

The Near-Death Experience: The Heart of Darkness

Marianne Brooke grew up on a small Native American reservation which nearly everyone older than twelve drank alcohol. Her

soberly by her mother, who never went more than a decade from the

is a steady stream of visitors to her home.

One evening she told her visitor that she was

the first woman inspired to read so she felt that her second adolescence among her people.

I started to wonder what could be possible.

after some time there's never a word around

meeting loads, I packed up the car and I went over to the

island and was there was a... we were... and...

could talk to them at night as well as by relationships with neighbors, friends, and family. Eventually, they succeeded and survived. But for a long time, they could not know. They could have lost everything.

Leadership Is Dangerous

In the early 1990s, Yitzhak Rabin, then prime minister of Israel, had been a leader of the left wing in Israel, particularly the religious right, by his success in getting the community to wrestle with the difficult and painful trade-offs between long-term peace and territory. The right wing refused to face the reality that they would have to give up some of their

So they began to make Rabin himself

losing the approval

so, Benjamin Netanyahu, willing to push the Israeli

death marked a high point

the voices of frustration

people every week to distribute

casualties

their prayers and they have stayed

more or less

message per se

remained and involved people do not resist

You appear 'dangerous' to people when you question their values, beliefs, or habits of a lifetime. You place yourself on 'the line' when you tell people what they need to hear rather than what they want to hear. Although you may see real clarity and passion as you are asked to give your answers, you are asking them to sustain their passion through losses and sacrifices. You will have to back when you have tried and failed or succeeded but were misled along the way. Or when you have watched the misadventures and successes of other people. The mode of leadership lies in inspiring others to take up the message rather than ignore it or kill the messenger. As a doctor, Roy faced this challenge every day. Every patient he treated every day. Doctors have to tell people that their health depends on changing their habits. Like a high school teacher, a physician has a favorite: don't take the easy way out. Don't smoke, don't drink, exercise, take medications, don't have sex without protection, break up an addiction to cigarettes, alcohol, or work. Roy saw a few doctors who were artists in the profession as well as their patients in reshaping their values, attitudes, and life-changing habits. But this was demanding and risky. Discussions can backfire if they seem unfeeling, insensitive, and every patient can find a variety of ways to damage a doctor's trust. Roy saw many ways to do this: give little advice, then no service; give little advice, then no service; while complaining about patient non-compliance—a term doctors use to describe people's resistance in taking medicine and advice or trust that they would say to themselves, "Why do people avoid taking medicine? They are resisting following the instructions: they would be the easy way, playing it safe by pandering to a technical fix, avoiding the difficult conversation, disturbing people from attempting to change the way they lived. Roy's patients look nervous and look like they are

cure, some Native Americans might place all their hopes on a new casino or look for a technical explanation for their pains (a genetic

sm). And most every Israeli would prefer giving up part of their ancient homeland. In

the Native American community, the Israeli face the challenge of adapting to a tough real-

requires giving up an important value of leadership, becomes dangerous. When

is a will to risk. This danger and the best

path. Question: Is that all that's really at stake and what's expendable?

The Perils of Adaptive Change

problems, or which they already knew the necessary know-how and procedures. We call these

because

ing new ways—changing attitudes, values, and behaviors—people

on having the peo-

the adaptive process that

in the current condition.

for loss. People frequently

ace the burden on somebody else, or call someone to the rescue.

and what's expendable?

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pre-disposition to alcohol

each case—the patient

people—people must f

ity, and the adaptation

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must deal with

and what's expendable?

problems, or which they already knew the necessary know-how and procedures. We call these

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ing new ways—changing attitudes, values, and behaviors—people

on having the peo-

the adaptive process that

in the current condition.

for loss. People frequently

ace the burden on somebody else, or call someone to the rescue.

cannot make the adaptive leap necessary to arriv

ronment. The sustainability of change depends

ble and the problem and the nature of

people cannot see at the beginning of

the new situation will be any better than

what they do see clearly in the potential

51

When fears and passions run high, people c

will have to sustain losses; rather, they want to know how you're going to protect them from the pains of change. And of course you want to fulfill their needs and expectations, not bear the brunt of

justing their unrealistic expectations, rather than try to satisfy them.

has if the situation were addressed primarily to a technical remedy.

Ve have to counteract the exaggerated dependency and promote

their respect for the process. This takes on an extremely high level of presence.

communication, but it's not like working

the situation in a technical way.

This was the case with the

in January 2000, he had a major loss of

trations, with thousands of the townspeople

slowly turn out of office, his popularity

in a year. With the

the overall

lost any connection with the people.

On February 24, he had been a hero, a

in the

to be washed away

nerous natural

ated 16 percent of

Ecuador's gross domestic product, the

foreign debt bankrupt

the start of an export

former another assault on the country's

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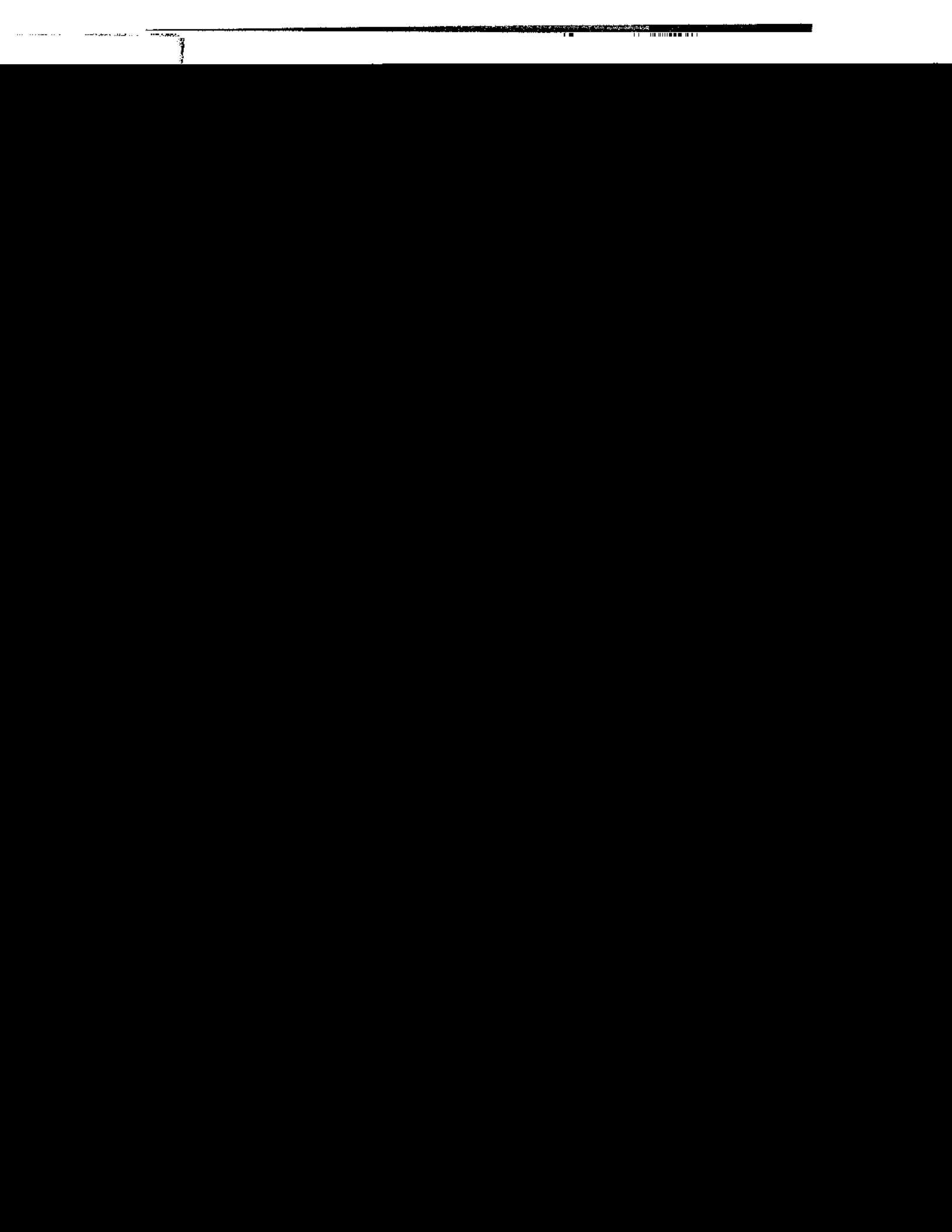
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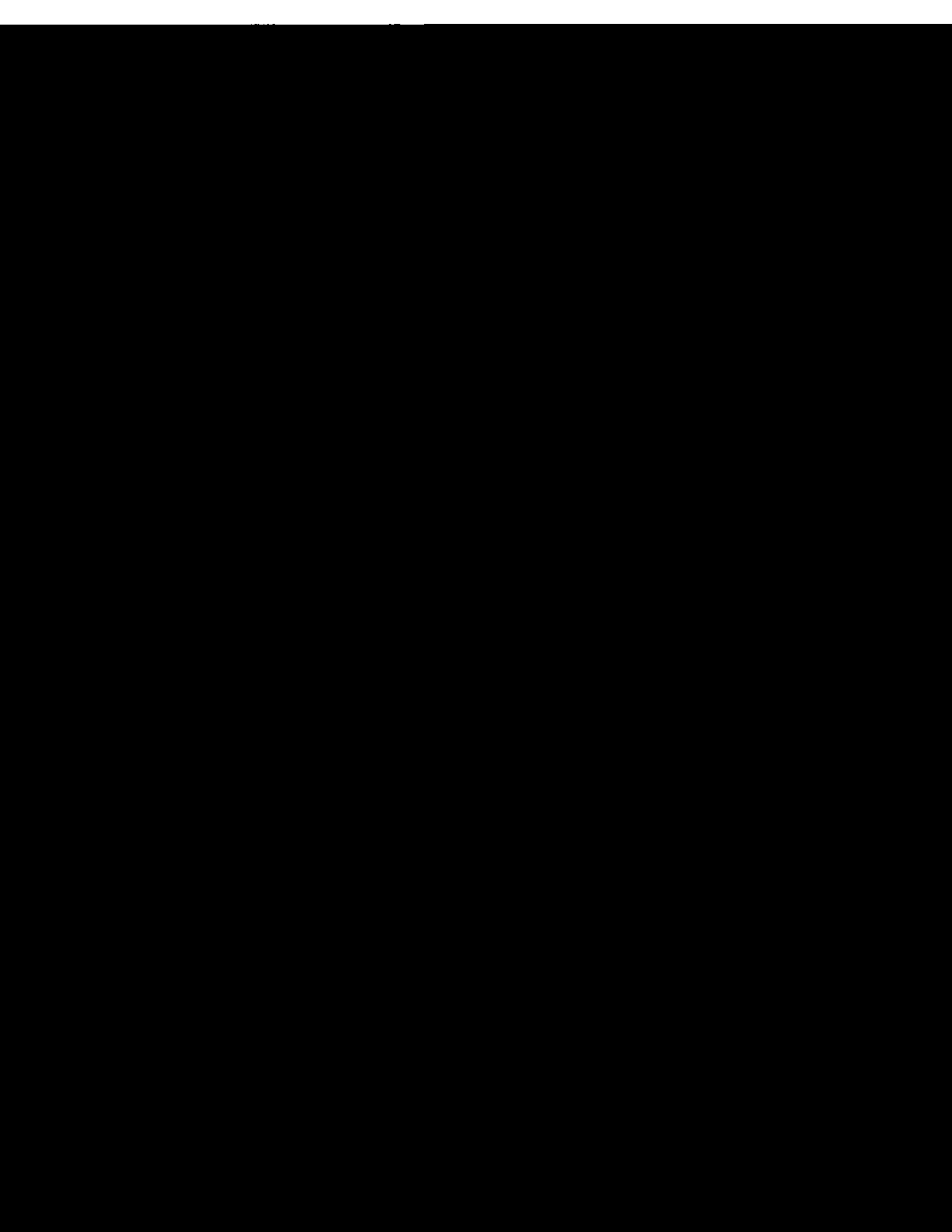
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As he soon discovered, the problem, like many tough problems, contained both technical and adaptive elements. After his effort to

IBM attorneys sent Sun Microsystems a letter demanding that Sun

stop displaying IBM data on its site. That error, of course,

IBM's work product was reviewed with IBM's existing legal

department. Excerpts

IBM blamed IBM's lawyers for

Internet would continue to grab from

with the business that

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IBM's work

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the display space auction would have closed and the opportunity would have been missed.

to act outside the narrow confines of your job description when

progress requires it. Get close to the heart of leadership, and to its

in breaking the boundaries of your authority. Danger, you might say.

For those organizations that consistently have a high level of respect,

respect, it might even be recognized as crucial for success. Along the

by the pain of disclosure. In any case, however, you will face resistance and possible

sanction for breaking the rules. You will be characterized as being out of place, out of

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disloyalty to the sources of the values that kept the relationship together. For example, acknowledging the damage from abusive

parents earlier in life also means experiencing disloyalty to them. It's

hard to sift through and salvage what's valuable from those primary

relationships and leave the chaff behind. Even though that process

fully will be experienced somewhat as a disloyalty to those relations

ships, however, change challenges a person's sense of continuity

of a woman's experience and competence in raising with

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Some of our most deeply held values and ideas come from

love—a relative, a favored teacher, or a mentor. As dis...

card some part of your teaching may be...

the relationship but in the first of...

encouraged by two others, saying, "You see, respect and care...

or never answer to anybody. With further reflection, an old skat...

lucky to have some help; she might see a reflection. One...

in authority relationships; also, there may be a host of...

challenge authorities respectfully and pursue a dialogue effectively now...

Our former student Sylvia now understands his disloyalty issue...

very well. She was part of the group of people who had the first...

DS, a rare, hereditary disease. The ads...

from people who believe that they...

concerns to protect against. A...

produced a firestorm of protest...

values of the protesters were the values...

brought up to believe in responsible sex, in the sanctity of sexual...

relationships, in people honoring each other by their faculty. And...

she knew that handing out condoms was at a way a message...

the protesters forced that to experience her own disloy...

other ED values. Upon seeing the television ads, Sylvia...

able conversa...

hadn't had a series of charged all...

as she clarified her prior...

children. She had to make some decisions about which...

values were more important to her, but getting to the other side of feeling disloyal to her loved ones was a painful process as she moved toward a more deliberate integration of herself.

The dangers of exercising leadership derive from the nature of the problems for which leadership is necessary. Adaptive change stimulates

uncertainty and even

is designed to get you to look away, the vari-

tion is too late. Recognizing these dangers, then, becomes of para-

mount importance: