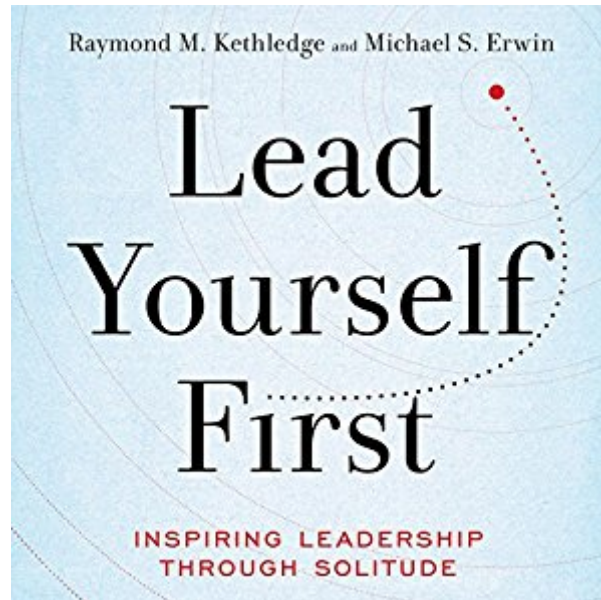




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# Lead Yourself First



## Synopsis

Throughout history, leaders have used solitude as a matter of course. Eisenhower wrote memoranda to himself during World War II as a way to think through complex problems. Martin Luther King found moral courage while sitting alone at his kitchen table one night during the Montgomery bus boycott. Jane Goodall used her intuition in the jungles of Central Africa while learning how to approach chimps. Solitude is a state of mind, a space where you can focus on your own thoughts without distraction, with a power to bring mind and soul together in clear-eyed conviction. Like a great wave that saturates everything in its path, however, handheld devices and other media now leave us awash with the thoughts of others. We are losing solitude without even realizing it. To find solitude today, a leader must make a conscious effort. This book explains why the effort is worthwhile and how to make it. Through gripping historical accounts and firsthand interviews with a wide range of contemporary leaders, Raymond Kethledge (a federal court of appeals judge) and Michael Erwin (a West Pointer and three-tour combat veteran) show how solitude can enhance clarity, spur creativity, sustain emotional balance, and generate the moral courage necessary to overcome adversity and criticism. Anyone who leads anyone - including oneself - can benefit from solitude. With a foreword by Jim Collins (author of the best seller *Good to Great*), *Lead Yourself First* is a rallying cry to reclaim solitude - and all the benefits, both practical and sublime, that come with it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Absolutely the best book for any level of leaders. Stories of the best leaders and how they apply the case for thoughtful solitude: "Instead, leadership solitude is productive solitude, which means to use solitude purposely, with a particular end in mind. Productive solitude involves working your mind—not passively, but actively, as you would a large muscle—as you break down and sort and synthesize what is already there."

Kethledge and Erwin demonstrate compellingly that solitude is essential to good leadership and, concomitantly, to considered decision-making. In the process, the vignettes they present reveal too that solitude is not a one-size-fits-all concept. Other than being alone, no single attribute defines productive solitude. One person may find clarity on a run while another may find it in the pre-dawn hours sitting with a cup of coffee. The authors also contribute meaningfully to the leadership conversation by showing that solitude alone (pun intended) is not enough. Rather, productive solitude requires hard work: deductive reasoning; intuition; sifting through a wealth of information; and more. Sharpening the focus of what it really means to sort through a complex problem provides an essential resource for any leader.

Excellent guide for leaders. It is so easy to forget to focus and this book makes it clear the importance. I loved the history and diversity of idea. Great book, I will be giving it to others.

Great perspective on the necessity of solitude for positive leadership.

Excellent read. Thoughtful, insightful and inspirational. Equally fitting for a long flight or day on the beach.

I have really enjoyed this book. It offers a historical and personal perspective that was thoroughly investigated, interesting and informative. I learned about behind the scenes decisions made by so many well known leaders that I never knew about before. The narratives were in depth and really illustrated the importance of self reliance and solitude and trust in yourself. An excellent reminder for any of us who need to lead in any way, large or small.

In today's society of being always available, this book recognizes how important Solitude is for all. Whether you only lead yourself or lead many, this book shares examples of world leaders embraced Solitude and accomplished clarity and intuition to make decisions that affect us today. "Words are

part of our rational selves, and to abandon them for a while is to give freer rein to our intuitive self." -  
Chapter 3, The Stillness of Intuition- Jane Goodall, 1960

This book is an amazing read for so many reasons. It's thought provoking in a way that is centered around having a meaningful, emotional dialogue with yourself. In this day and age, if you're not careful, it's easy to focus on the negative leadership we're faced with on a regular basis. But this book reminds you of the positive leaders and leadership out there, and it inspires you to become a leader yourself.

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