

IN OUR BEST INTEREST LLC

The Resilient Leader's Reset

*Five practices from Leading While Bleeding
you can put to work this week.*

This is not a book summary, and it is not a morning routine. The Resilient Leader's Reset is five practices drawn straight from *Leading While Bleeding* -- each one small enough to start this week, and honest enough to actually change something. If you are a school or district leader running on fumes, start here.

1. Audit the Weight

The problem: Most leaders cannot tell you what they are carrying. They can only tell you they are tired. But tired is not the same as depleted -- and you cannot fix what you have not named.

The practice: Take one page and divide it into four columns.

- **Column One: What I Am Carrying.** List the actual burdens. Be specific. Not "stress" -- the unfilled AP position, the board member who emails at midnight, the parent's diagnosis you have not told your staff about.
- **Column Two: Why I Am Carrying It.** Is it required? Chosen? Inherited? Assumed? Fear-driven? Temporary? Avoidable?
- **Column Three: What It Is Costing Me.** Name the effect -- on your health, your family,

your leadership, your time, your faith, your desire to keep doing this.

- **Column Four: What I Will Do With It.** Keep it. Share it. Delegate it. Address it. Grieve it. Get professional help with it. Set a boundary around it. Or put it down.

Not every burden can be removed. But almost every burden can be related to differently. That is where sustainable leadership begins -- not with a new planner, not with another motivational speech. With truth.

Try this week: Take twenty uninterrupted minutes and fill the four columns. Then choose **one** burden to share, delegate, address, or put down before the week ends. Just one. Wisdom is learning the difference between what is yours to carry and what you were simply never told you could set down.

2. Build a Threshold Ritual

The problem: The school day does not always end when the bell does. Sometimes it rides home with you -- in your jaw, in your inbox, in the way you answer your child's question while reading an email. Then home receives the residue.

The practice: A threshold ritual is a deliberate action that tells your mind and body: work is ending, home is beginning. It does not have to be elaborate.

- Before leaving the building, write down tomorrow's three most important priorities, so your brain stops rehearsing them all evening.
- On the drive home, choose music, silence, prayer, or a podcast -- instead of continuing every work call until you reach the driveway.
- Before entering the house, sit for two minutes and breathe.
- When you get home: change your clothes. Put the phone in a designated place for the first thirty minutes. Greet your family before you check your inbox.

The ritual matters less than the intention. Schools understand this for children -- bells, routines, arrival and dismissal procedures -- because transitions matter. Adults need them too. And here is the standard worth holding: most messages are not emergencies. They are simply messages. The ability to distinguish urgency from anxiety is a leadership skill.

Try this week: Design your own four-step ritual tonight -- write it down, keep it simple -- and run it every evening this week. Pay attention to the first thirty minutes at home. That is where you will feel the difference first.

3. Run the Balance Reset

The problem: Balance is not fifty-fifty, and it never will be. If your calendar is full and your life is empty, you do not have a time problem. You have an allocation problem.

The practice: If your life feels significantly out of alignment, do not start by designing the perfect schedule. Start with subtraction.

1. **Stop.** Identify one commitment to end, pause, or delegate.
2. **Protect.** Choose one personal priority -- a workout, a dinner, a medical appointment you have postponed, an evening with no laptop -- and put a scheduled block around it this week.
3. **Reallocate.** Shift time toward the area with the greatest current need.
4. **Communicate.** Tell the people affected what is changing. Do not just disappear; that is how boundaries get a bad name.
5. **Review.** After two weeks, assess honestly: did the change improve your energy, your presence, or your effectiveness? Then adjust again.

And ask one uncomfortable question about everything still on the calendar: *who says* this is a must? The law? Your supervisor? A contract? Or just you, and a habit of saying yes you built a decade ago? Leaders routinely discover that many "musts" are inherited assumptions. Challenge them -- not recklessly, but intelligently.

Try this week: Do steps one through four. Name the one commitment you will stop, block the one priority you will protect, and tell the people who need to know. Balance is dynamic. Your life will change, and your system has to be allowed to change with it.

4. Write Your One Sentence

The problem: Purpose drift happens gradually. Nobody wakes up one morning and decides to abandon their calling -- they just look up after three years and realize the calendar no longer resembles the mission. If you cannot say why you lead in one sentence, your calendar will decide for you.

The practice: Write one sentence. Not a corporate mission statement. A sentence you can use to make decisions. Use this structure:

I use my _____ to help _____ achieve _____ so that _____.

For example: *I use my experience in educational leadership, coaching, and community building to strengthen school leaders so they can create sustainable impact without losing themselves in the process.*

Then pressure-test it with three questions: Am I spending most of my time on work that reflects what I say matters? If the applause disappeared, would the work still matter? What am I doing simply because I have always done it?

A working sentence is better than a vague sense that everything important somehow belongs on your calendar. And the sentence is allowed to evolve -- purpose becomes clearer through living.

Try this week: Write your sentence and put it somewhere you will see it every morning. Then open your calendar and find one thing on it that your sentence would not allow. That is your next conversation -- with yourself, your supervisor, or whoever put it there.

5. Name Your Five

The problem: Leadership can put you in rooms full of people and still leave you profoundly alone. You become the person everyone brings problems to -- and no one asks how **you** are doing. I have coached leaders who could fill an auditorium and could not name a single person they can be fully honest with.

The practice: You do not need one person to meet every relational need. Build a diversified circle -- five roles:

- **The Truth Teller.** Can challenge you. Not intimidated by your title. Can say "I think you are wrong" and the relationship survives it.
- **The Witness.** Knows your story. Remembers who you were before the current success or crisis, and can place a hard season inside the larger arc of your life.
- **The Peer.** Shares comparable responsibility. You do not have to explain every acronym, political dynamic, or emotional contradiction.
- **The Professional.** A therapist, physician, coach, financial advisor, clergy member -- whoever fits the issue. Friendship should not be asked to do work that requires expertise.
- **The Joy Person.** Reminds you life is bigger than leadership. You laugh, eat, talk about something other than schools.

One person can fill more than one role. The question is whether the roles exist at all. And one

more honest check: if you are always the giver -- the mentor, the problem-solver, the one who says "I'm good" when someone offers help -- community cannot work. You have to let people contribute to your life, not just admire it.

Try this week: Write the five roles on paper and put a name next to each. Find the empty chair. Then call, text, or schedule time with one of the names this week -- not to talk shop, just to connect. Community built before a crisis is what carries you through one.

Start where the light is weakest.

Five practices. One week. None of them requires a new planner, a personality transplant, or pretending the work is easy. They require truth -- and the willingness to act on it.

Here is the part most leaders skip: do not try to do all five at once. Find the weakest light and start there. The practice that made you uncomfortable reading it is probably the one you need most.

Leading While Bleeding goes much deeper -- into the weight leaders carry, the breaking point, and the full BEACON Framework for sustainable leadership: Balance, Boundaries, Purpose, Community, Wellness, and navigating adversity without losing yourself. The book is coming soon. If you want to be first to know when it launches -- and keep receiving practices like these -- join the waitlist. Your leadership is too important to run on empty.

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