NCCO Webinars

Part 4

Series 1, Webinar 7 - 15 April 2020: Onward, We Lead

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**[1:11:45] Conductors tend to be problem solvers, empathetic people, and it's so easy to take on the feelings and problems of everyone around us, and the weight of responsibility can lead to leadership fatigue. Do you have advice for managing that as leaders? **

Eileen: I am trying to appreciate kindness, and I'm trying to appear nicer than I really am -- not to be phony, but we need to recognize kindness as a change agent in organizations. Now more than ever we need to remember that. None of us are calm, cool, and collected all the time. We need to give up the idea that leaders are superhuman -- that's a vestige of the old model of heroic leadership that omits the contribution of women and people of color. We must also reserve space in our lives to grieve not being together -- don't rush in with too much positivity, which can be toxic if it ignores the reality that our students are experiencing. One last point: I've prayed all my life that I would develop greater confidence, and it has never come. But what has come is courage.

Karen: Think of the people who aren't involved with music. We can go right to our music, and appreciate the profundity of it -- maybe this is a time to enjoy that sort of uplift, and the relief from leadership fatigue that it brings. Actually, I feel the companionship of so many people, and I'm at home, and I like that.

Catherine: It is important to hang onto gratitude. Because I tend to be an extrovert, there are days when this feels very heavy. I find it is important to be outside and refresh myself. I realized last week that I have stopped singing completely -- and I wondered "how did that happen?" So I've started singing again, working on something everyday. And then there are peanut M&Ms -- that helps!

Tim: All the things we've taken for granted and perhaps been cynical about, like Facebook, I'm so thankful for things like this now. It is so important to encourage one another during this time. I'm so thankful for people who have empathized with me, and we have got to do that for one another. The erosion of ego in our world may be one of the blessings of all of this.

[1:20:53] We have time for each of you to make a closing statement, and we have a question from a student watching: "During this quarantine do you have any tips for college students studying music to continue their growth?"

Karen: Don't be intimidated by the people surrounding you as you work and practice at home. If you need to go to a parking lot to sing, do so!

Catherine: One thing that has helped me is to talk to wise people; learn what they are thinking and why. The organizations that will come out the other side of this stronger will be the ones that have shown up for their communities in a way that addresses their current issues.

Eileen: I hope that we can maintain the sense of connection that we've gained, and that when we return to campus we will remember that there are some of our colleagues at risk of layoffs and unemployment, as well as those whose health has been affected.

Tim: Students, we represent the organizations that will be the lifeblood of the rest of your professional career. I want to say to the ACDA membership listening, would you please renew your membership in all of our organizations? If you can't afford it, I get that. But if you can, please do so. Students, contact us through the website and we'll connect you in your state for free membership. These resources are there and we want you to have them.