bit more, later. But it's just understanding what you're currently experiencing physically, mentally, emotionally. What you're currently experiencing without judgment. So saying, OK, what am I actually doing right now? What am I actually experiencing? And then saying, that's OK, and that's normal. So we're going to talk through each of these aspects of self-compassion. And we're going to talk about, how does this relate to self-care?

So the first one is self-kindness. And this has to do a lot with self-talk. So that little voice that you have going on in your head. So we're going to do a little activity, again with a partner. What I want you to do is turn to your partner, and your partner is having a rough day. They failed a test that they thought they were going to pass. They're not doing really good. They're thinking, I don't know, maybe I should just drop this class. I'm not sure if I can continue. Talk to them. I'm going to give you 30 seconds. Talk to your partner. Help them out.

OK, great job. So were you all just like putting on your best Leslie Knope face, and being like, you're magical, you're going to get through this. I know you can do it. You just-- what I want you to do now is you're going to talk with your partner, again. You can switch roles if you want. So, now, your other friend, they're going through this rough time. They're failing this class. They're not sure if they're going to make it. And on and on. And I want you to talk to them as you would talk to yourself, in your own head, if you were going through this. So your own little mental voice saying, I don't know if I can do this. Maybe I should just drop out of my class. I'm not sure if I can continue. Talk to them. I'm going to give you 30 seconds. Talk to your partner. Help them out.

OK, great job. So were you all just like putting on your best Leslie Knope face, and being like, you're magical, you're going to get through this. I know you can do it. You just-- what I want you to do now is you're going to talk with your partner, again. You can switch roles if you want. So, now, your other friend, they're going through this rough time. They're failing this class. They're not sure if they're going to make it. And on and on. And I want you to talk to them as you would talk to yourself, in your own head, if you were going through this. So your own little mental voice saying, I don't know if I can do this. Maybe I should just drop out of my class. I'm not sure if I'm going to make it. Talk to your partner.

OK. I'm going to bring it back together. How many of you had the same conversation twice? Not many people. A couple. How many of you, when you talk to yourself, you tend to be a little more negative than when you're talking to a friend? Or a lot more negative. Yeah. I can see a bunch of hands, here. So, often, the way that we talk to ourselves, we would never say those things to someone else. I would never be like, you know what? You should just drop out. You're going to fail, anyway. You're not worth it. You're not even good at math. I don't know why you chose to go to university. Just go be, whatever, a gas station attendant somewhere. Gas station attendants are great. I'm not knocking them. I have some-- So the things that we say to ourselves, we don't find ourselves saying to other people. And that's part of self-kindness. Treat yourself the way that you would treat others, with that understanding.

Now, self-kindness has a bit to do with self-esteem, as well. Sorry, we don't have time for Jessica. But she's great. So self-esteem means that I'm confident in my own abilities. And this
has a curve, as well. I have to have some confidence in my abilities in order to be really productive and achieve things. But if I have too much self-esteem, I become less productive, because I think that everything I do is golden. If I don't have enough self-esteem, I don't have the courage to go forth and put anything forward. So you have to have that medium level, there, where I'm kind and, I'm understanding, but I'm still realistic about what's happening in the world.

We're going to move on to common humanity, here. And I have a quick video I'm going to show you. Unfortunately, to the people who are on Global Campus, you won't get to see this video. But it's just a little short one.

SARAH WYNNE: --late to those. And you can say, wow, you're really going through a sad, stressful time right now. And I can relate to that. And then knowing that every experience that you have ties you closer to other people. Whether it's a happy experience or a sad one, it can give you a little bit more empathy and compassion to other people, who are going through those same things. And finding that we really do have those similarities more than differences.

So the last part of self-compassion I'm going to talk about, today, is mindfulness. And I mentioned earlier, mindfulness is simply paying attention to what's happening around you. On purpose, paying attention to what's happening around you physically, emotionally, mentally. And then accepting it without judgment. As this is the normal thing that's happening. It's not good or bad. It's just happening to me, and that's OK. It can be a really difficult to do-- thing to do. Often, when we're in a room, we tend to have this little narration going on. Where we're thinking, this chair's really squeaky. It's kind of stuffy in here. Oh my god. Are we running out of time? And I have to do this later. And we tend to comment on things as we're experiencing each moment. So rather than thinking about those things and saying this is the good thing or this is a bad thing, just being like, yeah, that's a thing. It's not inherently good or bad. And that's one way that you can practice mindfulness.

So I think we have to hand out some evaluations. I'm going to have those passed around. While you're filling it out, I'm just going to talk a little bit more about mindfulness, for another two or three minutes. So pull out your pens, but I going to keep on talking here.

So one way that you can practice mindfulness. There's lots of ways you can practice mindfulness. I'll take a step back. So you can practice mindfulness by just being a mindful person. You can do mindful activities. So I can exercise and really think about, physically, how is this affecting me? What are my muscles doing? How is my breath? I can eat mindfully and really focus on each bite that I'm eating. And not have a conversation or be on my computer, just really focus on the food. I can walk to work mindfully. And so I take out my ear plugs and just really focusing on what's happening around me. You can do mindful meditations. And those are great, as well.

But one thing that I really like to do to practice the skill of mindfulness is these little mini doses of mindfulness. And mini doses of mindfulness you can do anywhere, any time. And it has
three really simple steps. So the first thing you have to do is acknowledge your feelings and emotions. And so I tend to do this when I am, maybe, doing an unhelpful reaction to stress. So we saw earlier those white women who were biting computers. I now have a white woman biting a steering wheel. It's an epidemic. I was not aware. So let's say that you’re stuck in traffic, because there's a Cougar football game. And there's more people in Pullman than there normally is. And you're a little bit stressed, and you're just like biting the steering wheel. So the first thing you have to do to be mindful is take a step back and say, what are my underlying emotions, here? Well, I'm frustrated, because I wasn't expecting this much traffic. And, maybe, I'm anxious, because I think I might be late to that appointment. And I'm angry, because that person just cut me off. And I'm thinking, OK, what are the underlying emotions that have brought me, here, to this reaction that I'm having?

And then I had to do step number two. And step number two is the hardest step. I have to allow myself to experience those emotions, without judgment. So I'm not saying, your anger is unreasonable, Sarah. There's no reason for you to be frustrated. That's not a good feeling. All emotions are normal. So even if I'm feeling frustrated, and angry, and anxious. Those are normal human emotions. And I have to say, that's OK. It's OK that you're frustrated right now.

And then step number three is I move on with that knowledge. And maybe by moving on I can just say, OK, two breaths. Good. No longer frustrated. Let's keep driving. Maybe I can't just shut off my emotions that way. But what I can do is acknowledge, where is my current emotional state? And say, I'm already here. And so then throughout the rest of my day, I give myself a little more self-compassion. And I say, you know what? I'm already this frustrated, today, because of that traffic. So I'm going to give myself 10 extra minutes to get to class. And when I talk with my sister on the phone, I'm going to think twice before I talk back, so I don't just snap at her and take out my frustrations on her. And, maybe, later on, I'm going to make sure that I have time to go for that run, or to have that nap. So I'm thinking, where is my emotional state and what actions can I do that are helpful in that state?

The more often you're able to do this, acknowledge your emotions. Say, those emotions are normal. Those are normal things that people experience, and it's OK. The better able I am to separate my emotions from my behavior. So I can say, even though, right now, I'm feeling sad, I can still choose the behavior that I want to do. And they don't have to be linked together. Even though, right now, I'm feeling really stressed, I can still choose the behavior I want to do. And create a little distance between those two. And the more that you practice this, the easier it becomes for you to do that. And to allow yourself to experience those emotions, and then choose what you want to do next. So that's mindfulness.

So if you are finding that you're really stressed, and you want some more self-care tips on how to deal with stress, on how to incorporate mindfulness into your life, at WSU we have a free texting stress management program. So you can text this phone number, here, 30644, with the message STRESS. That's going to go to me and Health & Wellness Services. And then we will send you weekly reminders of, hey, here's a stress management technique. Remember to
breathe. Here's what you need to do. And we'll give you different tips on how to manage your stress in a helpful way.

That's the information that I have today. I know I'm going over time. If you have more questions on any of this, you can email me, here. Otherwise, have a great day. Do you have more feedback on the forms?

**SPEAKER 1:** Can we give a round of applause for [INAUDIBLE].

**NICHOLAS HUDSON:** All right friends. We're going to go ahead and get started. I don't know if you have anything to do. Great.

So my name is Nicholas Hudson, and I am an assistant director in the Center for Fraternity and Sorority Life here at Washington State University, Pullman. And so I work with a lot of our sororities and fraternities, here. But, specifically, I work with our multicultural and nonresidential organizations. And I'll provide you with just a little bit of information. What we're going to be talking about today is The Student Leadership Challenge by James Kouzes and Barry Posner. And how these five essential practices of leadership will make you into exemplary leaders. This book, The Student Leadership Challenge, or The Leadership Challenge, has been around since the 1980s. And they've tailored it to working with students across the country. Millions of people have taken the survey that you are about to be taking, as well. And so we're going to be learning about these five practices, and how to make yourself achieve. And the teams that you're working with and folks of that nature, how they can make you into better leaders. I'm still getting a little used to the technology.

So a couple of things to note. As we move through these things, as I'm not a big fan of this but--you have to, as leaders, want to make things happen. Leaders can either be sitting there, doing what they're doing, or they can go ahead and actually take action and lead others into a positive direction. So we're going to be utilizing The Student Leadership Challenge as well as The Social Change Model of Leadership, because The Social Change Model of Leadership, actually, helps folks, and groups of folks, achieve some sort of large scale change.

As I said, so I believe that leadership is about you and me, and how we can actually achieve the larger sense of things. And the author, here, Barry Posner, says that leadership is a process. Anyone can be a leader. So this thought process that he says in his book, as well as all of the other materials that he has, says that, no matter who you are, you are a leader. You can be a leader in the lowliest of positions. Or you could not be a leader and have the top executive position in a company. It's all about the motions that you go through and the actions that you take, while you're a leader, that actually makes you into the leader. [INAUDIBLE].

So I believe in this idea of servant leadership, and this idea that, as leaders, you have a responsibility to work with others and benefit of the larger, greater good that we have here. So The Student Leadership Challenge is about how you mobilize others to get extraordinary things
done in organizations. How you get extraordinary things done in your classrooms. How you get extraordinary things done in your day-to-day life.

So we're going to talk a little bit about The Student Leadership Challenge. But, first, we're going to watch a video by Barry Posner at the University of Nevada, Reno, and his idea of what is the foundation of leadership, in general.

As we take a look, here, at what he was saying, what I'd like for everyone to start doing is to start filling out the inventory that we just completed. And I want you, while you're filling it out, to reflect on the four foundations of a credible leader. Honesty, competence, enthusiastic, and/or forward thinking. And so think about these things.

What you're going to do is fill out-- there's about, I believe, it's 30 questions you're going to fill out. On the last page of that assessment, you will transfer your scores and total them up. So you'll, probably, either need to do some quick brain math. I know it's late in the afternoon, after some good lunch. We're a little brain-dead a little bit. But you're either going to use your math and/or your phones. And then you're going to transfer the scores. And I'll help you transfer the scores, here, in a second. So you're going to transfer your scores onto this chart. So we're going to take about five minutes to complete this. You may not complete it all the way, but I'll, at least, walk you through this.

I just want to make sure we can keep on time, here. So as we're taking this, I'll just give you a little background information about why I'm really passionate about The Student Leadership Challenge. And, hopefully, this doesn't interrupt your taking of the assessment.

When I was a freshman about 15 years ago at the University of Oregon, the university president had a class that was only for freshman. 20 freshmen at the University of Oregon were selected to take this class on-- it was called The Theories of Leadership. And in this class, I was one of the few 20 students that was selected. And I loved leadership since I was little. I went to leadership camp. It's a little nerdy, but I love leadership that much, and so I went to leadership camp. But anyway, so we went to this class, and one of the books that we utilized in our course, 15 years ago, was The Leadership Challenge. And Barry Posner came and spoke to our class, and talked to us about the credibility of leadership, as well as these five exemplary practices that were going to be working on, here, today.

And so this is why I'm really passionate about this. I use this and all of the courses that I teach here at Washington State University, Pullman. I teach in Intercultural Greek Leadership every semester. And in the spring, I teach Social Justice Leadership that focuses on developing your work capacity as a social justice leader. Developing an agenda, an activist agenda, whether it's here on campuses, or in the community, in the state, or nationally. So that's a little bit of information why I really love this very simple model, that really helps folks understand how to improve their leadership capacity.
So as you're going through, you're going to total up all of your scores. And once you've totaled up all your scores, you're going to enter them onto the chart.

And so questions 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, is going to be-- you're going to mark an x in that first column called Model the Way. So you're going to total up. It's going to be anywhere from six points, all the way up to 30. And so you're going to put an x right there, in the middle, wherever your number is. That make sense? If you are 24 in those six categories, you will put it in that first one, in Model the Way category. Put a large x right there.

Same thing for the next one, next one, next one. I'll give you all about three more minutes to finish this up. And we'll talk about what this chart means, and why it's important, and what are- moving in-depth into the five exemplary practices of leadership. Seeing a lot of transferring of scores, here. Make sure you totaled them up. Just total it all the way down the line. So just total these together. Total them by column. So it should be anywhere from 6 to 30 for that column. 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, and do that for all five areas.

And it's really important to start this-- to start off our conversation about the five exemplary practices of leadership through this self-assessment, and understanding where do you, actually, think you line up. One of the funniest things that I like to do is to take this assessment, or I tell my students to take this assessment, and they either have a very low opinion of themselves, or a very high opinion of themselves. And then I ask them, as an extra credit assignment, is to give this to three other people, and have them base it off of-- their scores based off of you, as a leader. And whether or not they, actually, think that you have the same leadership qualities that you believe you do. Because, sometimes, we have a very different idea of who we are and how other people perceive us. It's that idea of credibility. Some folks, they find us to be very credible, while others don't.

So as we move through, I think, most of you have finished the assessment and have transferred your scores. So the first category that we have here is Model the Way. So you will place your x on anywhere in there. And that percentile, this is the percentile that you compare across the globe, on how many people have taken this. We've said millions of people have taken this. So this is how you compare, in this specific category or leadership quality, of Modeling the Way. And we'll talk a little bit more about Modeling the Way. But that's how you compare, globally, to people who have taken this survey.

So for example, if you had a 24 for Model the Way, you would be in the 65th percentile, globally, for those in this category. So as you move across here, you're going to have five different x's that tell you your percentages, your percentiles, across the globe. Everyone have that so far? Anything surprising to folks, as they've begun filling this out? And are like what? I have a very-- I didn't realize that I was really good at this, or things of that nature. Looks like most of us are still transferring scores over. Well, as we're doing that, we're going to talk about the five different practices of exemplary leadership and we'll come back.
So the five that are on there, you can see them right there. They are Model the Way, Inspire A Shared Vision—very similar to what Barry Posner was talking about in that TED Talk about the foundation of leadership is credibility. People follow those that have a vision. As we're going to talk about that. The next one is Challenge the Process. You have to be willing to think outside of the status quo. And we're going to talk about what that means and how you can do that. The next one is Enable Others to Act. You wouldn't—as leaders, we tend to take on all of the responsibility for whatever it is, whatever the tasks are, at hand. We don't, actually, trust other people to get the job done the way we want to. The final one is Encourage the Heart. So we're going to talk about these five exemplary practices of leadership, and what they are.

Inside of the handouts that we gave you is Model the Way. And part of Model the Way is to clarify your values as an individual. Inside of these five exemplary practices of leadership, there's two kind of principles that are part of each one. So the first principle of Model the Way. And Model the Way is being that model leader. Making sure that everyone knows your values, that you set the example, that you are doing things the way in which you think they should be done, so others follow you. It's this idea of credibility. People have to think you're honest and competent. Modeling the Way means that you, actually, are honest with folks, and that you know what you're doing. People aren't going to follow you if you don't know what you're doing.

So what I'd like for you to do, now, is to get out the value sheet. And take a look—I want you to circle your five—your top five values. I'm very big on values. When you're in sororities and fraternities, that's one of the things that we talk about, immediately, is clarifying your values. Understanding what do you believe in? Because if you don't believe in something, then how can you join these organizations? If you don't believe in this, if you don't want to practice this on a daily basis, why are you doing what you're doing?

So you're going to circle your top five values. And then you're going to star your number one. And then you're going to get into small groups. And in those small groups, you're going to share those values. And then we're going to come out and share a couple of them, as a large group. And I think, maybe, we get ticket—I don't know—do we not get tickets this year? The raffles. Perfect. So, maybe, we'll share some of those raffle tickets, here. But go ahead and circle your top five values. Star your number one of those five. Share in small groups.

Take about one more minute. Hopefully, you have shared the values with each other. All right. So we're going to take some volunteers, here. Who would like to share their number one, and give their reason why they chose that? Yes, right here. So risk taking. Perfect. Thank you for saying that. Yup. So you said purpose, because if you don't know your purpose, what's the point of doing it. What else do we have? Yes, sir. Right here. Perfect. I really love that passion. You have to be passionate. That's, actually, one of the things that Barry Posner said that you have to have, as a credibility, as a leader. Is you have to be passionate about something. You have to be totally interested in it.

These are my top five values. Equity, justice, empowerment, collaboration, and purpose. Equity is something that, on a daily basis, I am committed to. So every single day, I am fighting for
equity, and to dismantle the systematic structures, that are put into place to limit and inhibit minoritized populations. And so that's what I do on a daily basis. That's what I live. If you are not living these values, it's going to be very hard for others to follow you. Part of this idea of Model the Way is people follow your values. If you are not exhibiting values that they want to follow, they're going to be like, I'm going to go to someone else.

The second component, or commandment, so to speak, of Modeling the Way is setting the example. As a leader, it is incumbent upon you to always be the first one there. If you believe in punctuality, and you believe that your followers need to be punctual, you need to be the one there. So you have to set the example for those that will follow you. You can't say, and stress, for example, if you're an organization, that you enjoy academics, and you're not, actually, focusing on your own academics. Does that makes sense? So making sure that you're setting the example.

The second one that we have, here, is Inspire Shared Vision. So let's talk about that. People respond to futuristic ideals. They respond to something that they can believe in. Part of what Barry Posner said was that folks, and credible leaders, have a vision. They inspire other people around this vision. And so the hope is what you can do. So let's think of some folks of who inspired them.

These are some of my inspirations. Martin Luther King, Jr., President Obama, and Dolores Huerta. I worked for President Obama in 2007 and '08, for his campaign. Because of that vision that he had, he inspired a whole bunch of people, my age, and a little bit younger, and a whole bunch of other folks, to go out there, knock on the doors, get him elected. Because of this idea of the power of change in the community. No matter who you believe in, part of this ideal of being a credible leader is having this vision for the future. So what I want you to do, once again, in small groups, is talk about who inspires you, and why they inspire you.

Take about another 30 seconds to wrap up these conversations. All right. So if we could get a couple of volunteers on who they believe inspires them. Who inspires you all, and why?

AUDIENCE: Elon Musk.

NICHOLAS HUDSON: Elon Musk. Why does Elon Musk inspire you?

AUDIENCE: Because he's innovative.

NICHOLAS HUDSON: He's innovative. Elon Musk is innovative. He is the founder of Tesla, right?

AUDIENCE: Paypal.

NICHOLAS HUDSON: Paypal? I don't think--

AUDIENCE: That's how [INAUDIBLE].
NICHOLAS HUDSON: Oh interesting. I didn't realize that it was PayPal. But I just know he does Tesla. So who else? Who else inspires you? So only Elon Musks-- the only one that's inspired in this room. That's it? That's the only thing-- everyone is inspired by Elon Musk? That's it? Most of you didn't even know who that was. Or did you? Exactly. Who do we have right here? Did you have your hand raised? I'm going to call on you, anyway. Great.

AUDIENCE: I guess, Alexander Hamilton. He came from nothing.

NICHOLAS HUDSON: Alexander Hamilton. Came from nothing. Made himself into the Treasury Secretary, and then, ultimately, I believe, didn't he become-- I don't really, fully know his story. But Founding Father of the United States. Who else do you have? Sometimes, they don't have to be large-scale leaders. Are some of you inspired by your parents? How many of you are inspired by your parents, or listed your parents as someone who really inspires you? How about a friend or someone in your immediate circle? OK. Or is it always just famous people? No. How many of you had someone famous-- or did not have someone famous as someone who inspires you? Pretty good group across the board. So we're about evenly split.

Part of Modeling the Way is sharing this vision. And the people that we are inspired by have this vision. Whether it's for, us or the future. They also enlist others in their cause. And so one of the great things about being a leader is that you enlist others to help you on this vision. So if you have not already created your own mission statement or vision statement, that is something that I'm recommending, especially when you're working in student organizations, and things of that nature. Because that's how you get other people to follow what you're trying to sell.

The third exemplary practice of leadership is Challenge the Process. And this idea of Challenge the Process is that you're not comfortable with the status quo. So we're going to watch a brief video.

Who knows where this comes from? Yeah. It's an Apple commercial from the 1990s, from the early 1990s. Before they developed the iPhone, and iPad, and anything that looks good. They were, actually, trying to brand themselves as being innovative. And one of the great things that leaders do when they challenge the process, is that they search for new opportunities. Apple was not being content in being the number two personal computing seller, the seller of personal computers. They, in the early-- in the late 1990s and early 2000s, began to reinvent themselves and really search for new opportunities. They also experimented and took risks. Someone, earlier, mentioned risk taking. That's, actually, really important, as a leader, is that you take risks. Because, one, it's important to progress as a society, to take risks. But it's, also, done in a relatively safe environment. And it encourages learning through failure.

The fourth practice of exemplary leadership is Enabling Others to Act. And here are six ways that you can enable others to act. But what the authors say, as it relates to this, is that you, as a leader, ultimately, your goal as a leader is to enable all of your followers to become new leaders. It's all about encouraging them, and enabling them, to act. And the biggest paradox of
leadership, in general, is that you, as a leader, you have to give up all of your power away to your followers. And that's when you know you are the most, you are one of the exemplary leaders that we have. You become more powerful when you give all that leadership away.

But the six things that you can do to enable others to act, is to delegate. How many of us like to delegate to other people? Just a couple of us. We don't trust other people. I don't trust other people to get this stuff done. I know this is exactly how I like it and want it to be done. You ask questions, you listen, and you take advice. You collaborate, and you strengthen others.

The fifth one is Encourage the Heart. This is one of the hardest things, as leaders, that we do. We need to make sure that people feel connected to our organizations through praise and awards. We often forget to say, thank you for helping out. Thank you for doing this job. And that's one of the biggest things. As a leader, you have to ensure that everyone knows that they are a contributing partner of your community. You also need to recognize the contributions of folks, whether they're small, large contributions, and celebrate the own values of the organizations and all of the victories that happen. So celebration, once again, as a leader, is key. It can't just be telling folks, do this, do this, do this.

So here are, once again, the 10 Commandments. So find your Voice, setting your values, set an example, envision the future, and enlist others. You search for opportunities. So searching for opportunities is that challenging the process. Experiment and take risks. You foster collaboration. Good leaders, credible leaders, foster collaboration amongst different folks. You strengthen others, you strengthen each other, by giving them and empowering them to take ownership over your organization. You recognize their contributions, big or small. And then, finally, you celebrate the values and victories.

Right now, I believe, we're doing evaluations I also believe that you can do them online-- if I'm not mistaken-- these evaluations online.

So how do you do this? You do it through trial-- you do it through experience. You become better leaders through experience, whether it's trial and error. You learn by example. So you observe others. And then, finally, you go to workshops. One of the things that Barry Posner said, as it related to credibility, is we must constantly be learning how to become better leaders, as we move through this, as we go through this workshop. And the hope is that, as a better leader, you become self-aware. You manage your emotions. You seek feedback from each other. You take the initiative. You seek help. These practices, that we're giving you here, is how you can strengthen your leadership capabilities and become a more credible leader. You set goals and make a plan. That's one of the key things, as a leader. It's all about this idea about the future. Setting goals is the future. Practice. Measure your progress. Reward yourself. That's going back to Encouraging the Heart, one of the five exemplary practices. And you have to be honest with yourself. Being honest is a key component of credibility.

One of the worksheets that I gave you is this action plan. And how you can improve, if you're low, let's say, in Model the Way, it's an action plan, and how you can become better in one of
those five areas. One of the things that we have given you all is a dropbox. If you want to take a
photo of this. You have access to a-- so we, at the Center for Fraternity and Sorority Life, have
the license to hand out a workbook, as it relates to this. So you can go back and, inside of there,
there's a 60-page workbook on each one of these five exemplary practices. And these are five
different videos that explain this, and more, in depth. I didn't figure we'd want to sit here
watching all of these videos, as we have it. So if you go to that dropbox, bit.ly, you will be able
to access all of these resources that you just got by attending this workshop. It's a pretty
awesome thing that we have.

Remember the five exemplary practices of leadership. Modeling the Way. What's the next one?
Inspire A Shared Vision. What's the next one? Thank you, Lily. Challenge the Process. Thank
you. She was in one of my classes, so that's why she knows these. The next one is-- so we had
Challenge the Process. The next one is Enable the Heart? It's Enable Others to Act. And then it's
Encourage the Heart. Those are the five exemplary practices of leadership. So if you have any
other questions, please feel free to ask us at the end. We have some announcements right
here, my friend.