Caught, Taught, and Sought: Evolving to a Quadripartite Conceptualization

Steven Gaultney

Caught, Taught, and Sought: Evolving to a Quadripartite Conceptualization
Dr. Steven Skipper Gaultney, The Jubilee Centre 14ᵗʰ Annual Conference

Abstract: *The Jubilee Centre's tripartite conceptualization of caught, taught and sought has inspired and empowered numerous organizations globally. The University of Hong Kong is one of these regarding its character leadership program, Lead for Life (L4L), which last academic year engaged over 600 undergraduate students and 110 mentors. This paper, by one of L4L's founding designers, demonstrates how Jubilee's tripartite conceptualization helped with the program's early design and development. It then explores expanding the conceptualization into a quadripartite framework by adding a fourth component "fought" to better help cultivate character leadership with emerging adults in tertiary educational settings. The paper offers a roadmap of character leadership cultivation and shares qualitative data of the lived experiences from L4L mentors and students.*

1.0 Introduction

Globally, there is an increasing interest among universities and businesses in cultivating character leadership among their students and employees. Many of these, including the University of Hong Kong (HKU), have been inspired by the Jubilee Centre's tripartite conceptualization of *caught, taught* and *sought*.[1] In October of 2021, HKU launched its character leadership program entitled Lead for Life (L4L). This academic year, for the first time, L4L became a six-credit bearing, undergraduate course and was publicly promoted as HKU's flagship leadership course. Before October 2021, however, L4L was just an idea emerging from an essentially blank canvas. While many character leadership programs were helpful in L4L's initial development, e.g., the Oxford Character Project, Wake Forest's Character and Leadership Program, this paper focuses on the contribution of Jubilee Centre's tripartite conceptualization of *caught, taught,* and *sought* in L4L's early design.

The paper takes a practitioner scholarship approach grounding its theoretical discussion in the real-world practice of L4L's early design and development. The first section of the paper gives a succinct overview of L4L's history from inception to its current expression, and then discusses the tripartite conceptualization's contribution as an effective design and communication tool. In the second section of the paper, a fourth component, *fought,* is developed and integrated into the original tripartite conceptualization. The paper's final section then proposes an original conceptual design for cultivating character leadership utilizing this evolved quadripartite conceptualization illustrated through a Jubilee-inspired Roadmap and a Delta Compass recommending six, change-facilitating virtues.

2.0 Lead for Life Design and Communication Tool

2.1 Lead for Life. In 2021, Lead for Life was launched as a four-year, character leadership certificate program designed to equip HKU's undergraduates with the character and competence to build flourishing communities. Support and endorsement were received from HKU's president office with both the president, and the provost speaking at L4L events. L4L includes students from all ten of the university's faculties. It is a partnership between HKU's Faith and Global Engagement program (FGE) and the Centre of Development and Resources for Students (CEDARS). L4L has since evolved into a two-year, six-credit course offered by the Faculty of Arts at HKU but is still open to all undergraduates. Initially, undergraduates had to start the program in their first semester, but now students can begin in any year provided they have a two-year window to complete the course.

Programmatically, L4L evolved from character development weekends at HKU in 2017-2019 led by a visiting team from the Oxford Character Project. These early character cultivation

---

[1] See Jubilee Centre's framework for character education, www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/framework

weekends planted the seeds for L4L, connected HKU with the larger global dialogue on character leadership, and established a proof of concept that such a program was attractive to HKU's undergraduate students. By academic year 2024-2025, the program had grown to over 600 undergraduates and 110 mentors. Mentors are industry and community leaders of different vocations, gender, ethnicity, and age, all of whom have been nominated to the L4L leadership team as leaders of character. Mentors voluntarily serve the program. The academic-year cohorts are divided into mentor groups of 10-12 students with a focus on creating as diverse a group as possible. Two mentors, with a commitment of one to two years, are then assigned to lead each mentor group.

In becoming a credit-bearing course at HKU and in drawing on the experiences of its first four years, L4L's curriculum has been significantly tightened and strengthened since its early design. In L4L's early development days, however, there were foundational and far-reaching questions as to how one cultivates character leadership with emerging adults. Like McGrath's seven elements (McGrath, 2018), Jubilee's tripartite conceptualization helped us "think about the essential active ingredients of a character education framework" (Lucas, 7) providing invaluable guidance in the overall design and communication of the new program.

2.2 Tripartite Model as Design Tool. The tripartite conceptualization wisely steered us away from an over focus on the *taught* component natural within a university setting, and towards a more wholistic interplay between *taught, caught,* and *sought*. The *sought* component became instrumental in keeping students as the focus of the program, meeting them where they were, and encouraging their agency. James Arthur observed that, "The most important agent in the educational process in not the teacher, but the student" (Arthur, 492). The Confucian pedagogical tradition aligns with this understanding, "Confucius cannot teach someone who does not have a felt need to learn" (Flanagan, 145, also see 148). The teacher might want all her students to be leaders of character, but if the individual student does not want to be a leader of character, it will not happen for him or her.

A distinctive design feature of L4L is its scale in numbers of undergraduates and its duration initially over four years and now two years. As the program grew rapidly in its early years with multiple "moving parts", one of our mantras became "it's about the students". Every design consideration was driven by how it would benefit the students guided by the *sought* component. We designed elements to show the students that they were "seen" and at the center of the program. For example, in the L4L High Table Dinners only the students wear the HKU robes - not the faculty or any of the L4L leadership team. In a simple but effective way, this visually and ritually says to the students, "you are seen", "this is about you", "you have agency".

The *caught* component was also extremely helpful in the design decision to *bake* the mentoring component into the program. The power of exemplars in positively influencing character has been articulated for millennia, at least from the times of Aristotle in the West and Confucius in the East. Linda Zagzebski built a whole moral theory around the notion of exemplarism and the driving "impetus to imitate" motivated by the emotion of admiration (Zagzebski, 2017). Recognizing the significance of exemplars in cultivating character, most programs have some form of mentoring component. The problem, however, often comes not in theory but in practice. Many professors desire to have mentoring relationships with their students, but the realities of day-to-day responsibilities and urgencies get in the way of their good intentions. So, the L4L design team decided to *bake* mentorship into the process: L4L mentors are not add-ons or nice-to-haves to the program but are central to its operation, and active participation in a mentoring group is one of the program's student requirements.

This decision meant that the team needed to identify potential mentors in the broader Hong Kong community and in the process of doing so serendipitously began to build a *town-gown* bridge between Hong Kong and HKU. All L4L mentors are nominated to the L4L team by

someone who knows both L4L and the mentor candidate as effective in their field through good character. Reflecting on the design implications of *caught*, the team also recognized that students are catching character from each other as well as from the mentors. One L4L student shared:

> *L4L allowed me to meet excellent peers from different faculties who also strive to become leaders who serve their communities. I was always inspired and humbled every time I listened to their sharing during our gatherings* (L4L AY2022-23 Midterm Research & Evaluation Report, 30).

The group mentoring process in L4L is highly relational with students and mentors interacting outside the classroom on hikes, service projects, shared meals and many other activities, each an opportunity for character to be *caught*. So, both *caught* and *sought* were foundational in early L4L design decisions. Equally, however, the tripartite conceptualization acted as a powerful communication tool.

2.3 Tripartite Model as Communication Tool. The three words *taught, caught,* and *sought* are simple, every day, and memorable, all of which are extremely useful in communicating with university students and mentors trying to come to grips with the vagaries of virtues and character education. Mentors can quickly see their contribution in the *caught* aspect, which can begin to introduce them to the more complex exemplar role. Students can recognize that they need to be *taught* so it is okay that they do not fully understand character leadership. At the same time, they are reminded that character needs to be *sought*. As mentioned above, their initiative is crucial in the character development journey.

The mnemonic quality of the words works powerfully in communicating the program's essence in informal settings such as explaining the program over coffee to university administrators, potential students, mentors or other potential program participants or supporters. In an efficient space of time, potential program participants can identify with how they themselves have sought, caught or been taught character. The mnemonic nature of the words also helps to serve as a "moral reminder" for program participants much in the way noted by Aristotle and communicated effectively through the Seven Strategies for character cultivation (Lamb et al., 2021). The mnemonic quality also helps participants share with those not yet involved and expands program awareness throughout the broader community.

The above outlines some examples of ways Jubilee's tripartite conceptualization was highly useful in L4L's early design and development phase. As one of L4L's early designers, I found the tripartite conceptualization especially helpful in the beginning, but harder to incorporate in guiding a maturing program that placed more emphasis on a formal curriculum. In the fall of 2023, I conducted individual interviews with five founder/designers of character leadership programs to explore their design aspirations and held focus group interviews with L4L mentors and students to discuss their lived experiences in the program. In reflecting on these interviews, I came to believe that there was something missing in Jubilee's tripartite conceptualization.

3.0 Something Missing

During the second cohort of L4L (academic year 2022-2023) the leadership team noticed a problem. The program was just emerging from its successful start-up year and while most of the feedback had been positive, the evaluative reports showed a higher attrition rate than projected in the second cohort and lower attendance than hoped for at large events.[2] The

---

[2] As L4L started as a voluntary certificate program running alongside students' faculty studies, the program projected a 15% attrition per year per cohort. The 2022-2023 cohort experienced about 25% attrition in its first year.

mentor focus group findings confirmed that some of the mentors were struggling in getting their students together for their groups (MFG3, 13)[3]. What the leadership team recognized is that commitment was an area where we were failing both the students and the mentors in not teaching what similar expectations are in the professional world. Put simply, students cannot learn character leadership if they do not stay on the journey, and that journey can be long and tough. We also see this focus on commitment in the Confucian pedagogical tradition as Flanagan notes, "Confucius requires of his disciples nothing less than a full enthusiastic commitment to the practical pursuit of the *Way*" (Flanagan, 148).

Research and subsequent reflection on the lived experiences of L4L participants began to suggest the need for a fourth component that would better support students in their efforts to both cultivate and put into practice character leadership.[4] This would involve a natural evolution of the tripartite conceptualization to help students stay the course in developing their character. While *taught, caught* and *sought* are crucial for character leadership cultivation, they seem insufficient to sustain a student on the character leadership journey without the recognition and addition of a fourth component: *fought.* All who have sought to develop their character and journeyed for any length of time in character leadership cultivation know that the journey is filled with struggles and setbacks. Progress can be slow in coming and demands patience and endurance. The attrition rate might have been lower had we better equipped students for the journey's struggles. Section 4.4. below discusses what type of equipping is envisioned in the *fought* component, but generally students face two main battles in character leadership development.

The first battle is internal and well-discussed in Christian Miller's "The Character Gap" (Miller, 2017). One program founder in the research observed, "There's a lot of fear involved in facing our own shadows" (F/D4, 15). Most of us resonate with this internal struggle in our own efforts to genuinely change key areas of our lives. The second battle, however, is equally if not more challenging. Character leadership is intended for the common good and for the building of flourishing communities and this naturally will lead to social justice struggles. Without explicitly addressing these struggles, character leadership programs can make it appear as if the character leadership journey is long, but relatively straightforward, and that if we habituate effectively, all will be well. Yet, the reality is often otherwise with challenges emerging almost from the journey's beginning. The student needs to be prepared for these setbacks, which will be addressed in the proposed conceptual design in section 4.0 below. The conceptual design shows the interplay of *sought, taught, caught* and *fought* in character leadership cultivation with emerging adults, and illustrates how in addition to being wise advice along the way, these touchstone words can *become* the way.

4.0 Jubilee Inspired Roadmap and Delta Compass

The metaphor of the journey in our moral lives has been one used since ancient times in different faith and wisdom traditions. Daoism, of course, means The Way, which was also the first name for Christians as people of "the Way" (Acts 9:2 NRSV). Michael Puett's book based on his consistently oversubscribed class at Harvard University is called "The Path:

---

[3] The notations for the qualitative research are as follows: (F/D number, number) stands for the Founder/Designer individual interviews with the first number representing a founder or designer in order of interview and the second number representing the page number of the transcript from that interview; (MFG number, number) represents the Mentor Focus Group (three groups in all) with the first number representing which group in order of the series and the second number representing the page number of that sessions transcript; and (SFG number, number) represents the Student Focus Groups (three groups as well) with the first number the number of the group in the order of the series and the second representing the page number of the transcript for that session.

[4] This perception and the resulting conceptual design below including the Jubilee Inspired Roadmap, and the Delta Compass are those of the author after individual research and reflection and do not necessarily reflect the views of the current Lead for Life leadership team or course at HKU.

What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About the Good Life". The Tang Dynasty Confucian scholar, Han Yu, articulated the teacher's role as "transmitting *dao* (or Tao), imparting knowledge and resolving doubts" (Hui, 21).[5] Character cultivation is not instantaneous but a journey necessitating navigational tools because each person's journey is in some ways unique.

The following conceptual design inspired by an evolved quadripartite Jubilee conceptualization proposes two basic navigational tools, a Jubilee Inspired Roadmap (Fig. 1) and a Delta Compass (Fig. 2), for cultivating character leadership with early emerging adults. Heeding Han Yu's call to "answer student questions" (Liu and Ma, 178) and Rilke's encouragement to "live the questions now" (Rilke, 27), the conceptual roadmap is inquiry based, built around four questions, starting with the primary *Why* question. The roadmap lays out a natural progression among the four components of the quadripartite conceptualization starting with *sought*.[6] Each of the map's quadrants also recommends three focal topics for operationalizing each of the components.

Jubilee Inspired Roadmap, Fig. 1
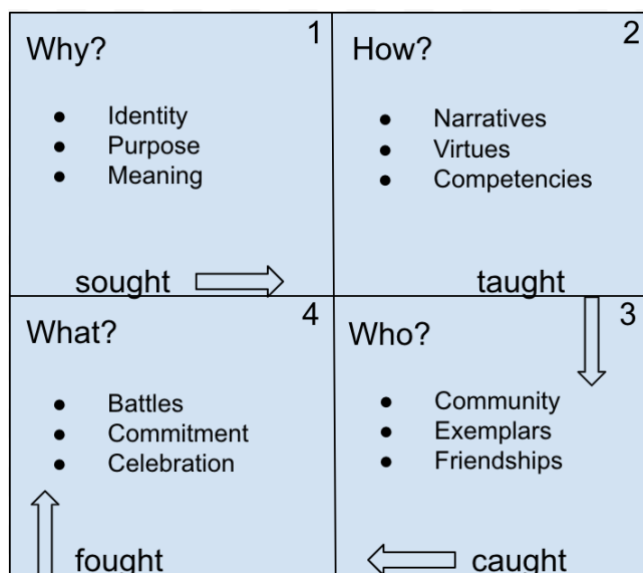
4.1 Sought. *Sought* is the starting point for the individual on the character leadership journey, and as we saw earlier, the student is the primary agent in the educational process. The *sought* here includes the student's motivation for wanting to develop character leadership. This motivation spans a variety of expressions which can be captured in the single word "better": better person, better opportunities, better society, better leader, better grades, to feel better and so on. Victor Frankl, drawing on Nietzsche, observed in *Man's Search for Meaning*, "He who has a *why* to live for can bear with almost any *how*" (Frankl, 76). The sought is the beginning of a personal *why* that will eventually allow the student to overcome any *how*. Initially with character leadership from the student perspective, however, it starts simply, e.g., to make connections with mentors, to better their chances for internships or a job, to make friends, to connect with prestigious, international organizations,

---

[5] The last clause in Han Yu's assertion, 'resolving doubts' has also been translated as "answers students' questions" (Liu and Ma, 178).

[6] In practice, the students could be simultaneously in all four quadrants at once, and the dynamic more of an "anything, everything, all at once". The movement around the map is best understood as a spiraling upwards: with each turn of the spiral, the student is slightly higher than at the last turn.

and it is important for the program to meet the students where they are. Character leadership programs first identify what their students are *seeking*, and then work from there.

4.1.1 Identity. After the initial stage of basic motivation for joining a program, the student's *sought* over the duration of the program begins to deepen into *identity*, *purpose* (or *telos*) and *meaning*. Identity discovery is an important work of early, emerging adults. A simple, accessible description of character leadership used by L4L is "leading from who you are". James Arthur quotes Hauerwas on the connection between identity and character,

> Nothing about being is more 'me' than my character. Character is the basic aspect of our existence. It is the mode of the foundation of our 'I', for it is character that provides the content of that 'I'...It is our character that determines the primary orientation and directions which we embody through our beliefs and actions" (Stanley Hauerwas quoted in Arthur, 650).

4.1.2 Purpose and meaning. The importance of *purpose* in developing character leadership has been well evidenced in the literature (Mendonca et al., 2023; Maranges et al., 2024) and underscored in the founder/directors' interviews (F/D4, 22). The students interviewed were open to exploring more of life's big questions (SFG2, 7), and these questions are crucial if we view the character leadership program not as a six-month, or two-year or even four-year program, but ultimately as a life-long project. From an educationist point of view, Arthur articulates the lack of the 'why' question in most education programs, "their focus is on the 'what' and the 'how' of teaching, but rarely on the 'why' (Arthur, 704). These larger motivational questions and the role of faiths and other wisdom traditions in facilitating these questions will be considered in the discussion of the Delta Compass below. Next, however, we move from the *Why* question of *sought* to the *How* question of *taught* in Quadrant 2.

4.2 Taught. As the student commits to embark on the journey of character leadership, they recognize that they will need help: help from outside of themselves, help from teachers and mentors who have been on the journey longer than they have. One student said that their mentor was, "active and courageous… and she had humility. I think it was admirable, but I didn't really know how I could be like that" (SFG1, 4). So, on our inquiry-oriented map we move now from the *Why* question to the *How*. As character leadership in tertiary settings is growing, academic courses are being increasingly designed for its cultivation, e.g., Wake Forest's course on commencement addresses (Lamb et al, 2022 and additionally Mendonca et al., 2023), Oxford Character Project and Ivey Business School's separate online courses and HKU's Lead for Life course, to name just a few. The courses' contents vary considerably but three focal topics proposed in this conceptual design are *alternative narratives, focused virtues* and some interaction between *character and competence*.

4.2.1 Alternative Narratives. One of the mentors in the research said directly that the students are hearing, "an alternative narrative, that usually [they] don't hear from normal college or in school. I think it touches something that is probably something that they usually don't think about" (MFG2, 4). One of the students described hearing the story of one of the speakers who has spent her life among the poor as

> life changing for me…I rewatched the recordings multiple times because I liked it so much… I used to have the thought that I was going to solve all the problems and change the world, but she has done [her work] for such a long time, and someone asked her about what [has] changed essentially and she said not much changes…there's really not much you can do, but the thing is that you keep coming back and I think that shows great humility…" (SFG1, 5).

To be effective, however, the narratives need to be alternative. One of the students speaking of the large gathering speakers in L4L incisively observed, "usually I can't pay

attention to most of them…I [have] heard those things already. It comes out of an important guy's mouth, but that doesn't change things" (SFG1, 3). Students in a university in Hong Kong, for example, do not need to hear about the virtue of hard work as for the most part this has been a constant narrative from their early years. Students do need to hear, however, that character development is not only about a *doing*, but also an *undoing*. Nancy Snow's "Virtue Acquisition: The Paradox of Striving" warns about "four different forms of striving that can impede our efforts to acquire virtue and to be virtuous: forcing, impulsivity, overthinking and holding ourselves to overly high standards" (Snow, 180). She cautions against an overly Aristotelian approach of working from the outside-in to a more Gandhian perspective of first turning inwards (Snow, 187). So, the narratives need to emphasis not only a *doing* but a *resting and receiving* a very "alternative" narrative in Hong Kong. The narratives themselves can take multiple forms. The Confucian tradition of rituals in character formation (Ivanhoe, 4) can be incorporated as narrative into rituals practiced every year, e.g., the mentors robing the student with their HKU green gowns in the High Table banquets in L4L narrates the relationship of the mentor serving and empowering the student.

4.2.2 Virtues. Given the lack of virtue literacy on campuses, and in society in general, a central part of any character leadership program with students is education on the virtues: what they are, why they matter, which ones to focus on for character leadership, and how to cultivate them. This conceptual design recommends that a character leadership program for emerging adults focus on six virtues: faith, love, hope, humility, courage, and wisdom (Fig 2).

Delta Compass, Fig. 2
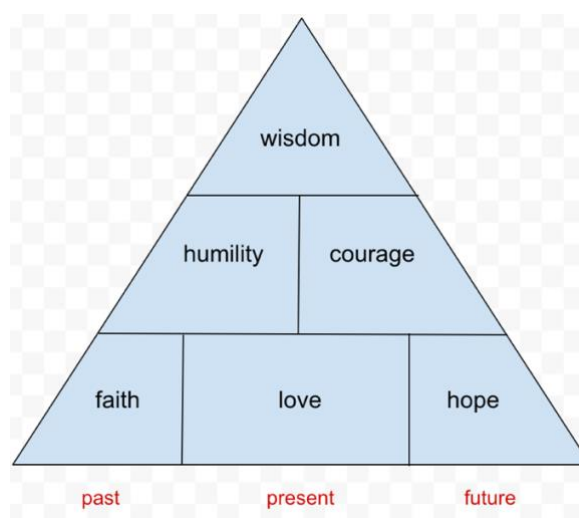
A full discussion of the Delta Compass and how it might be taught in a character leadership program is outside of the scope of this paper; however, all six of the virtues were chosen partly for their capacity in facilitating change. The word *Delta* refers to the mathematical symbol for *change*. Essentially character leadership cultivation is a *transformative* exercise in which one is trying to change or develop their character or their community or both. Nielsen and his colleagues note that leadership is essentially about bringing change (Nielsen et al., 109). Equally, the lives of early emerging adults are filled with change. Christian Smith notes that, "perhaps the most pervasive, consistent theme in the lives of emerging adults is the fact of their frequent and varied major life transitions" (Smith, 34). The bottom level of the Delta Compass are all staples in faith and wisdom traditions and useful for developing meaning and purpose; the middle level with humility and courage helps students discover their identity and cultivate courage in an age of anxiety; all this feeds into practical wisdom or *phronesis*. Joanna Collicutt, in her writing on cultivating virtues observes simply,

"It seems reasonable to view education in general, and higher education in particular, to be aimed at the development of wisdom" (Collicutt, 204).

4.2.3 Competence. While the focus of this conceptual design is on the *character* component of character leadership, the *leadership* aspect is also essential. Developing next generation leaders is part of the stated or unstated mission of most universities, and key to the *Why* from university management's perspective. Leadership studies are realizing that good leadership involves good people, people with good competence *and* good character. Increasingly we are seeing corporate learning websites such as "Leadership Character: No longer a Nice-to-Have'"[7] and articles entitled, "Effective Leadership Today – Character Not Just Competence" (Leavy, 2016). Character is the leading wheel on the metaphorical leadership bicycle of character and competence[8]; both are needed.

4.3 Caught. Quadrant 3 of our map moves on from the *How* question to the *Who* and addresses it with the three responses of: *community*, *exemplars*, and *friendship*.

4.3.1 Community. Character leadership is by nature communal. Jennifer Herdt puts it succinctly, "The virtues thrive in contexts in which persons feel affirmed and supported as well as challenged to become their best selves for the sake of a common mission"[9]. So, if up until this point in the map you have had an image of an *individual* on a journey, this quadrant replaces it with a depiction of a group, a *community*, journeying together. The design concept is intended to develop into a genuine Community of Learning. The structure envisioned in the conceptual design's community of learning is a holonic design with the whole of the community consisting of subsets in the mentoring groups.

4.3.2 Exemplars. The power of exemplars in cultivating character in an individual's life is well established. L4L is not a mentor program, but a character leadership program of which mentors are a part, but arguably they are one of the more essential parts for at least three reasons. *First,* the exemplars or mentors can provide the caring or love, which is so transformative. This caring provided by the mentors is one that runs through all quadrants of the map from providing a safe space to explore *identity, meaning* and *purpose* in the *sought* of Quadrant 1, to assessing what is most important from their experience in the various teachings of the *taught* in Quadrant 2, to coming alongside the students in their various battles in the *fought* of Quadrant 4. So, the mentors effectively become the glue that keeps everything together, accessible and applicable for the students. *Secondly,* the mentors embody an answer to the question often asked by critics of character leadership: "does it work?". If the students are asking this question, they can engage their mentors on what have been the mentors' own experiences and struggles in their character leadership journeys. This strong focus on practical knowledge "as opposed to 'academic theoretical knowledge' and the "emulation of others who have charted the way" are both reflective of the Confucian pedagogical tradition (Flanagan, 144 and 137, respectively). *Thirdly,* the mentors provide the students a needed perspective. One student shared, "I was really stressed out and I kind of talked to my mentor about it…and like I realized there is more to life than just academics and like, it's possible to, like, balance everything" (SFG3, 8).

---

[7] Accessed on 27 November 2025, https://www.harvardbusiness.org/insight/leadership-character-no-longer-a-nice-to-have/

[8] Grateful to Dr. Edward Brooks for suggesting this metaphor in his use of the Penny Farthing bicycle as representing a current cultural over-emphasis on competence and an under-emphasis on character, in his McDonald Distinguished Lecture, October 5, 2023, at The University of Hong Kong.

[9] Jennifer Herdt, Global Faculty Initiative, https://globalfacultyinitiative.net/content_item/389 , accessed 27 November 2025.

4.3.3 Friendships.   Students gained perspective not only from their mentors but also from the diversity and *friendship* of other students. Hauerwas and Pinches observe that,

> "...virtue is not something we have or do alone. Returning once again to our metaphor of the moral life as a journey, it is obvious as Aristotle himself notes, that a journey is better undertaken with companions than alone. At the very least we need others to sustain us along the way. But further, and more strongly, traveling with others is crucial not only to relieve our boredom or supply a hand to hold in the dark and narrow places, but as well, the journey requires that we ourselves be transformed, and this cannot occur without friends" (Hauerwas and Pinches, 31).

Good friendships are clearly a high priority for the students. One of the students shared how she appreciated mentors raising questions about, "our values, dreams and how we want to live our life. We got asked which is [the] single, number one quality you must have in your friends, and I still think about this sometimes" (SFG3, 12). There is also considerable literature on friendships, including Aristotle's teaching on the three types of friendships: utility-based, pleasure-based and virtue-based (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 2.3).

4.4 Fought. The title of Nelson Mandela's autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom* sums up the character leadership journey, which is apt for a leader globally renowned for his character. The character leadership journey is *long* (one does not obtain a good character overnight); it is a *walk* (not a sprint), and it leads toward *freedom* (genuine virtues are liberatory). As we journey to the fourth and final quadrant of the map, the question we are now addressing is the *What*: what *battles* are worth fighting for, what is the *commitment* of the students, and what can we do to *celebrate* along the way. The *telos* of character leadership cultivation is not to stay in a cozy community, but is aligned with the Confucian concentric rings, of moving outwards from *self* to *community*, to bringing good to *society*. The word *fought* is a strong one that could wrongly connote violence but is intended to explicitly recognize the very real battles on the character leadership journey.

4.4.1 Battles. Mandela's autobiography depicts a life of battles fueled by internal fears and external challenges, and this is the same for every leader of character. Qiaoling Lu writes of how Aquinas transforms Aristotle's version of courage when he "transforms the notion of 'battle' from warriors in the battlefield to ordinary people" (Lu, 478). Some of these battles will be internal as we have seen. Thomas A Kempis is quoted as saying "Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be, since you cannot make yourself as you wish yourself to be" (Murray, 75). The internal struggle is always with us. Other battles, however, will be external. The elements on the right half of the map are about training, but as we move into the fourth quadrant, the students are putting into action what they have learned into their daily worlds of study, student associations, residential hall life, service projects, internships and jobs. They will find aspects of their worlds difficult to change, and in many cases they will fail. Some of the program content in this quadrant will prepare students on how to "fail forward" with the help of simple tools such as the "Two L's" when encountering a failure however small or large. The two Ls are first *Learn from the failure*, and then second *Leave it behind*. Most can do one or the other, but not both, and both are essential for not replicating the same mistake and at the same time not getting emotionally stuck but moving forward.

Battles are more easily fought together. Comer and Vega describe the power of "courageous coalitions" of like-minded others who can stand alongside us during crucible moments (Comer and Vega, 2015). The students here can put into action what they are learning from the communal power of Quadrant 3. The aspiration in Quadrant 4 is that students will learn in small ways how to face their battles in a university setting so that they can then take this experience with them as they later battle for the common good in society.

4.4.2 Commitment. We saw earlier of the need for the fourth component of *fought* and its daily expression of commitment. The *fought* quadrant is partly on the left-hand side of the map because a key contributor to our commitment is knowing our 'Why' - the courage of our convictions – covered in Quadrant 1. As students put into practice what they are learning from the right-hand side of the map, their Quadrants 1 and 4 become dynamic as students both draw on and subsequently deepen their *identity, purpose* and *meaning* in dialogue with their own battles. The 'Why' of our *sought* (Quadrant 1) helps sustain us as our battles are *fought*, (Quadrant 4) while our battles reveal gaps in our 'Why' that need to be addressed.

4.4.3 Celebration. The above two elements of the *fought* quadrant can sound quite dire, and the role of celebration and joy needs to be infused throughout the program. Richard Foster devoted the final chapter to his seminal book on disciplines to the discipline of celebration (Foster, 190-201). Thomas Merton speaks of a humility that is "full of life and awareness, responding with boundless vitality and joy to all living things" (Merton, 27). So, in our Jubilee Inspired Roadmap, celebration joins the communal and committal aspects we have already discussed in helping the students stay on the journey of character leadership. L4L had a volunteer student dance team in the second year, which brought a lot of joy to one of the year-end celebrations, while at the same time training the student dancers on courage, commitment and numerous other virtues. The overall point of this fourth quadrant is that cultivating character leadership is challenging, and we will need to intentionally infuse commitment and celebration to stay the course.

5.0 Conclusion

The Jubilee Centre's tripartite conceptualization proved extremely useful as a design and communications tool in the early development of HKU's character leadership program, Lead for Life. This paper has argued, however, that something is missing in the tripartite conceptualization and suggests the natural evolution of a fourth component, *fought*. While it could be argued that the concept of fought is embedded as part of all three of the original components, the paper has argued for the need to make explicit the very real challenges of changing one's character and/or one's community for good. The paper also demonstrated that with the fourth component, the Jubilee Centre's conceptualization has the potential to become a conceptual model with a roadmap and compass to help emerging adults cultivate their character leadership.

There are of course many limitations to the paper. First, the primary qualitative research upon which the conceptual design is based, is a small qualitative sample from one case study at one institution taken midstream in an evolving program. Second, the ideas are conceptual and have not been tested yet in an existing program. Third, the author himself has a hopefully adequate, but admittedly limited understanding of all the complexities and nuances of Jubilee's original tripartite conceptualization. Given these limitations, however, the paper offers an original, scalable and highly relational conceptual design to help develop character leadership with potential applications in tertiary educational settings as well as in businesses. The hope is that the paper will stimulate dialogue among both scholars and practitioners involved with designing and developing such programs.

References

Arthur, James. *Christian Education in Virtues: Character Formation and Human Flourishing.* E-book, Routledge, 2021.

Collicutt, Joanna. "Forming Virtuous Character: Perspectives from Psychology and Christian Theology", *Cultivating Virtue in the University.* Edited by Jonathan Brant et al. Oxford University Press, 2022, pp. 196-212.

Comer, Debra R. and Gina Vega, editors. *Moral Courage in Organizations: Doing the Right Thing at Work.* E-book, Routledge, 2015.

Flanagan, Frank M. *Confucius, the Analects and Western Education.* Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011.

Foster, Richard. *Celebration of the Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth.* Revised edition, Hodder & Stoughton, 1988.

Frankl, Viktor. *Man's Search for Meaning.* Beacon Press, 2006.

Hauerwas, Stanley and Charles Pinches. *Christians Among the Virtues: Theological Conversations with Ancient and Modern Ethics.* University of Notre Dame Press, 1997.

Hui, Leng. "Chinese Cultural Schema of Education: Implications for Communication Between Chinese Students and Australian Educators". *Issues in Educational Research,* 15(1), 2005, pp. 17-42.

Ivanhoe, Philip J. *Confucian Moral Self Cultivation.* 2nd Ed., Hackett Publishing Company, 2000.

Lamb, Michael, et al. "How is Virtue Cultivated? Seven Strategies for Postgraduate Character Development." *Journal of Character Education, vol. 17, no.1, 2021.*

Lamb, Michael, et al. "Commencing Character: A Case Study of Character Development in College." *Journal of Moral Education,* Vol. 51, No.2, 2022, pp. 238-260.

Leavy, B. "Effective Leadership Today – Character Not Just Competence." *Strategy & Leadership,* 44(1), 2016, pp. 20-29.

Liu, Xiufeng and Wen Ma, editors. *Confucianism Reconsidered: Insights for American and Chinese Education in the Twenty-First Century.* State University of New York Press, 2018.

LU, Qiaoying. "Aquinas's Transformation of the Virtue of Courage." *Frontiers of Philosophy in China*, Vol. 8, No. 3, September 2013, pp. 471-484.

Lucas, Bill. "Overview of Character Education Frameworks." *Eton Journal for Innovation and Research in Education*, 3, 2019, pp. 4-9.

Maranges, Heather M., et al. "Exemplars of Purpose: Reliance on Moral Exemplars Supports College Students' Purpose in Life." *International Journal of Educational Research,* 123 102269, 2024, pp. 1-18.

McGrath, R. "What is Character Education? Development of a Prototype." *Journal of Character Education,*14 (2), 2018, pp. 23-35.

Mendonca, Sara Etz, et al. "Purposeful change: The Positive Effects of a Course-based Intervention on Character." *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 19, no. 2, 2023, pp. 323-336.

Merton, Thomas. *The Way of Chuang Tzu.* 1965. New Directions Books, 2010.

Miller, Christian B. *The Character Gap: How Good Are We?* Oxford University Press, 2017.

Murray, Andrew. *Humility: The Journey Toward Holiness.* Bethany House, 2001.

Nielsen, Rob et al. *Leading with Humility*. Routledge, 2014.

Rilke, Rainer Maria. *Letters to a Young Poet.* 1934. Translated by M.D. Herter Norton, W.W. Norton & Company, 2004.

Smith, Christian and Patricia Snell. *Souls in Transition: The Religious & Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults.* Oxford University Press, 2009.

Snow, Nancy E. "Virtue Acquisition: The Paradox of Striving." *Journal of Moral Education,* Vol. 45 (2), 2016, pp. 179-191.

The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtue. *A Framework for Character Education in Schools* (2022), www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/framework

Zagzebski, Linda. *Exemplarist Moral Theory.* E-book, Oxford University Press, 2017.