

Modern culture defines leadership as many things. People often paint a picture of the perfect movie heroine, someone with no faults who never does anything wrong, and that's who we think of as a leader. We can allow this individual to lead us somewhere that fits a goal. My identity has never been in this fixed box. I never was the one that could lead. I had many flaws that didn't put me into this box of a picture-perfect person.

I grew up in a Mexican American family, but we never did the traditional things growing up. I never had the set religion or activities that people said you should do as a Hispanic. Within my family, I have six siblings, and I am the middle child of those siblings. My voice was often pushed to the side, not being heard. I grew up being introverted and staying to myself. Growing up, I never considered myself a leader.

Within these last couple of weeks in my LDR class and legacy class, I had to define myself as this person, as this leader who can influence and change public opinion on the tip of the hat. Yet the fact is nevertheless that I can be the shyest person that you can meet. I would much prefer to follow someone who can speak the words that are too hard for me to say than to say them myself. Are those factors apart of my leadership ?

I can't truly define my identity today because it's so mixed up and changing . In today's society, being introverted and who I am is not considered a tradition. But I learned from Stacy Abrams that introverts can also be leaders, and that not all leaders fit into this picture-perfect box. People of different identities can be considered leaders in the same way as others. One example of this within Stacy Abrams's book is when she said " Power and leadership are hard, and it's especially difficult for those who start out weighed down by stereotypes and lack of access. Convincing others - often ourselves - that we can overcome obstacles takes confidence, guile and tactical maneuvers." (Abrams, 18) Within this quote, it shows the different types of

leaders we can all be, and how often we get ourselves down and get into our own heads and let ourselves be defined as certain things.

At different times in our lives, we all become leaders, and leadership emerges in many ways. At times, I used to think were not leadership moments, actually were moments of leadership. As a high school student, I was once in the debate club. When I was a freshman in highschool, I joined the club to improve both my speaking and leadership abilities. Flash forward three years, I am the captain of the debate club. And its my last year of highschool during the COVID-19 pandemic, many of my team mates were struggling with online school, and keeping up with the work needed for an upcoming tournament. It was twelve am in the morning, and no one had their work done for the tournament the next day. Therefore so that we potienally don't lose the tournament, I helped everyone make a case and made sure that everyone had that the information needed.

Despite this moment not being a leadership moment at first thought, I came to realise in the last couple of days that in that moment I showed many qualities of leadership that legacy and my LDR class were talking about. Additionally, Stacy Abrams taught me that introverts can be leaders too, and that leadership is not a set box. When I first read her book, I realized how much leadership is defined in a certain theme, but people often misdefine it. And often many leaders fail and mess up in the process of doing things but they are still considered leaders within life based on what they do.

I came to realize in the last couple of days that factors of my identity do not define who I am as a leader, and that they actually help me within my leadership identity. My identity helps bring a different perspective that helps many people understand each other. Additional I realized , with the help of Stacy Abrams, that being introverted is not a bad thing. Many leaders are also

introverted and it allows for more opinions to be heard. A good leader possess the abilities to sit back and listen. As the saying goes, actions speak louder, than words and that is how we define a leader.

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