



## LEADERSHIP

### *Past Presidents Speak about Leadership*

*Valerie Chamberlain and  
Elizabeth Scannell*

Our interest in the new Kappa Omicron Nu professional development module and recent articles in *Dialogue* led us to contact recent past-presidents for their ideas and examples of *reflective human action*. Thus, this paper shares selected responses from former presidents of Kappa Omicron Nu.

The past-presidents were asked, among other things, to discuss three core features of reflective human action: authenticity, ethical sensibility, and spirituality.

### *Authenticity*

“... being true to one’s personality, spirit, and character. It is avoiding self-deception and hidden agendas . . . to be authentic is to act, engage, be genuine and

trustworthy, reflect, question, and correct how decisions are made; it helps to determine what is really going on and to expand possibilities” (Mitsifer, 1995, p. 4).

Gwen Cooke (Omicron Nu, 1987-89) added to this description by pointing out that authenticity also means putting aside personal gain to benefit others. Virginia Clark (Kappa Omicron Nu, 1994) emphasized that authentic leaders are able to recognize when they need help and then can work with other people to get the help they need for the common good of the organization.

Mary Pritchard (Kappa Omicron Nu, 1993) gave this example from leadership of Kappa Omicron Nu: “I believe that members of the KON Board of Directors were being authentic to their own personality, spirit, and character when we adopted the new policy governance model. This was not the easiest task nor the one that would bring greatest glory to individuals. It was the decision that all felt would enable growth of the profession and lead to the desired end of ‘empowered leaders in family and consumer sciences.’ Because board members were authentic, a high level of trust was present in the decision-making process.”

About authenticity, Gladys Vaughn (Kappa Omicron Nu, 1990) wrote, “My name, work, and

reputation have been earned from years of hard work on behalf of families, children, and home economics. I have no intentions of doing anything else, no matter that price. My soul is not for sale.”

### *Ethical Sensibility*

“There is an imperative for leadership to be intellectually and morally defensible . . . ethical action integrates the elements of responsibility, love, participation, justice, freedom, and existence” (Mitsifer, 1995, p. 4).

Clark explained that ethical sensibility is demonstrated each time a board or management team works together to make a recommendation/decision for the organization. Members have the right and responsibility to voice their personal opinions in the group. When a decision has been reached, however, it is the responsibility of each member of the group to support the

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decision. Clark went on to say that if they do otherwise, the action is inconsistent with their responsibilities as members of the group, and the results are often divisive.

Cooke responded that where a person eventually arrives is not as important as how the person gets there. She also stated that in the process of getting there, it is important to set an example for others to emulate.

Pritchard gave an example to which we can all relate.

"We are often called upon to make decisions that have ethical implications. One simple example is a faculty member who observes cheating on an examination or an assignment. An easy response in the short term is to look the other way and ignore the situation. One might rationalize this response by questioning whether the observation was correct or whether this was an isolated situation. However, it is the professor's responsibility as a leader to maintain justice and provide a role model of accountability in the classroom. In most situations, an action to correct the cheating and to discuss the matter with the student will be both unpleasant and time consuming. The authentic leader in this situation will choose the responsible and caring path of intervention. This action can be a turning point in the life of the offender and provide an example of ethical action to guide future action."

## *Spirituality*

"Spirituality does not refer to any specific religion or faith but to depth, value, relatedness, heart, and personal substance. . . . [It] gives our lives passion and purpose" (Mitsifer, 1995, p. 4).

Cooke stated that spirituality is related to faith in yourself and that you are what you believe yourself to be. What principles you adhere to influence the decisions you make. "Because of your beliefs, you are a stronger person."

Clark wrote that anytime leaders take into consideration that they are working with people who have feelings and needs, they are operating spiritually. Clark further explained that a leader always has to keep this in mind and, even in difficult situations, consider how to make things as positive as possible for everyone, creating a win-win situation.

Along this same way of thinking about spirituality, Vaughn related that when colleagues and friends have telephoned her "out of the blue," she has been able to sense when something was "a foot" and has opened her heart to their pain or joy. "In so doing, I learned that 'God comforts us, not to make us comfortable, but to make us comforters. In listening to others, I have been able to see what makes me the person that I am. There are times that I am 'trifling,' but my spirit moves me to do things I thought not possible." She went on to say that "Once I told a particularly difficult supervisor that it did not matter what she attempted to do to me, my spirit could not be broken. It was ever present, guiding and protecting me. It would see me through from within."

Pritchard gave another pertinent example:

"Spirituality in leadership requires that leaders consider their colleagues in the organization as people rather than just as workers. In my department, we have hired

nearly one-third of the department as new faculty in the last two years. As senior faculty mentor to new colleagues, I have frequently observed faculty express a genuine concern and step forward to help when needed. One example was when a family member was the victim of a serious accident; individuals stepped forward to continue that faculty member's work in order to release her to assist her family and to cope with difficult changes—they understood their colleague's spirit and were able to support her. They also grew personally through their unselfish actions and made our department a more caring place to work."

Bobbitt (Kappa Omicron Nu, 1992) wrote that she believes passionately that all students can become excited about learning. "I believe it is within the power of the teacher to 'touch' and motivate each student. The spirit exhibited by students who come to enjoy learning becomes a strong force for continuing the drive to motivate all students."

## *Conclusion*

This article gives examples of how individuals illustrate the core concepts of reflective human action which complement the traditional theory of personal leadership skills/traits. Although the whole survey is not reported here, some of the components of the theory of reflective human action—share information, develop relationships, and embrace vision—were identified as crucial for leaders. We would like to challenge you, the reader, to consider how your view of leadership can be enriched by the theory of reflective human action.

**Reference:** Mitstifer, D. I. (1995, July). Leadership. Dialogue, 5 (3), 4.

**Editor's Note:** The theory of *reflective human action* is a mindset—a philosophy—of leadership and focuses on leadership, the action. From this perspective, leadership isn't rooted in one person—it refers to the actions, no matter who carries them out. In other words, leadership is the process that arises whenever people work together. And it is the bias of *reflective human action* that authenticity, ethical sensibility, and spirituality are fundamental to leading well.

*Valerie Chamberlain is Professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences, and Elizabeth Scannell is Extension Associate Professor, Department of Community Development and Applied Economics, of the University of Vermont.*

*The authors would like to acknowledge the participation of the following past-presidents: Norma Bobbitt, Professor, College of Human Ecology, Michigan State University; Virginia L. Clark, Dean, College of Human Development and Education, North Dakota State University; Gwen C. Cooke, Professor Emeritus, School of Family Studies and Consumer Sciences, San Diego State University; Patsy S. Elmore, Professor, Department of Home Economics, University of Mississippi; Peggy S. Meszaros, Senior Vice President and Provost, Virginia Tech; Virginia Moxley, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Human Ecology, Kansas State University; Mary E. Pritchard, Chair, Department of Human and Family Resources, Northern Illinois University; Gladys Gary Vaughn, The Odyssey Group/Vaughn and Associates.*

## 1997-98 Fellowships

**Master's Fellowships—**  
application deadline April 1, 1997.

**Eileen C. Maddex Fellowship, \$2,000—**awarded annually from an endowment in the Omicron Nu Fellowship Fund in honor of her contributions as Omicron Nu Executive Director.

**National Alumni Fellowship, \$1,000—**awarded by the National Alumni Chapter.

**Doctoral Fellowships—**  
application deadline January 15, 1997.

**Hettie M. Anthony Fellowship, \$2,000—**awarded annually for doctoral research from an endowment in the Kappa Omicron Phi Fellowship Fund in honor of her as founder of Kappa Omicron Phi at Northwest Missouri State University.

**Omicron Nu Research Fellowship, \$2,000—**awarded annually for doctoral research from the Omicron Nu Fellowship Fund.

**Alice Koenecke Fellowship, \$2,000—**awarded for doctoral study from the Kappa Omicron Phi Fellowship Fund in honor of her service as National President, 1978-82.

**Dorothy I. Mitstifer Fellowship, \$2,000—**awarded from the Named Fellowship endowment in the Kappa Omicron Phi Fellowship Fund in honor of her service as Executive Director of Kappa Omicron Phi and targeted primarily to chapter advisers for graduate or post-graduate study.

**Research/Project Grants—**  
application deadline February 15, 1997.

One or more grants are awarded annually that meet the criteria of the Kappa Omicron Nu research agenda. Cross-specialization and integrative research is the research priority for the honor society. Multi-year proposals will be considered.

**National Alumni Chapter Grant, \$500—**awarded annually as a project of the National Alumni Chapter.

**New Initiatives Grant, \$3,000—**awarded annually from the Kappa Omicron Nu New Initiatives Fund.

**Applications and further information about fellowships and grants may be secured from:**

Kappa Omicron Nu National Office  
4990 Northwind Drive  
Suite 140, East Lansing, MI  
48823-5031

Telephone: (517) 351-8335  
Facsimile: (517) 351-8336

**Errata:** The Editor regrets that the announcement regarding new committee members in the January 1996 Dialogue reversed the committee headings. Editorial Committee Members are Diana D. Carroll, Karen J. Cummings; Nominating Committee Members are Betty J. Church, Katrina R. Shaner, and Charlotte Edwards.

## 1996 Kappa Omicron Nu Election

*Nominees for Board of Directors are needed for the offices of:*

**Chair-Elect  
Vice Chair/Program  
Secretary**

*Nominees for Committees are needed for:*

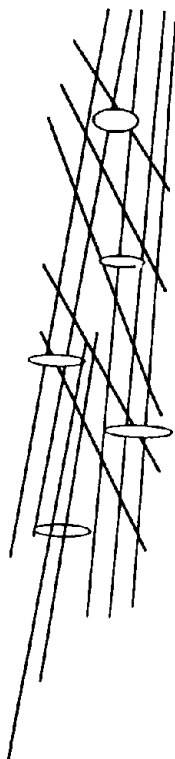
**Editorial  
(three-year term)  
Nominating  
(two-year term)**

Any KON member who would like to apply or to suggest a candidate is urged to contact the National Office for an application form.

Kappa Omicron Nu  
4990 Northwind Drive  
Suite 140, East Lansing, MI  
48823-5031

Telephone: (517) 351-8335  
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*The members of the Nominating committee are:* Shirley Hymon-Parker, Chair; Betty Church; Charlotte Edwards; Pamela Olson; Katrina R. Shaner; Virginia Clark, Board Liaison.



### ***Reflective Human Action***

#### ***A Leadership Workshop for Administrators***

**Opryland Hotel, Nashville,  
Tennessee  
June 28, 1996  
9:00 a.m.—7:00 p.m.**

The Reflective Human Action Model and Module to be introduced at this workshop is a state-of-the-art approach to leadership. As a comprehensive approach, it blends the work of current leadership theorists and new insights about the principles that guide the dynamic environment in which we live and work. Unique to the KON leadership module is the focus on theory and practice; a section of the module includes experiential activities to explain and practice the prin-

ciples of Reflective Human Action.

Join colleagues from across the nation to explore critical issues facing administrators by using principles of **Reflective Human Action**.

Administrators in a complex world must be able to work within often chaotic environments, appreciating and fostering creativity within themselves and others. Yet creativity alone is not enough to successfully lead in complex situations. Leadership from the view of the new sciences requires authenticity, ethical sensibility, and spirituality—authenticity from the perspective of genuineness, ethical sensibility as the heart of action, spirituality as connectedness to meaning.

A centerpiece of the Reflective Human Action Model is the **Action Wheel** developed by Robert Terry to frame issues and identify interventions. Experiential activities will offer opportunities to use the Action Wheel as a diagnostic tool.

Workshop participants will learn that the Reflective Human Action model is relevant to all levels of issues related to their professional and personal lives.

#### ***Who should register?***

The **1994 Emerging Administrators** will gain a new set of lenses and perspectives for dealing with change and challenges. **Seasoned Administrators** will have new tools to provide the kind of leadership they desire. **Aspiring Adminis-**

trators will find application to career planning and be able to apply principles to finding their own niche in the workplace and balancing work and home life.

The Reflective Human Action leadership model is a flexible blueprint for examining how we know leadership is present and how we exhibit leadership in all those places where leadership lives, moves, and expresses itself.

**The workshop will**

1. Explore the principles and core features of reflective human action.
2. Apply the theory of reflective human action to critical leadership issues facing administrators.
3. Use the Study Circles approach to strengthen dialogue and participation in addressing change, the challenges of academia, and the goal for achieving unit quality.
4. Use the Action Wheel as a diagnostic tool.
5. Form ongoing networking groups to continue leadership development.

For more information about the Workshop and to register, call the **Kappa Omicron Nu National Office at 1-800-351-8335.**

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Honor Society  
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**Advance Registration**

**Reflective Human Action Workshop**

**A Leadership Workshop for Administrators**

*Sponsored by*

*1994 Emerging Administrators,  
Kappa Omicron Nu  
CAFCS, & FCSALC  
as an AAFCS Pre-Conference*

Opryland Hotel, Nashville, Tennessee  
June 28, 1996  
9:00 a.m.—7:00 p.m.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Registration Fee(s) @ \$120 each; includes workshop, beverage breaks, luncheon, and dinner.

\_\_\_\_\_ Module(s) @ special workshop price—\$35 each.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Enclosed**

**Deadline for registration: May 15, 1996.**

*(Write check to Kappa Omicron Nu. Written request for refund will be honored until June 1)*

**Note:** Make Room Reservation in connection with AAFCS Annual Meeting

**Return form to**

Kappa Omicron Nu  
4990 Northwind Drive, Suite 140,  
East Lansing, MI 48823-5031  
Telephone: (800) 351-8335  
Facsimile: (517) 351-8336

# Sample Activity from Leadership Module

## Activity 5

### *Purpose: This activity will*

Explore authenticity as an essential quality of leadership.

### *Materials Needed:*

- ◆ Authenticity transparency, blank transparencies
- ◆ Overhead projector
- ◆ Newsprint and markers

### *Detailed Procedural Steps:*

#### *Introduction*

The principles of human action describe an environment that questions many of our traditional assumptions about how things work in organizations. But how do we change our behaviors and those of others to reflect these new insights? Undergirding the answer to that question are the core features of reflective human action: authenticity, ethical sensibility, and spirituality. Activity 5 will explore the meaning of authenticity in leadership. (Show transparency: *Authenticity is being true to one's own personality, spirit, and character*).

#### *Experiencing and Processing*

1. Conduct a Gripe and Glee Discussion--In groups of four or eight, half of the group describes situations where authenticity was experienced. The other half describes situations where inauthenticity, not authenticity, was experienced.
2. Share in the large group.
3. Dialogue in dyads: Develop (from these authentic and inauthentic experiences) some guidelines for demonstrating authenticity. Share a few on newsprint.
4. In the large group, combine and reorganize ideas into a list of guidelines for authenticity. List guidelines on transparencies.

### *Synergizing*

Genuineness and a refusal to engage in self-deception characterizes authenticity. It "entails action that is both true and real in ourselves and in the world. We are authentic when we discern, seek, and live into truth, as persons in diverse communities and in the real world. What distinguishes leadership from other forms of action . . . is that leadership calls forth authentic action in the commons" (Terry, 1993, pp. 111-112). In other words, authenticity is reflective engagement in those public places where leadership lives, moves, and expresses itself.

Inauthenticity is abetted by the following factors: a sense of disconnection from institutions and people, the shift to information-based activity, questions about the viability of institutions, the popularity of virtual reality--made up reality, the fragility of shared purposes, and a tendency toward relativism. However, the ability to name the challenges to authenticity gives hope for transforming the inauthentic.

Focusing on authenticity as a source for leadership is important in the areas of personality, inclusiveness of action, self-correction, engagement, vision, and ethical foundation. In these ways authenticity is as essential to leadership as the concept of action. Individuals have the obligation to apply authenticity by exhibiting wise judgement, understanding self and others, demonstrating empowerment, and exhibiting personal growth and development. Authenticity is exhibited in community by an enduring future, mutuality/regard/respect, shared power in dialogue over collective interests, equitable and adequate distribution systems, adequate resources, and ecological diversity and survival.

### *Reference:*

Terry, R.W. (1993). *Authentic leadership: Courage in action*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

(Sample leadership module activity taken from: Andrews, F.A., Mitstifer, D.L., Rehm, M., & Vaughn, C.G. [1995]. *Leadership: Reflective human action--a professional development module*. East Lansing, MI: Kappa Omicron Nu, pp. 29-30.)

# Leadership: Reflective Human Action

## A Professional Development Module

Frances E. Andrews - Dorothy I. Mütstifer  
 Carol B. Meeks - Marsha Rehm - Gladys Gary Vaughn

Published by Kappa Omicron Nu

Designed for students and professionals, this module features a theory section and experiential activities to practice Reflective Human Action.

Set I released October, 1995

(Sets II & III in 1996 and 1997) - Set I includes the theoretical framework and experiential activities for comprehending the theory, framing leadership issues, and exploring personal leadership skills.

Set II will include experiential activities for team, positional, and political leadership. Set III will include experiential activities for visionary leadership and ethical leadership.

### AAFCS Luncheon

The Kappa Omicron Nu Board of Directors cordially invites you to attend the

### Kappa Omicron Nu Luncheon

held in conjunction with the AAFCS Annual Meeting

Opryland Hotel Convention Center, Nashville, Tennessee

Sunday, June 30, 1996  
 at 12 noon

The program will include an update on KON activities and a forum to obtain ideas about the direction of Kappa Omicron Nu.

Reservations can be made through the AAFCS Registration Form.

Further information can be obtained from (517) 351-8335.

## Order Form

Leadership: Reflective Human Action Module  
 for Sets I, II, & III @ \$75.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Deliver To: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Leadership Module(s) @ \$75.00 each

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed

(Make checks payable to Kappa Omicron Nu)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

### Return form to

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## *Message from Ann Weiner*

*Chair, Board of Directors*

A productive Board of Directors meeting was held mid-January in Dallas. It was the first full board meeting for Student Representatives Elizabeth DeMerchant, Scott



Ketring, and Jill Robinson. Newly elected Board members Janelle Walter and Merry Jo Dallas were also in attendance. Utilizing input received from Conclave delegates and participants, governance policies were reviewed and revised.

The Board discussed linking chapters through the internet to facilitate communication among groups and between

the National Office and chapter officers and advisers. Information concerning the details of the implementation of this technology will be distributed as available. Board members also discussed a structure for the Leadership Academy which will facilitate cooperative ventures with other organizations in our profession.

Kappa Omicron Nu is currently collaborating with other organizations particularly through our focus on leadership. Dorothy Mitisfer, Fran Andrews, and Martha McCoy of the Study Circles Resource Center presented "Leadership for a Culturally Diverse Society" at the American Dietetics Association Annual Meeting last Fall; and our module,

Leadership: Reflective Human Action, was available to participants. Kappa Omicron Nu has joined with the 1994 Emerging Administrators, the Council of Administrators of Family and Consumer Sciences and the Family and Consumer Sciences Administrative Leadership Council to sponsor a leadership workshop for administrators as a Pre-Conference event of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Annual Meeting scheduled for June 1996. Kappa Omicron Nu will also present a workshop on leadership and diversity at the Society for Nutrition Education meeting in July.

The publications of our organization continue to provide timely thought and insight into current professional issues and future trends. The most recent issue of the *Kappa Omicron Nu FORUM* focused on "Building Community," and this will be followed by issues relating to leadership, legacies of past leaders, and making community. The last three issues of the *Kappa Omicron Nu Dialogue* have been devoted to reflective human action—the basics of this leadership theory, the web concept applied to a community or organization, and the importance of dialogue. This issue features the insights of past presidents regarding leadership.

I am pleased to announce that a new collegiate chapter was installed at Madonna University in Michigan. Dorothy Mitisfer and I conducted the installation April 10.

This has been a long, hard winter for many of us, so I wish you a warm and sunny spring.

*Kappa Omicron Nu Dialogue, Volume 6, No. 2—Executive Director and Editor: Dorothy I. Mitisfer; Assistant Editor: Lisa Wootton. Board of Directors: Anne M. Weiner, Janelle Walter, Carol B. Meeks, Merry Jo Dallas, Ann Vail, Elizabeth DeMerchant, Scott Ketring, Jill Robinson. ©Copyright 1996 by Kappa Omicron Nu, 4990 Northwind Drive, Suite 140, East Lansing, MI 48823-5031. Telephone: (517) 351-8335; Facsimile: (517) 351-8336.*