

LEADERSHIP NARRATIVE SERIES

**LEADING IN EXTRAORDINARY DISRUPTIVE TIMES (Part 3/3)
- TOMORROW – CREATING THE FUTURE -**

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"Déconfiné" by Dominique Christian (May 2020)

In this third paper, we want to offer some practical elements and framework to shape more thoughtfully *"the after"* world of the pandemic, individually, collectively, socially, organisationally. At the same time, we must encourage a level of self-awareness to avoid being trapped and limited by the past or by assumptions for the future.

We shall explore a number of themes which assist leaders to begin to enact the future, not individually but collectively with their teams who have shared the experience and created the new narrative. Those themes include:

- Learning to self-care before caring for others
- Valuing what can be learned from the shared and collective experience
- Recognising that contemporary leadership is complex and often paradoxical, with the strength of being vulnerable and the power of being a remote “nearby leader”
- Avoiding the pitfall of returning to “business as usual” and thoughtfully embracing the value of disruption
- Determining that strategy must include room and opportunity for serendipity

Leading and helping others starts with self-care, self-awareness, and self-regulation

Helping others works only if “*it all starts with you*”. Remember the *airplane oxygen mask* analogy – one needs to put his/her mask first, before helping others in need in putting on theirs. This is not about selfishness, it is not about egocentric considerations, it is about being first self-aware of one’s own thinking and emotional patterns, and about building self-monitoring and learning self-regulation. Through self-care we become self-aware. Leaders improve their health and well-being for the sustained demands there will be to meet the disruptive challenges ahead and recognise the consequences of their actions on others. By doing so, they reduce the risks of burn-out and mitigate the impact of their personal leadership derailers. Being more self-aware enables leaders, therefore, to regulate their own behaviours.

When leaders take care of their own needs, become more self-aware, and learn to self-regulate their impact on others, then they become far more effective at “sensemaking” challenging or traumatic experiences. They become committed to a key leadership task of “making sense” of the world for themselves and for others.

Articulating that, chronicling the experiences not just of the past but of the present, is one of the most valuable aspects of impactful leadership. Our recent experiences need that thoughtful and self-aware sense-making. Our priorities have changed together with our vision and our plans for the future. We have new insights and new perspectives on what is meaningful or purposeful for us, and both individually and collectively we need to be able to articulate this clearly to ourselves and to others.

Adopting a self-care approach is not about “taking “selfies” or remaining in isolation. The very reverse. You do not exist except in relationship to others and, as the Abbe Pierre said, “*The only way to grow is to help people growing*”.

Valuing the pandemic and lockdown experiences

None of us would have wanted this experience in terms of the devastation it has created at personal, family, social, national, and international levels. The price we have all paid and will continue to pay is enormous. But good leaders can see the value of the experience in helping us to shape a future. In fact, the pain, suffering and sacrifice, is pointless unless we do learn the lessons from it about ourselves and about our world.

The uniqueness of lockdown, confinement and working from home have created unique experiences, often complex emotional and cognitive ones. Our deeply rooted ways of pacing our life, of structuring organisational dynamics, as well as our cultural habits and lifestyles may lead to quickly forgetting what happened during these moments and experiences. While we are writing this paper, mid May 2020, some countries are still in lockdown, others are experimenting progressive deconfinements, others are reactivating restrictions while new covid19 clusters are popping up or reappearing. Looking at it as a simple “in between moment”, is not only a pernicious bias, it would be a denial, if not an insult, to the richness of our experiences, however difficult they have been.

There will be more than one “after”. There will “un-lockdown” phases per countries (and sometimes in sub regions), post crisis phases per market and industry, after economical/social crisis phases, additional covid19 outbreaks, after covid19 times, cultural and political crisis phases.

Leaders may have to prepare themselves and their teams for long term situations far from the comfortable notion of “*business as usual*”. This crisis has brought us to a far greater awareness of our vulnerability, of the social, of economic, and environmental issues, of the rise of terrorism, of the threat of global warming, and of extinction. These were already significant issues, but for many of us they were far in the distant, concerns “*out there*” which we chose to ignore.

The value of this experience has been to bring matters to a head, to raise our level of consciousness of the immediate threats to our world and to stimulate us to action. Surely, we now all know that we cannot ignore the issues, that we must create that new world and that it has to be better, not merely different.

We should also value the experience because it has shown us some of the capability we have as individuals and as societies in coming together. We have seen that we can still have courage and fortitude, that we can still be resilient, compassionate. We have seen that we can adapt to new ways of working, to living in different ways, to limiting our destructive impact on our environment.

The Pandemic has accelerated and intensified our awareness of our world as it stands and the grave danger to our future. But it has also given us some reason for hope that we are in a position to do something about it, that we have the will, the capacity, and the capability to create “*the after*”.

Over the next few weeks and months leaders will be able to initiate conversations in the home, in the community and in the workplace around questions such as:

- *How resilient did we prove to be?*
- *What from this experience do we never want to revisit?*
- *What from our experience do we want to cherish and take forward?*
- *What aspects of the lockdown may we miss?*
- *When it was most needed, how caring, and supportive were we?*

The paradoxical virtue of leadership vulnerability in crisis times

Which leadership style is the most reliable, engaging, inspiring, and generating credibility? The answer may probably vary depending of the culture, of the predominant values of the “*air du temps*” and of the historical epoch. So, here then come the questions of: *showing or not showing one’s own vulnerability when communicating upwards/downwards or at peer level? Am I a good leader if I show parts of my doubts, concerns and feelings? Will I gain or keep respect then?*

Most leaders, sometimes with the formatting of business schools, do shape their careers with the belief to demonstrate *Be Strong* and *Be Perfect*, *Be Decisive* attitudes. Recent times have

strongly challenged this, and still are. New generations, everywhere in the world, show more inclination to value the disclosure of some vulnerability, and show more respect to those leaders who accept their own areas of vulnerability. In a recent coaching session, a senior executive showed his immense surprise in reading a comment in his LEA 360™ feedback report, in which one of his directors had written *“it is at that moment, when you showed your doubts and limits, that you became fully human in my eyes. I felt pride to work with such a leader.”*

What is this telling us?

- Do not seek to be perfect - leadership is not about knowing everything
- It is OK to have limits - use collective intelligence and leverage everybody's expertise
- Create a reflective learning environment – in disruptive times a key task is to be a ‘fast & smart learner’, so the collective and the organisation can reinvent itself
- Do not let inner feelings of vulnerability inhibit you, but show vulnerability in that light, and build on it. It may nurture followership.

Vulnerability is the antidote to arrogance. It is also the first brick of any learning process. As Socrates said: *“I know that I don't know”*. The so-called “sachants” in French (those who know), or established experts, are unable to learn. There is wisdom and power in any leader who helps people to accept and publish their own vulnerability.

Because of their status, leaders create, or not, the main conditions for their collaborators' development. Their “acts of leadership” will be role-modelling this dynamic, will be enablers or blockers for people development. Every leader is role modelling, even anti-models with their toxic ways of managing are role-models.

Sharing aspects of vulnerability, not for the purpose of expecting compassion, makes leaders stronger not weaker, and more importantly is a permission for others to disclose their own vulnerability too, and to overcome it by building mutual trust and team support.

Forget about being the hero of the situation.

Don't copy Tarzan, the movie character, whose only job was to restore previous equilibrium.

*Live with the disarming paradox that sometimes strength is your weakness,
and that weakness is your strength.*

Thoughtfully embrace uncertainty and disruption

“We have to act with the explicit knowledge of our non-knowledge”.

- Jürgen Habermas in Le Monde, 11 April 2020 -

One of the lessons of the pandemic was the wakeup call, a “*Wachet Auf!*” injunction like in Jean Sebastian Bach’s cantata, to make us realise how little we know, and how fragile our world is. No major insight for the Buddhists who live with acceptance of impermanence, of course, but for many of us we had lived for so long deluding ourselves with being all-knowing and certain.

We find uncertainty particularly demanding. Neuroscientists have provided the evidence that our brain is the organ that learns and so to it requires massive energy (through the oxygen in the blood), with a function to keep the body safe and ready. Specific parts of the so-called primitive part of the brain allow us to lower the need of energy by controlling emotions, specific responses, and habits. The control of habits brain functions are interesting to consider as they focus on using knowledge and experience that already exists. These habits are then used in a “per default” mode, unconsciously and spontaneously by people in front of the unknown, the non-understandable, the new – it is therefore a function highly challenged in disruptive and extraordinary times. As Tricia Naddaff, the President of *The Management Research Group*™, MRG, states it: “*our brain is agnostic, so for the brain there is no good or bad habit*”. Habits depend of people’s background, education, learning, exposure, and the various life experiences that took place in the landscape of their individual story. The thing is, that people tend to become very good, experts, in their habits, whether these are effective or not in new situations.

So, the primitive part of the brain, plays a key function to use and protect stability of information, of perceptions, of experiences, of stories, of codes and rituals, or to put it differently, to use “certainty” as an energy saver for the brain.

What are your certainties?

What are your preferred habits you are “activating” in crisis times?

Are you aware of these habits of yours?

Do they serve you more in unusual times?

How can self-regulation help you remove some of them, and better embrace uncertainty?

The opposite, *uncertainty*, forces us to accept being without responses or without any clear perspective, and therefore to put energy in creating new patterns, new understanding and knowledge, new purpose, new solutions and possible actions. This is typically the function of the prefrontal cortex, which among many things has a meta-cognition role, but also requires more energy – however it can be hindered by the primitive part of the brain. Uncertainty alternatively generates stress, at moments for the best (creativity, hope, excitement) and at other moments for the worst (pain, inhibition, fear, aggressivity, exhaustion). It is a double dynamic, linked to the functioning of the two parts of the brain described above, and which is essential to either reboot or to reshuffle our brain and gain an opportunity to learn. A double dynamic that also requires a lot of energy, which is exhausting, and even more so when uncertainty lasts over a long period of time.

Many have experienced this double dynamic during these pandemic times – with moments of hope, creativity and energy to project oneself in “the after”, followed by moments of doubts, of low energy, of fatigue, of anxiety about “the after” and a feelings of helplessness about influencing the future. A colleague of ours, Hervé Saint Aubert from *CC International*, described this as a succession of “*stop & go*” moments.

Most leaders, and individuals have experienced this during the lockdown time. It was also visible in the ways people analyse, comment, and communicate during these times (Politicians, experts, leaders, journalists). An external observer may read it as a normal healthy process of enaction and learning ... but for the people working below, it is often experienced as chaotic, erratic and as an additional source of uncertainty. Being mindful about the cognitive “*stop & go*” dynamic and explaining what we go through, will make a major difference.

The good or bad news is that not everyone reacts in the same way to uncertainty. The Covid19 pandemic has provoked numerous disruptions, impacting people, and often in a domino effect. Leaders can decide to stay in their comfort zone and ignore it, to select only a few to focus on, but the broader reality will remain as it is more systemic in its nature. The economist tradition, to handle one disruptive factor at the time, with the famous *Ceteris Paribus* approach (“*all other factors being equal*”), is simply irrelevant, non-effective and dangerous.

This is the time for leaders to listen and to acknowledge that team members and colleagues are experiencing a whole assortment of emotions about the disruptive impact of Covid19 and

its aftermath. These include disruption to routines, work-life balance, community involvement, leisure activities, work pressures through to anxiety about future job security, fears for personal health and the welfare of family and friends, including experience of the death of relatives or friends. These are equally disruptive to us as individuals, and just as relevant, as the “big issues” of environmental impact, global recession, long-term mutation of pandemics. It is a time, therefore, when we are acutely aware of uncertainty and disruption.

Few of us find this comfortable. We long for peace and quiet, for order and familiarity. For leaders at such a time, therefore, to “embrace” uncertainty and disruption may seem particularly out of touch.

Here lies another paradox. At one level leaders must enable people to give voice to their fears, to talk at length at the impact of disruption and uncertainty on them, and to show genuine respect and sympathy. It is important to facilitate such discussion and to create a culture in the home and in the workplace where people can express their feelings.

But at the same time, leaders can and should help themselves, and then help others to see that through uncertainty and through disruption come the opportunities for new thinking, for new experiences, for new and potentially better ways of living. There needs to be that positive sense, that hopefulness that allows us to live through an experience, however traumatic, and be strengthened ourselves by it.

“Thoughtfully embrace uncertainty and disruption” may seem hard to accept in the rawness of this moment, but it is the way through the experience to a positive outcome. It is also in all reality the *only* way forward. Scientists are already beginning to warn us that we may have to live with the pandemic for a long time, some say forever. That disruption and uncertainty will be an enduring issue for us to face, not an uncomfortable transitory phase. This changes everything. Leaders will have to lead the way in having a fresh and positive perspective on how to not only manage and live with uncertainty, but to use it in creative and beneficial ways.

MULTILEVELS OF UNCERTAINTY TRIGGERED BY THE PANDEMIC

- The disruption to people's routines, balance, needs
- The disruption to people's work-life balance (*work from home, home-schooling, dispersed family or regrouped family*)
- The disruption to people's social life, community, religion, sport ...
- The fear of being exposed to the Covid19 or to be at risk for family
- The death of family members, relatives, or colleagues, by the Covid19.
- The change in of nature of people's job (*format, content, purpose, relevance, pace, professional interactions, deliverables*)
- The sense of purpose and achievement linked to what they do (*"if only the indispensable activities can continue, and I am being asked not to work ... what is the value of my work?"*)
- The sense of engagement in the company in the light of corporate decisions during the pandemic: downsizing vs protecting employees; focus on shareholders (*increase of dividends*) vs focus on stakeholders (*funds to support employees in difficulties, transforming industrial plants to produce for free hydroalcoholic gels, medical devices or masks, ...*)
- The sense of uncertainty about the future (*health, job security, workplace, financial resources, parents, children...*)
- Their plans and projects (*weddings, travels, holidays, promotion, investments, ...*)
- The support, the care, and the presence they get from their employer, their colleagues, and their boss

Ignoring these multi levels of uncertainty and disruptions will maintain people in unnecessary and negative stress and hinder the emergence of new options. Leaders must help their teams face it positively and with confidence in themselves and in others.

On May 9th, Jean Sibilia, professor and dean of the *Faculté de Médecine in Strasbourg, France*, who was asked to intervene in front of the town council of Strasbourg, started by saying: *"In front of the questions and uncertainty generated by the pandemic, no one today, should it be at Harvard, the Institut Pasteur, or any of the prestigious organization, no one can predict how the future will be in one month or in six months. People may only do speculations, making scenarios."*

The Covid19 disruptions are changing the setup, therefore:

You have to create, to make a new state appear.
It is crucial to initiate and practice a new type of strategy making,
no more, or at least not only confrontation strategy,
but also, a strategy of creation,
of building on the opportunities given by a modified chessboard.

The paradoxical benefits of remote leadership presence

For the last decade, the world of humanitarian organizations, such as the *International Committee of Red Cross* (ICRC) and some UN organizations, have been considering what kind leadership can make a difference in high volatile and exposed contexts. Humanitarian leaders in the field must navigate daily in a VUCA world (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous). It is already their “normal”. The ICRC has identified a combination of specific leadership domains that do make a real difference, and among these are “*sensemaking*” and “*leadership presence*”. There is much to learn for leaders in all industries being exposed to the VUCA equation of the pandemic.

A research by a colleague of ours, Feena May (CEO of *The Inspiring Company* and former head of Learning and development at ICRC) shows that “*leaders embody the role of sensemaking through their **presence**, which is defined as the energetic space an individual holds. Standing in the role, a person creates an energy field (intentional or otherwise), a space of potential. This is the gravity of a leader; this is the act of presence. Gravity is a force which compels movement. So too presence is a force that compels movement. Gravity is that unseen force, unnoticed until an object is placed within its field - then its effect can be observed. The presence of a leader is similar; it is unnoticed until an object is placed within its field to see if anything is different. The challenge for leaders is to be aware of their force of presence; it is their presence which, like gravity, effects the experience of the environment and the quality of the relating*”.

Leadership presence works if it is lasting and sustainable, which implies authenticity, a way of perfectly aligning to the deep motivational drivers of the leader. Finding the “acts of leadership” that fit right and are sensemaking “in the right moment”, is what creates presence and impact. Playing a role as a leader by following a checklist in a prescribed recipe book of leadership instructions will sound fake and will attract no followership. Think of children ... they immediately know when an adult is “playing a role” or is authentic.

The *Management Research Group™*, MRG, has observed in a study conducted from 2018 to 2020, based on 5063 leaders from 15 countries, who took the LEA360™ (*Leadership Effectiveness Analysis®*), that in crisis times *connecting skills* combined with *presence* are essential. “*In crisis times, people need managers to be connected and to facilitate connection*” (Tricia Naddaff, CEO of MRG, May 2020).

In the VUCA world, *“presence also implies the ability to integrate the surrounding connections, to be able to summarise and synthesise these connections so that they can both be taken into account and given a meaning that is shared. Thus, presence becomes an intensity of being, the basis on which one can be an integrator and sense-giver to the system and the individuals within it” (Feena May)*. These last weeks, *Microsoft* reinforced the importance of connecting for their leaders and clients using TEAMS, with guiding messages such as *“During remote work calls, we jump straight to work after a brief mandatory round of greetings - which many skip as well. But in these challenging times, it’s more important than ever to connect with our colleagues beyond work”*.

We have seen organisations measuring the real benefit of introducing in their remote and virtual meeting, explicit social and connecting moments – for example by opening a virtual meeting room a few minutes in advance, and by allowing the informal connection and social time as if people were entering a normal meeting. *Microsoft* is inviting its senior executives to role model this by tying it up in their habits.

Leadership presence is not a given simply because a leader puts in an appearance at an event or on a virtual meeting; it takes focus, self-awareness, and regular attention to read the setting and others and to be in the moment fully attuned to others and drawing deep from those all-important authentic leadership values which are at the heart of their being. Remote leadership requires even more so a high level of attention and agility. Leaders must develop the ability to remain a presence whilst physically being away from the workplace. They must purposefully connect with those they do not see regularly and to maintain personal contact with people, even remotely. They must show genuine interest and regard for the myriad people in organisations who have back-office or functional roles who are still serving the needs of that organisation and must feel valued. Developing a remote leadership presence takes time and is a conscious effort at first, but it nurtures the sense of belonging especially when threats are greatest.

Banish the phrase “business as usual” from your vocabulary

The pandemic has generated stress, but has also offered other perspectives, has created experiences of different ways of working, of interacting, of collaborating, and thus has open the door to “new possible” and hopes for a different future. The pandemic has also shown the

dramatic limits of our human world, of our governance models, of globalization mechanisms, of the liberal society and business models, and therefore the fragility of our life.

In a recent French television interview, the French philosopher Raphael Enthoven was questioned if “the after” world will be different, as so many people voice this expectation. His answer was striking, because if we look at human history almost no major historical pandemic or war led to significant changes in each “after”. Of course, some changes happened, but do they radically lead to a reset? Leaders will have a key role to play to support and enact courageously a different vision of the world. And they have to do it now.

There is conjunction of favourable factors, many factors, that as in the force-field theory of Kurt Lewin, may help leaders help the model switch to a different “after”. One of the important factors is that people from so many nations of the world have been expressing, more and more loudly, their expectation for such changes. The dichotomy of attractive and non-attractive employer brands of many organization and businesses increases talent attraction issues. For what kind of employer will people want to work for in the new world ahead? Organisations that act as change makers for a better world and have banished “business as usual” or companies who desperately stick to old world thinking and long for a return to the “good old days”?

The opportunity for leaders, at all levels, is to go into the workplace and foster a creative playground, by initiating through their acts of leadership a new sense of purpose, by narrating and chronicling progress towards new values and visions and by creating new sense that owes little to the past and expects far more of the future. This is a risky and thrilling opportunity, leaders can facilitate themselves, with external facilitators, and through the collective intelligence of their people and teams... but they have to embody it, to own it and take it seriously. The bases of tomorrow’s leadership vision and approach are being established now, during the crisis times. Leaders should not be obsessed with Covid19, that may have been the starting point, or a catalyser, but it is not the ending nor was it ever the only significant challenge we faced and nor will be the last time we have to overcome global existential threats.

Culture is ever evolving and is both organic and dynamic. Traditions change, habits can and should be broken and then re-created around new mindsets, new perspectives, new collective purpose, new ways of operating and new behaviours. Reacting to these, or owning and

becoming an architect of these with our teams will be the tactile and visual way in which we free ourselves from the constraints of the past, and move ourselves albeit with hesitation, to our own future and to the futures of succeeding generations.

Teams are far more ready to embrace significant and disruptive changes than most leaders think. Contrary to “business as usual” thinking we are not hostile to change – when it is for the better. The pandemic has demonstrated that within a few hours, people could respond, absorb and implement radical changes, as long as the decisions are meaningful and provided a clear purpose (“working from home” became feasible with 72 hours, after years of “no way” in many companies). But what people may accept and endorse in “extraordinary times”, may not be accepted anymore in the “after”, as the purpose linked to the context will change.

Leaders will be followed if their decisions and initiatives are sense-making, and “going back to business as usual” will be disengaging for many people. Leaders may not be able to offer “comfortable old truths”, nor an easy journey ahead. They certainly cannot offer certainty or freedom from anxiety. There can be no easy reassurance or simple solutions to complex problems. They may be clear opportunities for leaders to sit and engage differently with their teams in order to define new features for “the after”. Supporting a “*Business NOT as usual*”, may unleash creativity and allow collectively to redefine priorities in a forward-looking statement of intent:

- Announcing clearly and unequivocally that tomorrow cannot be a repeat of yesterday
- Guiding the mindsets to be in *leaping* to the future mode (versus “bouncing back” to the past)
- Identifying what the teams would regret not to have done, experimented, and tested during this unusual time
- Discussing and defining the “why” of the overall purpose of decisions for the future
- Redefining “stakeholder value” away from mere financial metrics and towards community and social benefit with a far greater commitment to corporate social responsibility (*e.g. food distribution in hospitals, allocation of dividends to social funds, change of activity and services to support community needs, ...*)
- Giving space to teams by showing that is not the talk of “leaders and is not about “new norms” but about creating with others something that is aiming for the better.
- Being honest with yourself and with others – as “the after” times will be complex, faltering, and prone to mistakes.
- Recognizing that business is not just about “financial reserves”. Thanks to the pandemic, we have re-learned that it is also about “people reserves” – the talent, resolve, commitment, initiative, sheer stubbornness, grit and “sisus”.

Entering in “the after” with a new collective and personal narrative

As we developed in our Part 2, one of the major acts of leadership is about building a new narrative. But this is not a one-off event or workshop. Create that narrative... co-create - but keep it fresh, alive, invigorated, constantly repeated and a continuous process nor a mission statement, not a staged event, but an ongoing dialogue, a building and refreshment of the narrative which not only describes a single and dramatic experience, but goes on to continue to articulate the future, and celebrate all that can mean. Our narrative, your narrative, is not a historical statement, and afterthought or hindsight... but both a SIGNATURE ("This is my identity") and a STATEMENT OF INTENT. Do not write the narrative as a history, but as a “captain’s log” of the here and now and of the future.

Like in compelling stories, or in good Netflix series, we should remember Marc Aurele, Roman emperor, and philosopher, facing times of radical transformations, who understood that a good narrative is a *chronicle*. Chronicles are alive, evolving, capturing the changes, and most importantly reveal over the time the evolution and transformation of the psychology of the main characters and their roles in the narrative.

Have a strategy but leave room for serendipity

Here comes one of the most mysterious, if not magical, elements of any strategy, planning for the unplanned - Serendipity. It refers to this awkward notion that came from one of Horace Walpole's novels, written in 1754, whose story was taking place in an imaginary country of *Serendip*. One of the three princes of the kingdom, in his numerous journeys was making extraordinary and unexpected discoveries, while the two other princes did not. Christopher Columbus is a historical reference of serendipity: navigating to India and discovering the Americas. The invention of penicillin, or the Post-It are just two more examples of “chance” discoveries. In organisational life, in leadership, serendipity can be described as the art of inventing or discovering by paying attention to what is astonishing, what is emerging or by daring to have another insightful interpretation of something. Serendipity is the positive delight, the chance finding of benefit when, perhaps least expected but most needed.

When facing uncertain times, when entering a new and unknown “after”, there is a risk to stay focused on what we want and to over-plan our future, setting it out in too much detail and

blinding ourselves in the process to the opportunity for new and unexpected delights to appear – Serendipity.

There is also the opposite of serendipity, the *zemblanity*. This notion was introduced by William Boyd, in one of his novels written in 1998, Armadillo. It refers to a notion of « unpleasant un-surprises », and to repeatedly being unhappy, being unlucky and making expected discoveries occurring by design, and by habit and by tradition.

While entering “the after”, leaders will benefit from setting the proper enabling conditions for serendipity, while avoiding the pitfalls of *zemblanity*, which indeed could be a starting point for serendipity.

We end, therefore, on a positive note which of course is where all good leadership begins. Leaders are optimistic, they often need to grind their way through difficult times but ultimately, they believe in the future. Working with their teams and learning from them, they can and will create the new after and narrate, or rather chronicle, for themselves and for their teams that positive way ahead, both planning for the future and leaving good space for serendipity. Leaders bring hope. Sometimes this is all that we have; perhaps it is all that we need.

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