



**J JOSEPH LALONDE**  
Empowering young leaders with the tools to thrive in a hectic world

# BECOMING A DISCIPLINED LEADER

HOW TO CHOOSE A BETTER PATH AND GROW  
YOUR MIND, WALLET, AND RELATIONSHIPS

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# Being A Disciplined Leader Is A Choice

When you think of becoming a disciplined leader, what do you think about? Do you think about the effort and energy it takes to become disciplined? Do you think about changing your thoughts and actions? Or do you think about changing your choices to become a disciplined leader?

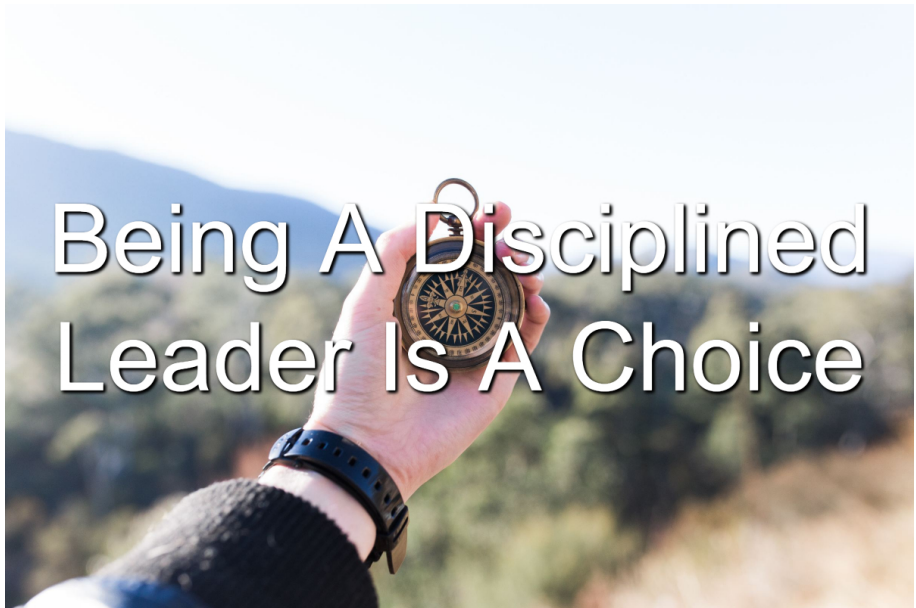


Photo by Heidi Sandstrom

The reality of discipline is that it does take energy and effort. To be disciplined means you will have to think more and do things differently.

Discipline also takes change. You can't keep doing the same things you had done in the past. Those were undisciplined actions. You want to become disciplined.

To **become a disciplined leader**, you have to begin changing the choices you make. Being a disciplined leader is a choice. A constant choice.

## Being A Disciplined Leader Is A Choice

Boiling everything down, you see that a disciplined leader knows how to make wise choices. They know how to make choices they don't want to make.

Those choices aren't because they're bad choices. In fact, the choices a disciplined leader makes are **better choices**. These choices reflect health and wellness, respect and honor, and wisdom and knowledge.

A disciplined leader knows he cannot make choices that only benefits himself. His choices have to go beyond self-preservation to looking out for his staff, his organization, and his family.

These areas of a leader's life aren't always in direct alignment with what would benefit the leader or make the leader happy. Instead, the leader has to choose to set aside his wants and desires for those of others.

And **that is a choice**. A difficult, frustrating choice as you don't get what you want. As you help others succeed and thrive. As you spend time away from loved ones.

But **the choice** is worth it in the end. Because you're willing to set aside your own desires and choose a better path, the disciplined leader sees results.

He grows his mind. He grows his wallet. And he grows his relationships.

When you think of becoming a disciplined leader, know you will have to make a choice to set aside your selfish desires. You will be making decisions based on what is best for the whole rather than the part.

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# The Power In Becoming A Disciplined Leader

To some, the word *discipline* is a dirty word. It's a word they hate to hear and hate to use.

After all, discipline doesn't sound sexy. The word connotes a dying to self. A falling in line. A giving up of oneself.



Photo by Nirav Insomniac

And it does. But that's not bad.

Discipline is a needed trait as a leader. Getting to become a disciplined leader is a good thing.

## **The Power In Becoming A Disciplined Leader**

There is much benefit that can come from becoming a disciplined leader. While you may not be able to see the benefits at first, you will be able to see them after becoming disciplined (or after reading this, haha).

By strengthening your self-control, establishing your mind, and becoming disciplined, you will:

### **Be able to say yes to the things that matter and no to those that don't:**

The shiny object or squirrel syndrome affects a lot of people. Those people are undisciplined. They are ready and willing to jump at something without fully considering the implications of doing so.

Disciplined people take a different approach. They see something new, something shiny and they examine the situation. They look at the benefits and pitfalls of chasing after the squirrel.

After pondering the benefits, they then act. They choose whether or not to say yes based on the research they've done.

The disciplined leader here is able to make a wise choice. One that is not made in haste but in wisdom.

Be willing to stop and think about chasing after something new. Think about whether or not it will truly benefit yourself or your organization. Then act.

### **Be less likely to get in trouble:**

Yes, you read that right. Disciplined people have a lesser propensity of getting in trouble.

This happens because disciplined people are able to control their emotions and evaluate their decisions more clearly. Thus, they tend to make wiser decisions.

Many disciplined leaders will choose to abstain from alcohol and drugs, extramarital relationships, and excess. They know these things will derail their hopes and dreams. So they don't do them.

Look at what you're doing. Are you making disciplined decisions or decisions that are leading you down a dark and lonely path? Make the disciplined decision to

choose wisdom.

**Be able to hold yourself accountable:**

You know what needs to be done. You've set clear goals and aspirations for yourself. You also know you need to be accountable to get these things done.

By being a disciplined leader, you can begin to hold yourself accountable. You can call yourself out for being late or not meeting your goals. Or, if you feel bad calling yourself out, you can be disciplined enough to have a close friend do this for you.

When you screw up, hold yourself accountable. Don't let yourself get away with things you know aren't right. Let the discipline you've built up guide you to do the right thing.

Discipline gives you the power to do a lot of things. It helps you avoid the shiny object chasing. Discipline helps you to avoid trouble. And discipline helps you to hold yourself accountable.

Isn't discipline pretty powerful? It allows you to do so much with so little!

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# The Habits Of A Disciplined Leader

Becoming a disciplined leader takes hard work. You have to **discipline** (duh!) yourself and break yourself of the bad habits you've created.

You're going to have to create new habits. The habits of a disciplined leader.



Photo by Saffu

Are you ready?

## The Habits Of A Disciplined Leader

### 1. They practice self-care

The first habit of a disciplined leader is the habit of self-care. This isn't a call to be selfish. This is a call to make sure you and your body are in optimal condition.

Disciplined leaders know they have to do a couple of things to make sure they're



the best that they can be. To practice the habit of self-care, a leader must:

Regularly exercise

Renew his mind

Eat healthily

Basically, self-care means you take care of your body and mind. You don't do drugs, drink alcohol in excess, or over-indulge. You also make sure you're inputting good things into your body and mind.

Find ways to take care of your body and mind and they will take care of you.

## **2. They respect their time and the times of others:**

Disciplined leaders know their time is valuable. They also know the time of others are valuable and they respect this.

These leaders show up on time. They respect the time-limits others have. And they make wise decisions in how to spend their time.

If you're late for meetings, stop being late. If you don't plan out your day, begin to plan it out. Or if you find yourself working too much or too little, change it.

Your time is valuable. You need to make sure you're making it a habit to examine how you're spending your time throughout the day.

## **3. They master their thoughts:**

Our thought lives can be one of the most damaging or they can be some of the most beneficial things we do. For me, I struggle with positive thoughts. I can easily see the downside without seeing the upside.

But disciplined leaders know their thoughts impact how their days, weeks, and years go. So, they take captive their thoughts. They place boundaries around the negative inputs they consume. They choose to see the positive side to a negative situation. And they won't let others manipulate their thought-life.

Begin to reign in your thoughts. Take captive the thoughts that shout you're not good enough or don't have what it takes. Replace those thoughts with words of affirmation.

#### **4. They focus on what is important:**

Your life can be so scattered and piecemeal you don't know what's coming up next. Disciplined leaders do their best to avoid this.

They know they can't be productive if they don't have a focus on what's to come. So they plan out their day, they know what needs to get done and what doesn't, and they focus on the important activities.

Look at your calendar. See what needs to be done and what doesn't need to be accomplished. Then tackle those important tasks.

#### **5. They communicate clearly:**

You don't get things done by communicating ineffectively. The most disciplined leaders know they have to be clear and concise in the way they communicate.

When you don't communicate clearly, you set yourself and your team up for failure. The most disciplined leaders know the key to effective leadership is to be clear in their communication.

They speak only what needs to be said and in a way that gets their point across.

Find ways to communicate clearly. Use your effective communication skills to lead well.

#### **6. They are committed:**

You don't get to become a disciplined leader without being a committed leader. As you begin to commit and *follow through* with your promises, you build discipline.

This happens because sometimes you will commit to doing something and you really don't want to do it. By following through and completing what you said you would do, you tell yourself you can do the things that aren't pleasurable or wanted at the time (though it's something you should do).

Be willing to commit and follow through with those commitments.

## **7. They reward themselves:**

This may seem out of place on the list of the habits of disciplined leaders but it is a critical habit of those disciplined leaders. When you work towards becoming more disciplined, you will struggle to continue on the path. It's not an easy or pleasant path all of the time. This is why those who are successfully disciplined know they have to reward themselves.

Whether it's a bar of Ghiradelli chocolate, a date night with the wife, or enjoying an extra movie this week, disciplined leaders find a way to reward themselves as they work on their habits. This reinforces the fact that what they're doing is good and there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

As you work towards becoming more disciplined in your habits, don't neglect the idea of rewarding yourself. You need to treat yourself to little bonuses along the way or else you'll get burned out and discouraged.

These are just some of the habits of disciplined leaders. There are many more you'll discover as you continue your leadership journey.

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# How To Become A Disciplined Leader

You may be asking yourself a simple question by now. That question is: How do I become a disciplined leader?

The answer is simple. You do what a disciplined does.



Photo by Dan Roizer

A disciplined leader:

## **Trains his mind-**

There are things he wants to do. Yet he knows he cannot do everything he desires. He must take control of his thoughts and actions.

This means he no longer does things on a whim. Instead, he chooses to do things which will push him onwards and upwards towards the goals that have been set.

He doesn't allow himself to get off-track. He pushes himself to be the best he can be.

The disciplined leader trains his mind through consuming uplifting content. He fills his mind with positivity and instruction. He may even partake in a bit of entertainment once in awhile.

### **Controls his temper-**

A leader who cannot control his temper or emotions is a dangerous leader. To become a disciplined leader, you must get your temper and emotions under control.

Before going into a rage, look at the damage you're going to cause. See who you're going to hurt. Figure out whether or not it is worth it.

Disciplined leaders look at the consequences of their actions. Many times contemplating what will be the results of a temper tantrum will compel the disciplined leader to temper their emotions and not act inappropriately.

Look for ways to control your temper. Find a mentor who will help you reign in your anger and rage. Choose to hang around people who will hold you accountable.

### **Holds his tongue-**

It is easy to spout off hurtful words. They flow like water from the tongue and they can even feel good coming out of your mouth.

Then you begin to regret those choice words. Those **hurtful words**.

Undisciplined people will allow their words to flow freely, without thought. A disciplined leader tames the tongue. He knows he **must** bring the words that come out of his mouth under control.

The disciplined leader will think about what he will say before he says it. He will choose his words wisely. And he will speak the truth.

### **Chooses to move forward-**

Many people find themselves living in the past. They see their failures and mistakes and cannot move past them. They see themselves as they were ages ago.

Their struggle is moving on from their mistakes. This is a continuing mistake the undisciplined leader has.

He becomes fearful and afraid. He chooses to stay still when he should be moving forward.

The disciplined leader chooses to see his past mistakes as just that: **IN THE PAST**. He doesn't let those mistakes keep him down. He chooses to move on.

Have you made mistakes before? Have you been hurt in the past? How has that held you back? Do you keep looking back at those times or do you focus on the future and what is ahead?

Disciplined leaders can see the future clearly. They see what is possible and how they can get there. They choose to move forward instead of staying still.

You can choose to stay where you're at or you can choose to move forward. What would a disciplined leader do?

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## Author Bio

Joseph Lalonde is a **leadership expert** who specializes in helping emerging leaders deal with the struggles that come from leading. His passion is in seeing leaders thrive regardless of their situation. He believes they can succeed!

He shares nuggets of leadership wisdom at his blog: <http://www.jmlalonde.com>. He's confident that young leaders can use these nuggets to **grow their skills** and lead better.

Knowing **you have potential**, he offers coaching to those looking to increase their leadership potential, work on personal development, or live a more full and enriching life.

If interested in his coaching services, check out his **coaching page**:  
<http://www.jmlalonde.com/coaching>