

# book review

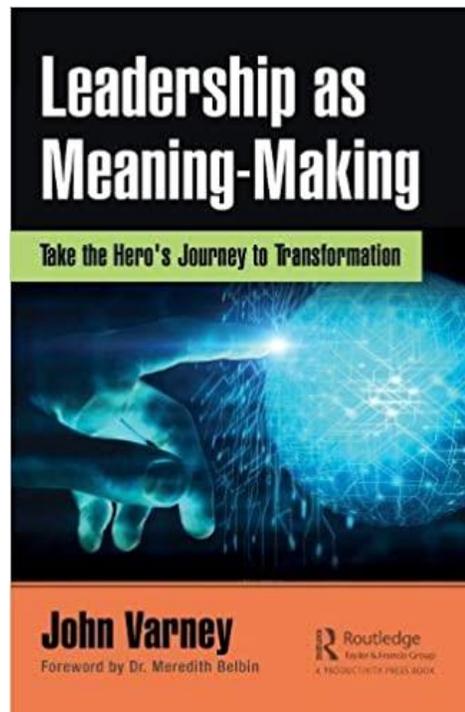
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## Leadership as Meaning Making

– **Take the Hero's Journey to Transformation**

by John Varney

published in 2020 by Routledge



This book begins with an exploration of the cyclic pattern of the hero's journey as the means to personal and collective transformation. It takes the story of the archetypical hero's journey as an allegory for the quest for inner growth through purposeful adventure. This is applicable to each of us individually, if we so choose. As we overlay it with the enneagram framework, we begin to reveal a similar pattern in all living processes.

The book communicates a broad sweep of related ideas that form a philosophy for the development of the inner qualities required for effective leadership, applicable in all walks of life.

In a practical vein, the book describes the role of mission, vision and values and how they can be co-created, so that they have substance for those involved. Purposeful leadership by mature beings enables others to make their own equivalent journeys. As maturing people engage in work, they become more conscious and more effective. Engaging in such leadership is what brings meaning to people's lives.

Our idea of leadership should not be restricted to the notion of what leaders do. An alternative kind of leadership is a flow of energy and resources towards a desired outcome. This is a flow between people who step into and out of the flow as appropriate.

This view is a counter to the empty manipulative techniques propagated by much popular writing on leadership, which pays little attention to transformative interaction. No longer do we need to await those great leaders – we are them!

Ultimately, right living brings human beings to spiritual maturity in symbiotic relationship with the flow of leadership, promoting sustainable society.

Perhaps the collection of ideas in this book will be helpful for those seeking a role in the creation of a more wholesome society. There are exercises at the end of each chapter and additional material is available to readers via the internet.