



goals primarily instrumental – maximize profit, growth and shareholder returns – and their relationships transactional. Dominated by a rational modality divorced from feeling and sensing, their power rests in the wielding of a metaphorical sword on the battlefield of relentless competition.” But today, especially post-pandemic, he contends that leaders cannot be effective if they are overly transactional. People need and are demanding a more humanizing path forward. “Healers are leaders who have highly developed rational minds but have also raised their emotional and physical ‘bodies’ to a similar pitch. They have explored and integrated wounded parts of themselves and developed higher levels of consciousness...”

Leaders should not only heal the wounds of others, but they should also find ways to name and integrate their own wounds into their leadership. The theologian Henri Nouwen acknowledges as much in his book, *The Wounded Healer*: “Our service will not be perceived as authentic unless it comes from a heart wounded by the suffering about which we speak.” We are, all of us, the walking wounded. We are bruised by difficult life circumstances, losses, transitions, family challenges, insults the injustices of the world. We cannot pretend these do not exist. Recognizing our own wounds opens pathways of empathy for the wounds of others. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, in *The Home of the Future*, gives us this very charge: “If I were to sum up what faith asks us to be, I would say: a healing presence.”

The Talmud relays a remarkable and unexpected dialogue between the sage Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi and Elijah about healing leadership.

“When will the Messiah come?,” Rabbi Joshua ben Levi asked the prophet.

Elijah replied: “Go ask him yourself.”

Rabbi Yehoshua asked: “Where can he be found?”

He replied: “At the entrance of Rome.”

Rabbi Yehoshua asked: “By what sign will I be able to recognize him?”

He replied: “He sits among the poor who suffer from various ailments; untying and tying their bandages” (BT *Shabbat*, 98a).

If you want to know where the Messiah is right now, look to the poor and the one who bandages the poor. If we want the Messiah to come, we should do the same. The grand, dramatic gestures of leadership will be surpassed by the gentle and tender touch to the wounds of those who require healing.

**Name a leader who healed you in some physical or emotional way. What could you do to pay the kindness forward today and help heal someone else?**