

Leadership and Resilience in an Age of Uncertainty

Strengthen Your Confidence, Resilience, and
Leadership During Times of Uncertainty and Change



Presented by Jeffrey L. Russell
Co-Director

The Age of Uncertainty

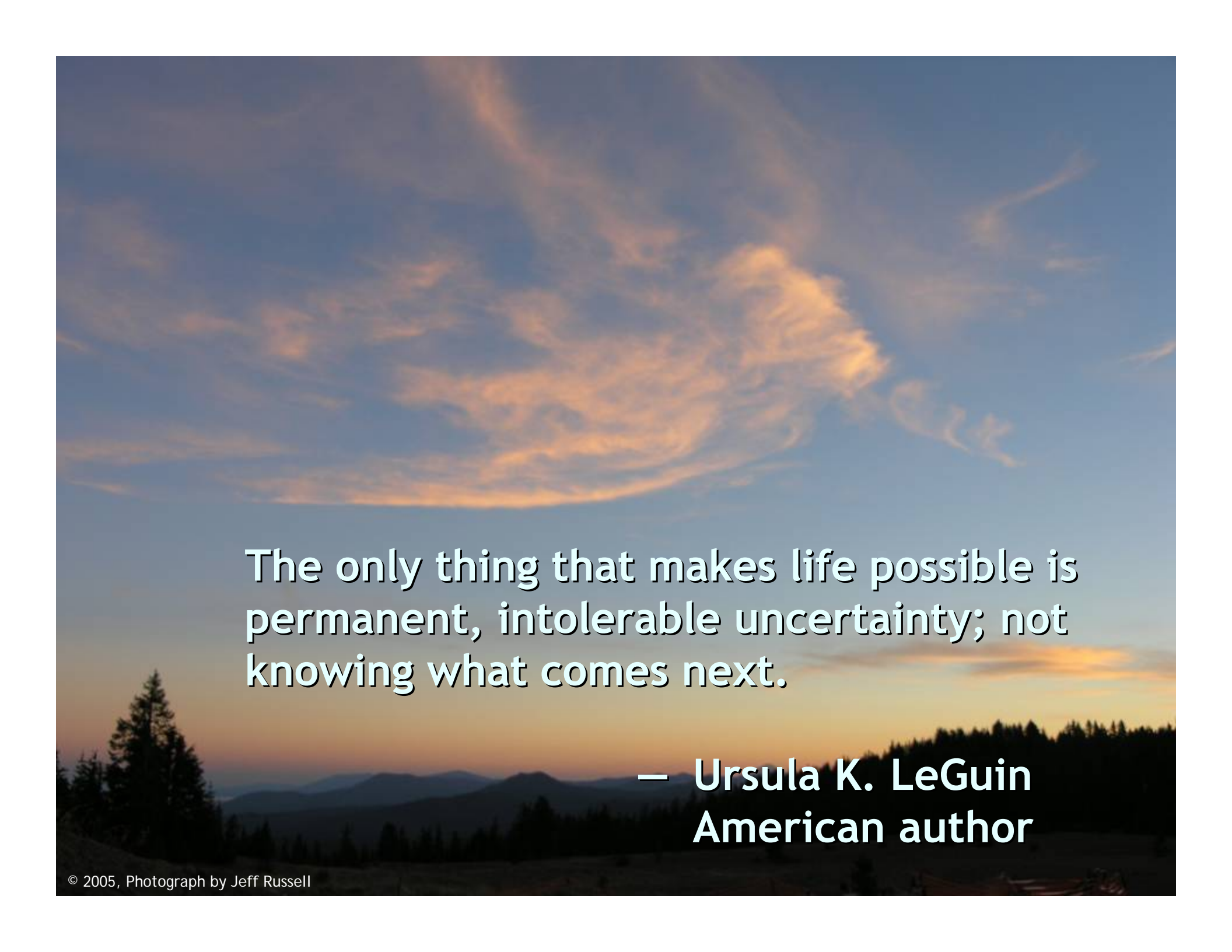
- **September 11, 2001**
- **Divided society**
- **Boom and bust economy**
- **Unsafe toys from China**
- **Fiscal constraints and service cutbacks**
- **Erosion of trust in our public institutions**



The Age of Uncertainty

- Outsourcing of jobs
- Headline driven public policy
- Global warming and climate change
- New Orleans in ruins 24 months+
- Chaos in Arabia
- Collapsing infrastructure . . .





The only thing that makes life possible is permanent, intolerable uncertainty; not knowing what comes next.

— Ursula K. LeGuin
American author

*The **Crisis** of Our Times . . .*

危機

Danger!

Hidden Opportunity



**Antwone
Fisher**

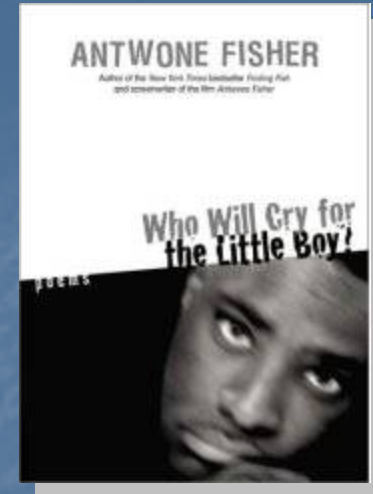
**Nelson
Mandela**

**Viktor
Frankl**

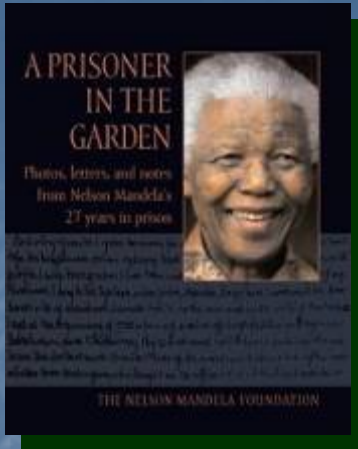
**Harriet
Tubman**

Antwone Fisher

- His father was killed by a gunshot blast shortly before he was born in 1959.
- His 17-year-old mother gave him up for foster care.
- 14 years in foster family – where he was physically and psychological abused and where he was sexually abused by a neighbor. Withdraws into himself.
- Foster parents dump him . . . Sent to reform school – although he had no criminal record.
- Becomes homeless at 18 when the State gives up its “hold” on him
- Joins the Navy – after episodes of explosive anger, begins an 11 year healing journey.
- Leaves the Navy. Works as a security guard at Sony Pictures while enrolling in a screenwriting class. Is “discovered” by a producer on the Sony set.
- 2001 publishes his memoirs Finding Fish – becomes a NYT bestseller.
- Writes screenplay of this life. This becomes the bestselling movie Antwone Fisher, directed by Denzel Washington.



Nelson Mandela



- 1918, born in a rural black homeland of South Africa.
- Father's death lands him in the care of a powerful relative.
- Runs away from his guardian to avoid an arranged marriage, he apprentices to a law firm — where he is exposed to the injustices of apartheid. Studies law and becomes an attorney.
- He shuns a comfortable life to take up the cause of democratic nonviolent revolution against apartheid.
- Government brutally crushes democratic efforts, bans ANC, and arrests Mandela.
- Incarcerated for 27 years in Robben Island Prison.
- Declares: “**Any man or institution who tries to rob me of my dignity will lose.**”
- Organizes an “Island University” where work details and recreational breaks become classrooms in philosophy, history, economics, politics, literature, etc.
- 1989 begins secret negotiations with government for his release and the peaceful transition to democracy.
- 1990 first democratically elected President of South Africa.

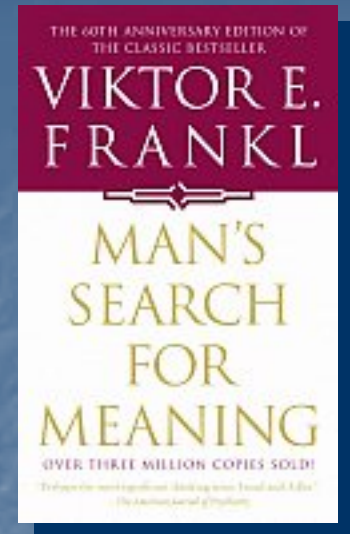
Harriet Tubman

- Harriet Ross was born into slavery in 1819 or 1820, in Dorchester County, Maryland.
- Raised under brutal conditions, subjected to whippings as a small child. At the age of 12 she was seriously injured by a blow to the head, inflicted by a white overseer when she refused to assist in tying up a man who had attempted escape.
- Marries John Tubman at 25. Five years later leaves her husband and escapes slavery when she feared she would be sold South.
- Given a piece of paper by a white neighbor with two names, and told how to find the first house on her path to freedom. Travels the Underground Rail Road to Philadelphia where she meets William Still.
- Begins relocating members of her family to St. Catherines, Ontario.
- Personally guides more than 300 person to freedom as a Conductor on the Underground Rail Road.
- During the Civil War, Tubman served as a soldier, spy, and a nurse.
- After the Civil War, moves to Auburn, New York . . . Where she began her work for the rights of women.



Viktor Frankl — 1905-1997

- Born in Vienna. At age 4 wanted to become a doctor.
- 1928 organizes free counseling centers for youth in Vienna.
- 1930 earns his doctorate in medicine. Continues training in neurology and runs psychiatric unit.
- 1938 Nazis invade Austria. He applies for a VISA to the U.S. — but decides to stay to care for his elderly parents.
- 1942 appointed director of neurological unit at the only Jewish hospital in Vienna. He begins writing The Doctor and the Soul.
- 1942: He marries, but soon his entire extended family is arrested and deported to the camps. His wife, parents, and brother all perish in the camps.
- His manuscript is destroyed upon arriving in Auschwitz.
- Helps organize a camp lecture series and concert performances.
- Succumbs to Typhoid fever. Stays alive by focusing on reconstructing his manuscripts on stolen pieces of paper.
- 1945 Auschwitz liberated.
- Publishes his reconstructed book and then writes Man's Search for Meaning in only nine days — selling over 5 million copies in U.S. alone.



Resilience: re-sil-i-ence, *n*

From Latin: *resile* – *to leap back*

. . . the ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.

. . . the capability of a strained body to recover its size and shape – to bounce back – after being subjected to adversity or stress.





It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the most responsive to change.

— Charles Darwin

**British naturalist
c. 1809-1882**

What Resilience Looks Like . . .

Resilient people . . .

- View problems and challenges as opportunities.
- Learn from their mistakes/failures.
- Succeed despite their hardships.
- Seek out new and challenging experiences.
- Don't let anxiety and doubts overwhelm them.
- Have a sense of humor and realistic optimism under stress.
- Don't feel shame or depression in the face of failure.
- Transform helplessness into power.
- Move from being a victim to being a survivor.

Why We Need Resilience @ Work

- Rapid changes in our environment.
- Multiple changes occurring simultaneously
- Pressures to do more with less.
- The need to play multiple roles, wear multiple hats, and satisfy multiple customers in our jobs.
- Work/life balance OUT of balance.
- Greater workplace diversity—with diversity comes differences . . . which can lead to conflict
- Changing job descriptions.

Why We Need Resilience @ Work

- Increasing pressure to achieve higher levels of performance.
- Outsourcing, downsizing, and the fear of job loss.
- Project overload.
- Loss of control over our work.
- Uncertainty about the future . . .
- **Because *change* is constant . . . It's how we respond to it that makes the difference**

The Journey Through Change



As we (individually and organizationally) move from *stability* into *chaos*, there is a greater need for resilience . . .



**There is nothing permanent
except change.**

— Heraclitus

Without Resilience . . .

Our anxiety, self-doubt, confusion, frustration can . . .

- erode our personal effectiveness and job performance
- create higher levels of mistrust and resistance
- negatively affect our personal health and well-being
- decrease our ability to find the “hidden opportunity” that is essential if we are to make the change work for ourselves and the organization
- stifle our creativity, innovation, and problem solving capacities
- make the “next change” that much harder . . .

With Resilience . . .

We will be more able to . . .

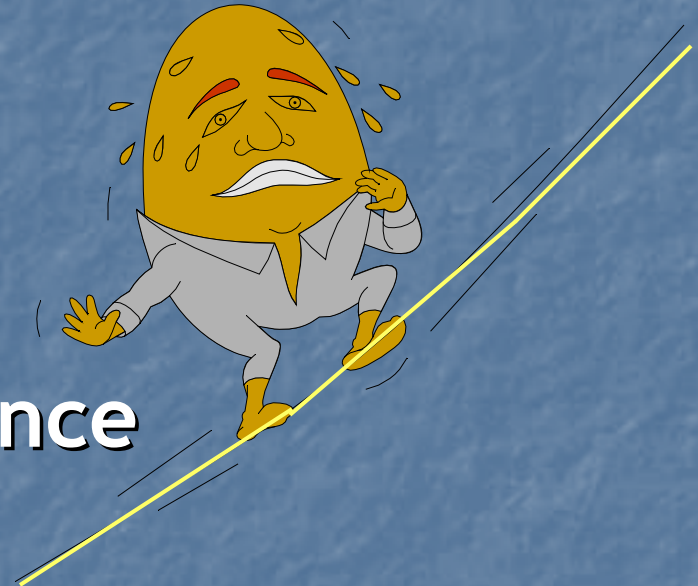
- view change as an opportunity for learning and growth
- discover the “upside” of every change – no matter how difficult or traumatic
- shape or influence the change such that it works *with* and *for* us
- handle multiple changes simultaneously
- help others through a change
- view setbacks not as fatal personal flaws or failures – but as temporary states
- have the capacity to see beyond the stress, anxiety, confusion, and frustration of the moment
- view the larger picture and grander vision of the present and emerging future

Resilience is a Mindset . . .

- Resilience is less about who we are than about how we *think*.
- Our mindsets or “**mental models**” directly influence and shape how we view the world and how we view ourselves in the world.
- This view of self, in turn, influences how we **respond** (our behaviors) to adversity and stress — with a healthy/productive response or an unhealthy/unproductive response
- The strength of our resilience mindset and the force of our behaviors enable us to, in turn, influence or **shape our environment**.

Develop Your *Resilience*

- Self-Assurance
- Personal Vision
- Flexible
- Organized
- Problem Solver
- Interpersonal Competence
- Socially Connected
- Proactive



First Dimension: Self-Assurance

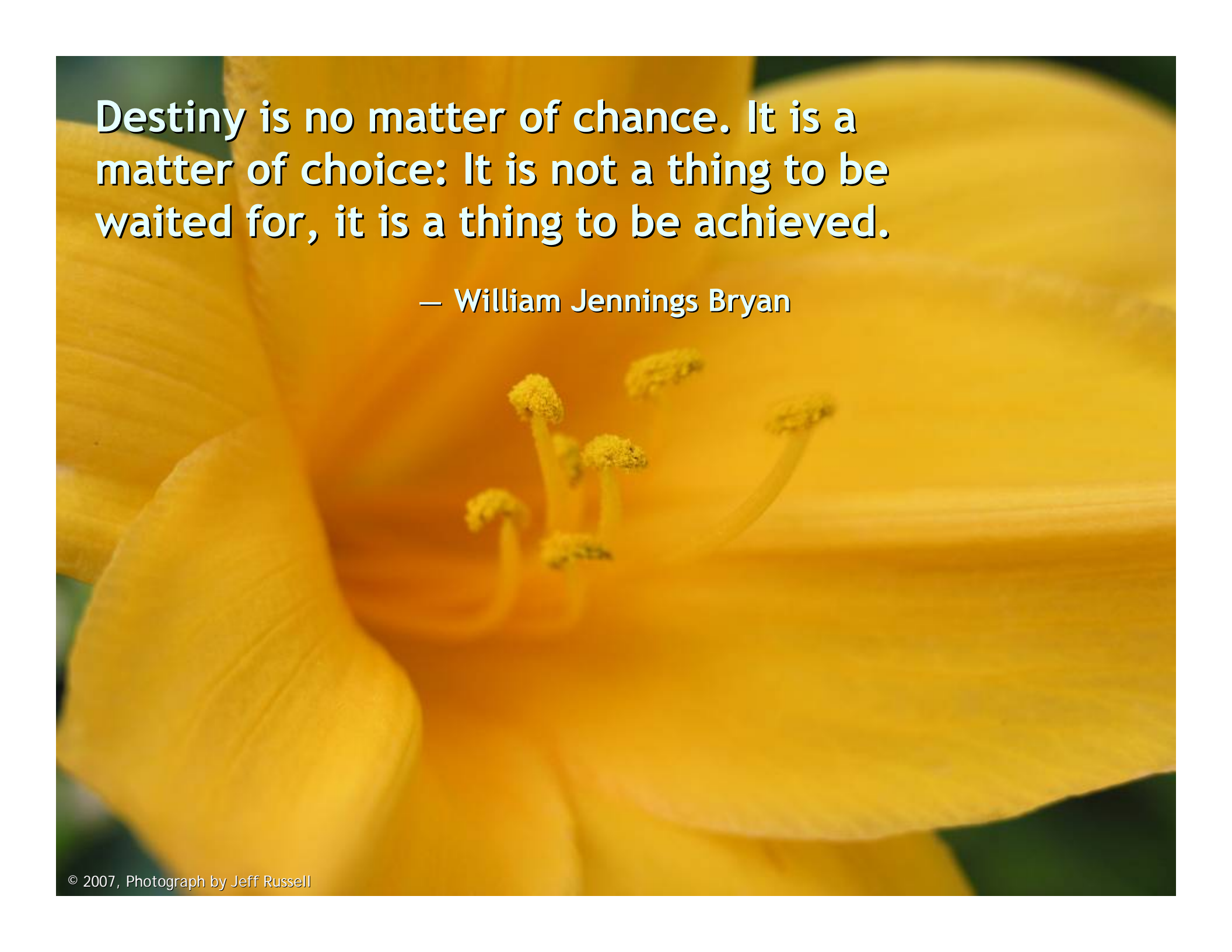
- Viewing the world as complex and challenging . . . But filled with opportunity.
- Holding a positive self-perception.
- Confident in one's ability to meet any challenge with hope and realistic optimism.

You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You *must* do the thing you think you cannot do.

— Eleanor Roosevelt

Second Dimension: Personal Vision/Purpose

- Knowing what you believe in.
- Having a clear vision of what you want to accomplish/achieve.
- Approaching adversity and stress with a sense of hope.
- Belief and purpose carries you forward into life.



Destiny is no matter of chance. It is a matter of choice: It is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.

— William Jennings Bryan

Third Dimension: **Flexible/Adaptable**

- Aware of and sensitive to changes in the environment.
- Able to shift gears in response to what is happening.
- Remaining true to your purpose/vision while making room for other's ideas and opportunities . . .

Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape.

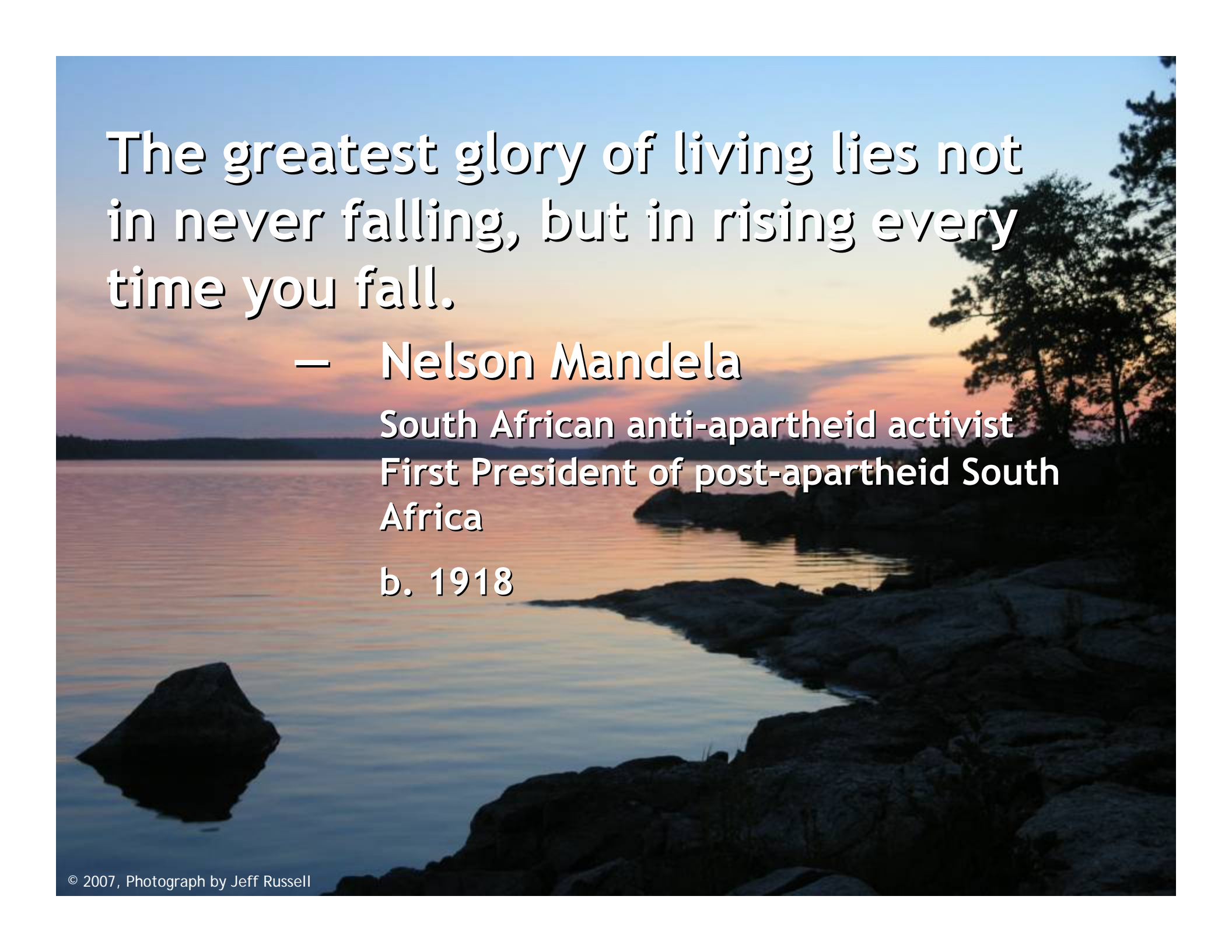
— Dr. Michael McGriffy

Fourth Dimension: **Organized**

- Creating structures and methods to bring order and stability on your own terms.
- Setting realistic goals for yourself.
- Managing the moments with calm and clarity of purpose . . .

Fifth Dimension: Problem Solver

- Thinking critically and reflectively.
- Viewing impossible problems as challenges and opportunities for learning and growth.
- Collaborating with others.
- Anticipating setbacks and missteps.
- Solving problems for the long-term.
- Viewing failures and opportunities for inspiration




The greatest glory of living lies not
in never falling, but in rising every
time you fall.

— Nelson Mandela

South African anti-apartheid activist
First President of post-apartheid South
Africa

b. 1918



Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that makes the difference.

– Winston Churchill

Sixth Dimension: Interpersonal Competence

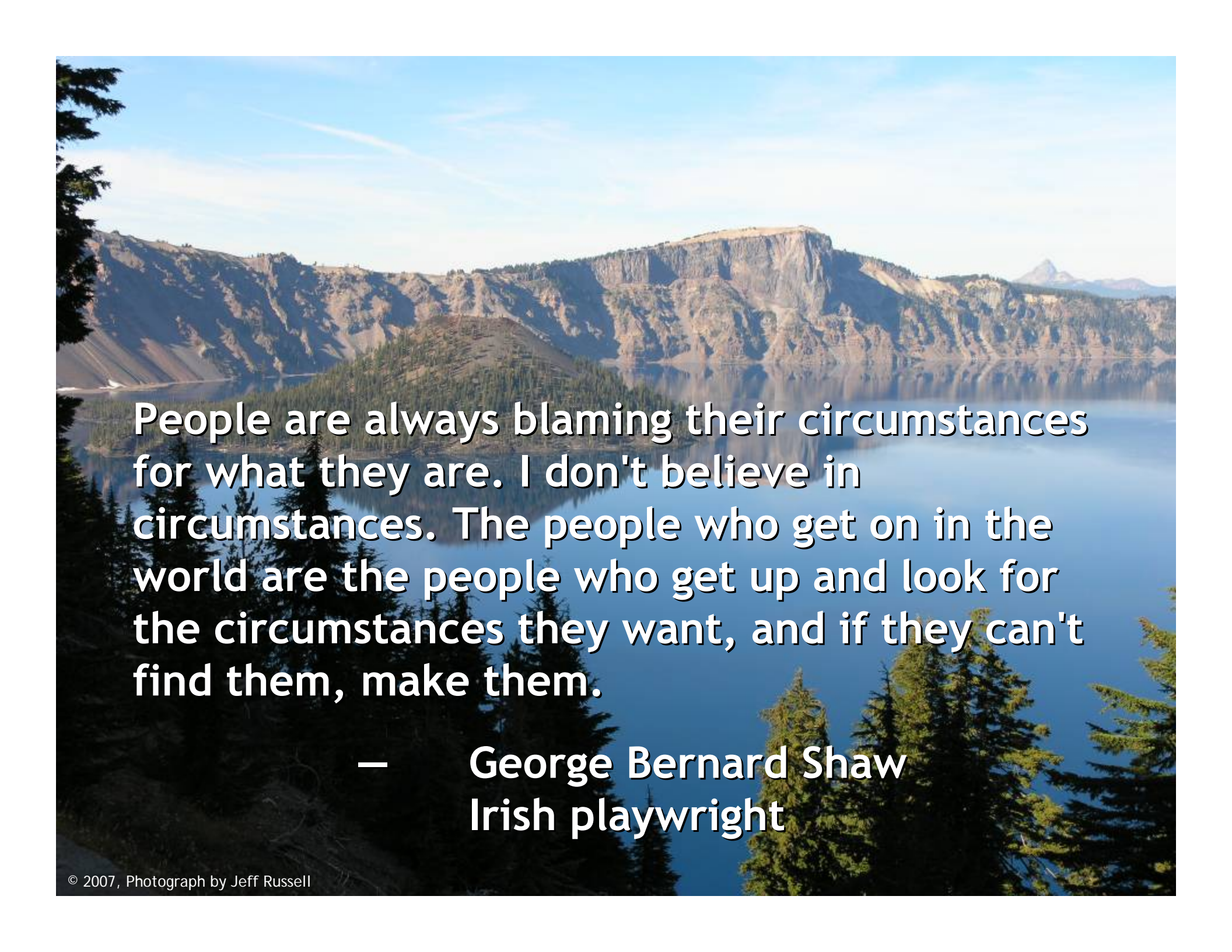
- Demonstrating empathy and understanding for others.
- Displaying emotional intelligence – *self-awareness, self-control, and social awareness.*
- Laughing at yourself.
- Seeking out others' perspectives.

Seventh Dimension: Socially Connected

- Reaching out to others.
- Building bridges, sharing solutions, exploring opportunities together.
- Discovering common ground.
- Contributing to other's welfare – giving of yourself.
- Touching others' hearts . . .

Eighth Dimension: **Proactive**

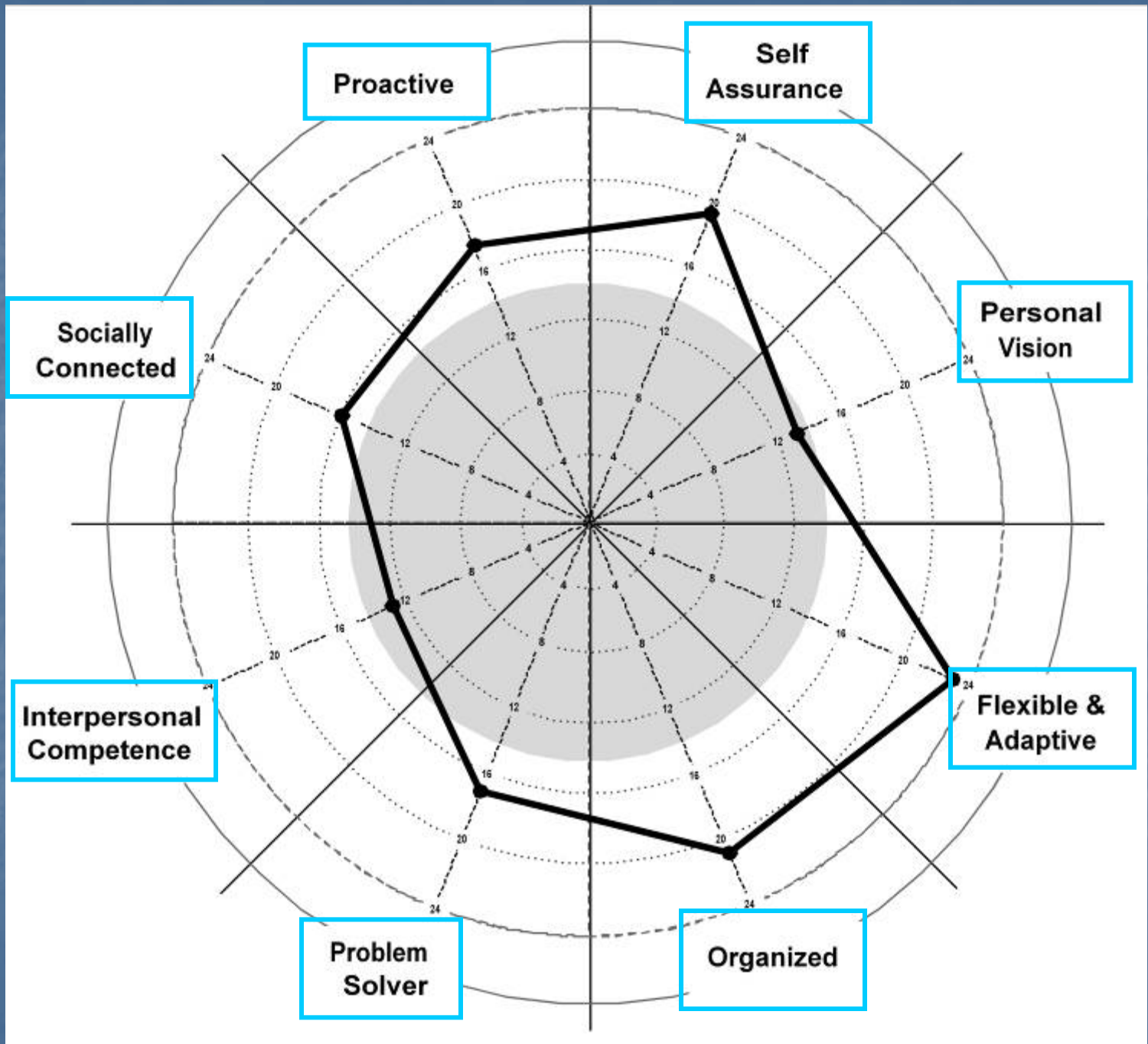
- Engaging change directly.
- Focusing on — and expanding — your sphere of influence.
- Focusing on actions that you can take vs. waiting for others to act.
- Experiencing small victories . . .
- Leading others through change by setting the example . . .



People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in the world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and if they can't find them, make them.

— George Bernard Shaw
Irish playwright

QRMST



Strengthening Your Resilience

- Know what's important to you – define your personal vision and your core values
- Reframe your mental models – challenge your assumptions about yourself and others
- Identify what you can change/influence and what you can't and focus on what you can influence

Strengthening Your Resilience

- Assume a “can do,” proactive attitude
- Take care of yourself – mentally and physically
- Reach out to others – find new connections and strengthen existing ones
- Create/build a discipline that gives you the structure/stability/order you need

The Four Agreements

New *understandings* for a new life (especially during times of stress and change) . . .

One: *Be impeccable with your word*

Two: *Don't take anything personally*

Three: *Don't make assumptions*

Four: *Always do your best*

— from Don Miguel Ruiz —

Be Impeccable with Your Word

- Speak with integrity
- Say what you mean
- Do what you say
- Tell the truth – the *whole* truth
- Don't speak ill of others . . .



Don't Take Things Personally

- Nothing others do is because of you
- What others say and do is a projection of their own reality
- When you immunize yourself against the opinions/actions of others, you won't become a victim of needless suffering

Don't Make Assumptions

- Find the courage to ask questions – of yourself and others – to develop a deeper understanding
- Communicate with others as clearly as you can
- Don't rush to judge others (prejudice)

Always Do Your Best

- Under any circumstance (in sickness or in health, in fear, in moments of anxiety, in moments of great joy), simply do the best that you can
- Your “best” will change depending upon your circumstances . . . And that’s okay!

Leadership in an Age of Uncertainty . . .

- Leadership is distributed
- Leadership is personal and developmental
- Leadership is a process to create change
- Leadership develops over time

From: Ancona, Senge, Malone, and Orlikowski – MIT

A Framework for Leadership

- Sensemaking – finding meaning
 - Seeking divergent perspectives
 - Creating *shared* meaning
 - Setting aside assumptions
 - Moving beyond stereotypes
 - Testing and experimenting
 - Using metaphor and stories

A Framework for Leadership

- **Relating - developing relationships**
 - Displaying compassion for others
 - Inquiring into other's perspective
 - Listening without judgment
 - Owning your bias
 - Being true to your word
 - Investing in others . . .

A Framework for Leadership

- Visioning – dreaming the future
 - Being excited about something . . .
 - Using stories and metaphor
 - Believing . . .
 - Walking the talk . . . Living the vision

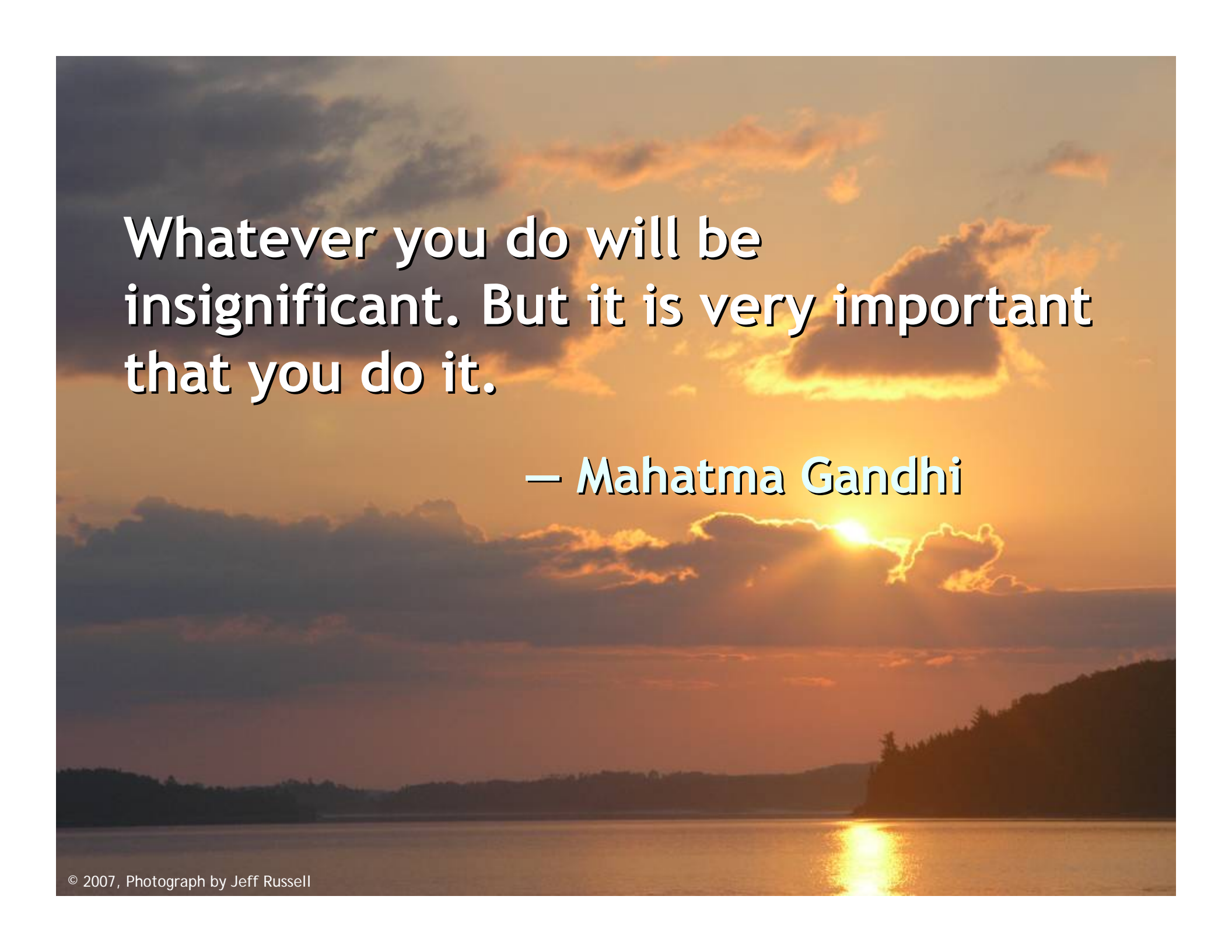
A Framework for Leadership

- Inventing – new ways of working together
 - Focusing on teams and teamwork
 - Thinking through every goal: *How will it get done?*
 - Breaking down barriers and silos
 - Integrating with *Sensemaking* . . .

**We must be the change we
wish to see in the world.**

– Mahatma Gandhi





**Whatever you do will be
insignificant. But it is very important
that you do it.**

— Mahatma Gandhi



Thank you for the opportunity to guide
you in exploring the role of leadership
in an age of uncertainty

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