

# A Guide to Human Citizenship: The ALF Way

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In 2020, against the backdrop of a pandemic and extraordinary civil, racial and environmental unrest, American Leadership Forum Silicon Valley CEO Suzanne St. John-Crane began imagining a book that would outline the core principles of “the ALF Way,” featuring stories from ALF graduates—Senior Fellows—who had lived them. The idea was to reflect back to the network all that the organization had learned, taught, and nurtured since its founding in 1988, as a gift and a guide to leaders who were, and in many cases still are, navigating a steady stream of unprecedented challenges.

An advisory committee of Senior Fellows was assembled to provide input on these core practices, and 800 ALF graduates (Senior Fellows) were invited to submit their stories for consideration.

Today, we humbly offer an excerpt from our forthcoming book that highlights three of the eight tenets, and the stories of leaders who as it turns out, are also pretty great humans.

While ALF helps nurture and connect the grass tops of organizations across sectors and industries, you certainly don’t need to be running a company to practice ALF Way principles. Our hope is that

the tenets, stories and reflection questions teach and inspire you, as together we navigate lightning speed disruption and societal change.

Special thanks to Board Member and Lead Advisor Tom Giles (Class XXXVII), Writer and Editorial Assistant Allyson Paul, and Marketing and Communications Director Richard Vega for bringing this publication to life. Thank you to curriculum contributors Akemi Flynn (Class XXVII) and Jenny Niklaus (Class XXIV), and our dear colleague Greg Ranstrom for the light he shined on these principles.

A special thank you to the three story contributors for this 2024 Exemplary Leadership publication: Diane Fisher (Class XXXVII), Aftab Jamil (Class XXXVII), Keith Krach (Class XV) and Marico Sayoc (Class XLI). Tenets written by Suzanne St. John-Crane (Class XXV / Urbanism XXXIV).

Please note: The political and world views expressed in the following Senior Fellow stories do not necessarily reflect those of the American Leadership Forum staff, board, or organization as a whole. Our mission is to join and strengthen diverse leaders to serve the common good, and therefore, we strive to give voice to a variety of leaders who are working towards that goal.

— The Principle —

# Amazing Grace (and Forgiveness)

"Forgiveness is not forgetting. Forgiveness is freedom from hate."

—Valarie Kaur, *See No Stranger*

Each year of the Fellows program, ALF embarks on a weeklong wilderness experience to the High Sierras of Northern California. Twenty plus executives from all walks of life unplug and sink themselves into the arms of the natural world – some willingly and others with great trepidation. Throughout the week, they become a family out there – detoxing from the constant overexposure of technology, wrestling with each other over differences, exploring memories and feelings that may have been buried for years. For many, it can be a cathartic and enlightening experience.

Although sometimes we dig deep enough – or quiet our minds enough – to discover hidden resentments that as it turns out have been eating away at us for years. They may have subconsciously influenced our life choices. We start to connect the dots, and through the support of classmates or guides, process these anchors that have been keeping us stuck in one place or pattern for years - or even lifetimes.

In the 12 Step framework of anonymous self-help programs, participants are asked to regularly take an inventory of their fears, resentments, anger, etc. Keeping their side of the street clean is actually a critical step in remaining sober. Carrying resentments, stretching the truth and causing harm to others in small or significant ways are dangerous behaviors directly tied to relapsing. Carrying anger – justified or not – can be fatal. If you talk to those with long-term sobriety, it's not unusual to hear them call themselves "grateful alcoholics." This isn't just because they

stopped drinking. It's because they learned how to start living.

What if we all practiced these principles in all of our affairs? What freedom awaits us if we take an evening inventory of our habits and correct the wrongs before they fester? What if we committed to staying on the road to forgiveness - of ourselves and or others - for the purpose of maintaining emotional sobriety, and ultimately being able to show up in all interactions with a clear conscience and unconditional love?

It's not infrequent for Fellows who bravely engage in deep reflection – in the wilderness or in an ALF circle – to discover the unwanted baggage of resentments or wrongs not forgiven. Justified or not, we're invited to explore who the anger is really impacting. Holding on to resentments is like eating rat poison and waiting for the rat to die. That being said, depending on the offense in question, forgiveness can be an insurmountable feat.

In 2018, ALF held a three-day Senior Fellow retreat with Ela Gandhi, Mahatma Gandhi's granddaughter who was in her 80s, yet still very active and traveling the globe. She had clearly followed in her grandfather's footsteps of preaching and practicing non-violent resistance. Ela had grown up in the movement, and in the early 90s was appointed to a seat in the African National Congress. Just before her term in parliament was to begin, Ela's son was tragically killed while serving his country. And yet, astoundingly, she didn't miss a day's work. When asked how she could ever pull herself together to get out of bed in the right state of

mind to serve, she shared a learning from her grandfather. "Hate the sin, not the sinner."

The seed for 'Satyagraha' (non-violent resistance) began with a pivotal choice that Ela's grandfather made on the night of June 7, 1893. M.K Gandhi, a young Indian lawyer practicing in South Africa at the time, was forcibly removed from a whites-only carriage on a train for not obeying laws that segregated each carriage according to race. Ela explained that Gandhi had two

**We are living in a time when knee-jerk reactions, finger-pointing and calling a case closed before any evidence is presented has become commonplace.**

options in that moment, and chose to lead a transformative movement instead of resorting to reactionary violence. His passive resistance has influenced civil rights movements all over the world.

Ela takes it a step further, however. Instead of only embarking on the noble task of serving her country in the face of a heart-wrenching loss, she went on to forgive her son's killer. Holding on to a resentment would have held her hostage and prevented her from living her highest and best good – for her family and country. Forgoing her service in Parliament and shrinking back would have meant a lost opportunity to drive the path of change for community healing and long term impact. This extreme and inspiring example of letting go and forgiveness begs the question – if Ela can forgive that, what can we let go of to free ourselves from the chains of resentment? How might authentically taking inventory of my actions and emotions allow me to lead and serve in

repeatedly.

Can we change the tone of responses and influence outcomes by changing ourselves? Let the bullets roll off our shoulders? Sure. Sometimes that's doable. Other times, the bullets are debilitating. Senior Fellows who are deep in the work of becoming better humans have demonstrated another way to show up: Model grace. Bless and release. Take ownership over your reaction; and, tend to the parts of you that are not yet healed.

Remember a time as a child (if you can), when you stumbled somehow – and who made you feel better. Who offered you grace and forgiveness? Can you picture that moment and feel the feeling in your body right now? How would you describe it?

You might use words like relief or pure love or warmth. A soothing exhale. A weight lifted. The energy this gift of grace provides can be the starting place for something better; the opportunity

the soul. And as Author Anne LaMott says, "Grace always bats last."

Think about what grace - practiced on a large scale - could help unfold in our world.

THE INVITATION:

- Show up as a "different you" in a tense situation; one who is paying attention to breath, whose heart and mind are open.
- Stay curious. Remember that we all have a 7-minute story.
- Center the feeling of forgiveness and grace in your words, body language and actions.
- What would letting go of resentment feel like in your body? What kind of freedom would it create in your mind? **I**

## If you can master the art of giving grace to others, then try on the practice of offering grace to another worthy subject: yourself.

extraordinary ways?

Ela went on to serve in Parliament for ten years. She was part of the Transitional Executive Committee which promoted the preparation of transitioning to a democracy in South Africa. She founded the Gandhi Development Trust in 2002 and as of 2024, still chairs it.

Let's talk about grace. For ourselves and others. We are living in a time when knee-jerk reactions, finger-pointing and calling a case closed before any evidence is presented has become commonplace. Public servants are subjected to harassment and extraordinary backlash. As information is traveling faster than ever in human history and only showing signs of increasing, we are subjected to the firing squad in record time and

and courage to be better. It offers a clean slate.

Reflect now on how you give others room to fall and get back up – whether at home or in a work context. Is your first reaction anger or impatience? What kind of assumptions might be feeding that reaction? Can you trade that up for a response that will offer you and the subject of your distress a better outcome? Play with this concept during your next tense interaction.

If you can master the art of giving grace to others, then try on the practice of offering grace to another worthy subject: yourself. For many, this tall order is elusive and uncomfortable - like accepting a compliment without excuses or explanations.

Grace is a great diffuser. A salve for

# The Mountains We Climb

By Marico Sayoc, ALF Silicon Valley Class XLI

I met one of the greatest challenges of my career — and life — in 2021 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. I had just begun my second term as Mayor of Los Gatos and there was great discontent in the town. The Town Council was striving to build a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community amid a global pandemic and national political unrest.

There were a multitude of changes that happened quickly, and I think these culminated in the outrage that we saw and that I had personally experienced. We had just put together a series of police reforms in light of George Floyd’s murder. We could hear the escalating rhetoric against the LGBTQ+ community, and 2021 was the year when we saw anti-Asian hate and violence come out in full force again. In the town, we had two hate crimes committed against Asian women, and there were many other hate crimes against Asian people occurring in Santa Clara County and nationwide.

We enacted several initiatives to encourage more inclusiveness of the community, such as flying banners with the words “Listen, Learn, Change, Grow” and painting rainbow crosswalks to show solidarity with our LGBTQ+ residents. We also hired a neutral DEI consultant to engage with more community partners to gather more input on equity and inclusion efforts in the Town. We wanted the people of Los Gatos to understand that while some of our community members’ lives were wonderful, others weren’t as great. We were not trying to change the small-town character. We were not trying to erase all that is wonderful about the town. We were trying to infuse more voices and stories to enrich and deepen our

town’s character. I truly believe that one experience does not cancel out the other. We can have space for both experiences.

The opposition was immediate. Many people said outright, “How dare you do that.”

The Town Council faced a lot of verbal backlashes at our Council meetings, but what struck me the most was the escalating hate we were facing. The perpetual opposition was compounded by the mask mandates. In the middle of 2021, we were grappling with the worst of COVID-19, and there was a lot of frustration growing around the mask policy. This led to escalating verbal attacks in our Town Council meetings from individuals who were COVID deniers and believed President Joe Biden “stole” the 2020 election. These disruptions weren’t just about

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our policies, however, but about the council members, myself, and what the disruptors thought we represented.

At each Council meeting, the same group came forward to accuse us of using the “plandemic” to strip their freedom, drawing a false and destructive equivalency between mask mandates and the Holocaust, and accusing us of setting up a Marxist government. What began in March as criticism for the whole Council sharpened to requests for me to go back to where I came from and accusations ranging from my being a member of the Chinese Communist Party to brainwashing children and causing genital mutilation. I was the “ignition,” so to speak, for a far-right group of individuals who opposed our DEI efforts.

As an elected official, I was prepared for verbal attacks. But I was not prepared for my family and colleagues to be attacked and become collateral damage. For example, the people who came to disparage me at every Council meeting alleged that critical race theory was being taught in our local schools at my behest. They then took it a step further and alleged that the nonprofit I manage was “grooming students.” My agency provides mental health counseling and emotional support for children in schools, and our professional services for students were being twisted as propaganda and “grooming.” People called our offices screaming profanities and threats on a daily basis, and one of our school offices was vandalized twice.

What was even more alarming were the verbal attacks against my family, particularly my then 16-year-old son. He was harassed online and warned that people like him would be thrown off buildings. He was harassed at work,

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with people yelling at him to repent. He was harassed outside of our home to the point where he feared leaving his room. At all hours of the day and night we heard people on bullhorns asking us to leave the town. We were told repeatedly that we did not belong in Los Gatos. The sense of belonging that I was trying to promote for our community was not even available to me and my family.

Over the course of 2021, my disappointment, fear, and anger were festering to hatred. Hatred for those attacking my family. Hatred for those who insisted on dismissing voices that were asking to be heard. Hatred for those who stayed silent and allowed the attacks to continue without pushback. As I traversed through these emotions, it exposed and validated all the issues I was fighting for because I was seeing first-hand what people go through when they don't have any allies or champions fighting for them. I needed to continue the fight, but the fight that I wanted to do was as dirty and hateful as their fight.

But their way of fighting was unbecoming of a leader, a public figure, and ultimately of me as a person. I

needed to fight in an intentional and thoughtful manner. I needed support, but my initial reaction was to wonder how I would be viewed as a leader if I asked for help.

In a twist of fortune – or perhaps predestination – 2021 is also the year I began my ALF journey, which placed me in the company of different ideas, environments and thought leaders. If I didn't have my class, I don't know if I would have been able to go deep into that anger and move beyond it. During our fellowship year, we were delving into conversations that reminded me to be comfortable with the uncomfortable. More importantly, ALF gave me the space to admit vulnerability and the courage to allow others to help. One of the most impactful a-ha moments of my ALF journey was realizing that climbing mountains is easier with trusted hands that would prevent me from falling and wise eyes that could guide the best path to the summit.

My gratitude for these eyes and hands deepened when I realized that I could ask for help from not only my ALF class but the larger ALF network. I was especially grateful to have a family completely supportive of my efforts even when they became collateral damage. Even when the hate was at its height, it fed my gratitude, and that ultimately helped me to find grace and forgiveness in my situation.

I found grace when remembering that I represented an "other" that many feared. They didn't know who I was, they only knew of the changes I wanted for our community. I found strength when remembering that what was happening to me was a public version of what I was trying to prevent for others. I was staying true to my North Star by giving dignity and voice to those who have long been oppressed and silenced; and I knew I couldn't overcome this mountain of hatred and animosity alone. I asked for support and took a leap of faith that my asking for help would not be seen as weakness.

Weakness – to me, and especially after what I lived through – was staying silent. Some might say it's graceful to allow others to express their opinion, but silence can also validate those opinions. Silence is complicity. Silence is no longer acceptable. We need to speak up

and be co-conspirators for justice.

My ALF journey highlighted the value in having courageous conversations. Leaders need to be comfortable in the uncomfortable to create change. Progress is not a straight line to the summit, but a meandering journey that recognizes everyone is at a different level with a different pace. My peak isn't someone else's peak, but progress as a community does not leave anyone behind.

I needed to lift my emotions for those who continued to need me. I'm learning to forgive. If I hadn't, the anger and hate would've consumed me, and I needed to move beyond it. I found forgiveness when I realized I would be ineffective as a leader if I led with anger versus love and compassion. I took an oath of office to represent all residents of my town and I would not have been able to fulfill that oath if I was consumed with anger. I found forgiveness for those who stayed silent when remembering that not everyone knows how to be an ally and upstander.

As much as I was able to muster forgiveness for offenses directed at me, I have by no means arrived at a place where grace flows freely. I'm still not capable of forgiveness for those who threatened my family, for instance. But I know there is reconciliation in my mind and a path towards healing in my heart. After my term of office ended, I chose to focus on my family's healing and not run for re-election. I continue to fight for equity but not in such a public arena. It's my hope that by doing so, people can see me just as Marico, a person advocating for the betterment of others rather than Mayor Sayoc, a politician.

It's unfortunate that with titles come assumptions. We can't truly know one another as humans until we take the time to look beyond titles, labels, and facades. We need to listen to each other's stories, learn from each other's experiences, grow from each other's wisdom, and ultimately make the decision to change any practice that breeds othering. Until we reach that summit of belonging for all, I'll just continue to walk this path and climb this mountain of hope knowing that others are on this journey of grace with me. ■

# Dialogue First

“Real listening is a willingness to let the other person change you. When I’m willing to let them change me, something happens between us that’s more interesting than a pair of dueling monologues.”

—Alan Alda, Actor

It was July 27, 1980. A week after quitting his law firm to create what we now know as the American Leadership Forum, Joseph Jaworski came upon an article in the *New York Times* by renowned physicist and friend of Albert Einstein’s, Dr. David Bohm. The article held excerpt’s from Bohm’s latest book, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*. While his pontifications on the contradictions between relative and quantum theory were a bit overwhelming, Jaworski was nonetheless captivated by a feeling that Bohm’s courageous exploration revealed.

“Bohm thinks that the current fragmentation is embedded in the subject - verb - object structure of our grammar, and is reflected at the personal and social levels by our tendency to see individuals and groups as “other” than ourselves, leading to isolation, selfishness and wars.”

The discovery resonated deeply with Jaworski, and as is told in his book *Synchronicity*, “another set of predictable miracles” occurred in which Jaworski found himself in Bohm’s office the very next day. A decade-long friendship began, with Bohm becoming a pivotal thought partner with Jaworski as the Fellows Program curriculum took shape. Bohm’s book *On Dialogue* was published in 1990 and became a textbook for the Fellows experience for many years to come.

“Discussion” comes from the Latin root meaning “to break apart and investigate.” People often hold onto and defend their different positions

in discussions, which can devolve into debate.

The roots of the word dialogue come from the Greek words *dia* and *logos*. *Dia* means ‘through’ and *logos* translates to ‘word’ or ‘meaning’. Essentially, a dialogue is a flow of meaning. The essence of dialogue is an inquiry that surfaces ideas, perceptions, and understanding that people do not already have. True dialogue requires a willingness; a selflessness. It’s about exploring uncertainties and thinking together.

Of course this methodology may be a relatively new phenomenon in European circles, but dialogue is foundational to the governance practices of Indigenous communities. In native talking circles, only the person with the talking stick may speak. All others remain quiet. The circle is complete when the stick passes around the circle one complete time without anyone speaking out of turn. The talking circle prevents reactive

communication and directly responsive communication, and it fosters deeper listening and reflection in conversation.\*

**THE 4-PLAYER MODEL:** For over a decade, ALF has used David Kantor’s 4-Player Dialogue Model as a guiding framework in its Fellows program. ALF, with the input of a diverse group of Senior Fellows, expanded on the “four player” roles a bit, to encourage broad thinking and respectful engagement (*Pg 10 - Figure A*).

Fellows are called to examine what role(s) they default to, and to actively try on a different role in order to create opportunities for discovery. If you’re always the one to move forward with an idea, working to convince everyone to get on board, try leaving room for someone else to step up first. Imagine listening and noticing, perhaps supporting. If you love playing devil’s advocate, try pausing and hearing the speaker, perhaps letting conversation more fully unfold, before offering a dissenting opinion. Everyone can be more of a witness, noticing what’s being shared, inviting in those who haven’t spoken, naming emotions or themes, etc. Sometimes just sharing these observations can break a stalemate in conversation and open up the aperture a bit.

## DIALOGUE GUIDELINES

In ALF’s *Dialogue 2.0: Creating Healthier Dialogues for Better Communities*, a series of practices are suggested to help create less of a debate or discussion, and more of a dialogue. Below is an excerpt from this Fellows

**Stay in it. Try to stay at the table. Can you push through some discomfort to get to the other side?**



curriculum guide.

Pay attention to who's invited to conversations, and who isn't. Do you gravitate to your immediate network when picking participants for boards, think tanks or work teams?

Diversity of lived experience adds perspective and sparks creativity in a dialogue. Intentionally include those whose opinions and backgrounds are different than yours. Choirs only serve to provide confirmation bias and are not helpful in getting us unstuck.

Start with a beginner's mind. As humans, we come to conversations with lived experiences that shape our beliefs and influence our assumptions about others. Try walking into dialogue with a sense of curiosity about others at the table. Suspend judgment and start with a clean slate – a “beginner's mind.” Easier said than done at times, certainly; and a practice that takes practice.

Be open to the experience of others and suspend judgment. Yes, this can be tough. A mindfulness practice comes in handy here. As one's blood starts to boil and a reactionary response percolates, a mindful leader will automatically sense this, understand it for what it is and take the opportunity to pause, perhaps lean into curiosity, or silently reflect. (Listen and silent contain the same letters!) This takes practice and is an invaluable skill to hone.

Seek to understand. Shawn Ginwright, Author of *The Four Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining Ourselves*, describes a conversation with a man he went to high school with who was the ideological opposite of him. He talks about the moment he noticed the fear and anger in his body as the man expressed his views which were diametrically opposed to Ginwright's – and decided to further inquire and question to understand how this man came to know the world in a particular way. Seeking to understand doesn't condone behavior or decrease the validity of your perspective. Alternatively, seeking to understand gives the listener data from which new pathways of healing or solutions can be forged.

Stay in it. Try to stay at the table. Can you push through some discomfort to get to the other side? Depending on the topic and power dynamics in the

room, this can be incredibly challenging. Cancel culture is everywhere and the ultimate expression is walking away from the table and shutting voices out; however, there are also all kinds of legitimate reasons for doing this, many rooted in self-preservation.

## For historically marginalized communities, the fight can be always and everywhere and exhausting.

STAYING IN IT (A CAVEAT). In March of 2021, Author, Filmmaker and Civil Rights Activists Valarie Kaur spoke to the ALF Network via zoom about her extraordinary book *See No Stranger*. ALF Silicon Valley Senior Fellow and Retired California Superior Court Judge LaDoris Cordell interviewed Kaur as a part of the event. As Kaur talked about the power of dialogue across differences – even and especially with those who have deeply hurt us – Cordell challenged her with a story of her own.

A few years prior, she was invited to hear a former Grand Wizard of the KKK speak to a crowd about his past and what led him to leave the white supremacist group. He shared excruciating stories of hate crimes he had been a party to before he renounced the KKK. As one of many African Americans in the audience, Cordell could not get to a place of curiosity or willingness to see beyond his past. The stories were too painful.

Kaur offered this astute invitation to Cordell, and really, to all of us. “Revolutionary love is not the sacrifice of an individual. It's the act of a community. At any given time we have a role to play. The fact that so many [people of color] continue to use the metaphor ‘knee on

neck,’ and yet are asked to look at their opponents – even those who have said ‘Look at me! I've changed!’ – when we are still dealing with trauma that they have inflicted, that is where I say - our revolutionary act is to tend to our own wounds.”

ALF facilitators describe healthy dialogue as a Comfort to Growth Continuum. Ideally, participants are asked to move from comfort through fear and eventually to growth; and while discomfort is a part of the process, participants should not be causing or experiencing harm.

This powerful James Baldwin quote comes to mind: “We can disagree and still love each other, unless your disagreement is rooted in my oppression and denial of my humanity and right to exist.” The choice to stay in it may be far easier for those with power who have less to lose – financially, emotionally, even physically. For historically marginalized communities, the fight can be always and everywhere and exhausting. The decision to “stay in it” must be guided by one's internal capacity for the dialogue. Only we as individuals can know where that line is, and it's our responsibility to self-regulate.

UC Berkeley's Othring and Belonging Institute describes the act of bridging as “two or more individuals or groups coming together across acknowledged lines of difference in a way that both affirms their distinct identities, and allows for a new, more expansive identity.” Institute Director John A. Powell acknowledges that we can't bridge with everyone; but we can choose to start pushing to the outer edges of our comfort zone in order to widen the circle of human concern.

Committing to courageous conversations that stretch us to open up in new ways - outside of our EGOsystem and for the good of the ECOSystem - is the only way for us to build bridges that can lead to a more inclusive and thriving world. If ever there was a time in human history that we needed to have better conversations across differences, it's right now. |

*\*Taken from "Introducing Healing Circles and Talking Circles into Primary Care"*  
[https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4022550/#b1-permj18\\_2p0004](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4022550/#b1-permj18_2p0004) *The Permanente Journal*. Copyright © 2014 *The Permanente Journal*

<b>ROLES</b>	<b>COMFORT ZONES</b>	<b>TRY THIS INSTEAD</b>
Move   Initiate	I lead with an opinion, strategy, idea. I like to advocate and get people to follow. I'm often an initiator of ideas.	Initiate an idea or opinion with clarity and courage.
Challenge   Oppose	I like the debate and often challenge ideas and structures. I bring forward different ideas and the perspectives of those who aren't in the room.	Question with respect and awareness. Bring in missing perspectives to the conversation.
Witness   Bystand	I reflect back what I'm seeing in the group. I name dynamics. I ask questions with the intent of helping sides see opportunities and challenges more clearly, and hopefully move towards solution.	Witness with all the senses. Reflect back what you're seeing and sensing in the group. Listen deeply.
Follow   Support	I ask questions of clarification to help me discern. I don't need to insert my great idea if one already exists. I support and collaborate. I can let go of my ego and understand that for the good of the group, I can follow.	Follow with curiosity. Be an active supporter and collaborator. Put aside ego and the temptation to "move."

*(Figure A)*

# Social Change for the Long Run

Two long-time friends, one who is Jewish and the other a Muslim, reflect on the urgency of inter-faith dialogue at a time of deepening division.

*Diane Fisher served for 18 years as executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC), a Los Gatos, California-based non-profit organization that works for the elimination of hate and antisemitism and development of a thriving Jewish community in the South Bay.*

*Aftab Jamil, a partner at accounting and tax-advisory firm BDO USA, is active within the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, a revival movement within Islam that emphasizes his faith's teachings on peace, love and justice. Their motto is "Love For All, Hatred For None."*

*Diane and Aftab are both Senior Fellows of ALF Silicon Valley Class XXXVII and have been friends for two decades. Aftab and Diane met up with ALF Silicon Valley board member Tom Giles, also from Class XXXVII, in early November 2023, almost a month to the day after the Oct. 7 terror attacks in Tel Aviv. Together they discussed the value of inter-faith dialogue. The following is an excerpt of that conversation, edited for length and clarity.*

TOM: How have the events of Oct. 7 and the Israeli response changed the climate of the Jewish-Muslim dialogue?

DIANE: There are people who engage in dialogue no matter what. Recently I was at the Jewish Community Center in Palo Alto, where there was an annual whole-day gathering. It included a group called AJEEC-NISPED, which draws its name from the Arabic word meaning "I am coming toward you." It's an organization that finds projects to work on together and build community resilience and leadership. The room was full of people talking about common

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cause even in the face of this moment.

AFTAB: The head of our community [the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community] has given specific instructions to all our chapters to reach out to local rabbis to collaborate where we can and ensure that there's human connection. As part of that, we've organized an event at our mosque tomorrow; we've invited rabbis and religious leaders from different faiths. It's a call to peace, a time to say, "Let's have a dialogue. Let's sit down and ask questions."

TOM: What are the ingredients of successful inter-faith dialogue at a time like this?

DIANE: First of all, it's sitting with each other. It's very much what we first learned in ALF—the seven-minute

story and deep listening. It's not like something where you say, "Okay, I did it. Check." It's important that you start with the relationship—and not just jump to the action piece. Let's get to know each other's lives. Let's ask, "Where are you now, and what's happening with your family?" That's what I see more people deciding to do.

We see the need for this kind of dialogue even within the Jewish community—between American Jews and Israeli Jews, who don't necessarily see or know each other. I spent the last 10 months going to protest rallies with Israelis—there's an organization called UnXeptable, started by Israeli expats in support of a democratic Israel. It organized weekly protests against the Netanyahu government and the things it represents, like expansion of settlements, that ruin the possibility of a two-state solution. It was a call by Israeli expats to American Jews to say, "Can you please stand with us? Because we need you to assert that democracy matters." Since Oct. 7 the group has pivoted to bringing home the 240 hostages (who were captured during the Hamas attack on Israel).

AFTAB: If anything, I wish there were more outrage from both sides over the return of the hostages as well as the plight of the people of Gaza. It is a devastating human tragedy, and we all must have the courage to look at it from humanity's point of view—and not merely through a religious lens.

TOM: As Diane noted, there are people who engage in dialogue no matter what. But how do you go from engaging the committed few to fostering

dialogue among a larger group?

DIANE: Generally, in political organizing, you identify who's 100% with you, who's 100% against you, and then there are the folks in the middle who are open-minded to learning and listening. That's where you spend your time. With people who are dead-set against you, you're wasting your time.

AFTAB: Our mosque has a long tradition of events where we invite people from a broad range of faith traditions. We've had rabbis over the years, as well as priests, Hindu leaders, Buddhists, even atheists, who come and give a talk—describe the good things in their religion or tradition. When you attend these, you learn so much. Maybe not all misunderstandings get removed, but if I go to a session and walk away with one thing new that I've learned, that's well worth the time. This is one of those things where it's one soul at a time.

DIANE: You don't approach this with the mindset that you're making change overnight. It's social change for the long run. I started going to those events at Aftab's mosque 20 years ago. I was invited by one of the female leaders at the mosque, and I went with my rabbi. Then we started bringing other people. Eventually I started appearing on panels, speaking about the role of fasting, or community service or hospitality—whatever.

There are some people who dip their toe and go, "Well, that was nice." And then they go back to their world. And then some people will stick with it.

TOM: Taking that first step can be difficult. What prompted you to say yes to the invitation the first time?

DIANE: I was friends with my rabbi, and the focus of her rabbinate was interfaith relations and things like community service and social justice. So she (and someone from the mosque) invited me. A lot of people come with a friend. That's how a lot of people walk through the door the first time.

It takes the kind of person who is curious and not fearful of things they don't know of—like saying the wrong thing or asking the wrong question. You need to have some level of self-confidence in your own humanity to walk into a place that is different and be open to ask a question and not be fearful.

AFTAB: I used to have this sense, "Gee, what if I go to—say, a Hindu temple or a synagogue, and I don't know what to do? Would I offend anyone?" So as long as people know that it's okay if they make a mistake—that people are going to be understanding. We open our mosque every Friday for anyone to come and join the service, and it's fine if you make a mistake. It's got to be OK to step into somebody else's place of worship and ask questions or be guided. Every city I visit I always go to a church, not to participate in the service, but to go and say this is a place where people worship the same God. Or I go to temples and observe.

TOM: How do you respond to those who might say, we have too much to do in our own community to build bridges to other traditions, especially ones where extremists at the fringes are at work to destroy us?

DIANE: A couple of things come to mind. One is specific to the Jewish community. We're such a small population. You can't really survive as a Jew in any place without allies. Not that it's a totally transactional thing, but thriving means being part of the larger community. In the world we're 0.2% of the population, and in America we're 2% of the population.

When I did JCRC work, I had the mindset that you should come to this work for whatever reason you want to, because you will probably change over time anyway. If you come to it because you think it's good for Jews to be in relationship with the larger community,

fine. But if you come to this work because it's morally the right thing to do—to be in relationship with others who are different from yourself, that's great. Some people walk between those two paths. In a way, I don't really care why you're coming to it. I just want to know what you're doing, where your feet are actually standing. That is enough for me.

AFTAB: If you only do this work when it's the hour of need, then it will come across as transactional. But if you make it part of your DNA, you show that you are there to support each other. Let's leave the job of God to God and not judge each other, and let's just do what human beings should be doing, which is to be good neighbors to each other.

A long time ago, our community raised funds to build desalination plants in Gaza. We recently got a report that, now that water has been shut off, those plants are working. And no matter what your religion is—because it's not just Muslims who live in that area—you feel good that we did this a long time ago, without thinking that something like this will happen. And now that community is benefiting from it.

DIANE: After the mass shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh in 2018, we had a lot of people standing with us from all different stripes. There were people who had previously pushed back against our work for whom the lightbulb went off. They needed to see it. They're so fearful, they didn't believe that anyone would really stand with

**If you only do this work when it's the hour of need, then it will come across as transactional. But if you make it part of your DNA, you show that you are there to support each other.**

us. But when they saw it happen, they became believers in the cause.

TOM: How has the work of inter-faith dialogue become harder in a society where antisemitism and Islamophobia are so much more in the open and even legitimized by people at the highest levels of government and business?

DIANE: You try to do it all still, and it can be stressful. You're not going to leave your friends that you've made and go, "Sorry, right now we don't have time." Once you have connections with people, you owe it to that relationship to continue it. Twenty years ago, I was much more worried about issues like affordable housing or hunger. But now a certain amount of the time is straight-up programming—emails, information, helping kids deal with antisemitism on school campuses. It's very in your face, and you have to deal with it.

AFTAB: The issue is not new, but what is going on right now—be it Islamophobia or antisemitism—it is becoming more and more urgent. I hope that there will be a day when there are Muslim organizations in a more formal and intentional way holding an event against antisemitism, and that the Jewish community will do the same against Islamophobia, because the issues are the same. The more that can be done together, the more potent that response could be.

We have an ongoing campaign to write to the politicians in every country to focus them on the danger of Islamophobia. We as a community do not hold or participate in any protests, because that's not in our DNA. But we do engage politicians, government officials, other faith communities or other organizations. Likewise, we have an ongoing effort to write to newspapers, to raise awareness. We're trying to engage through as many angles as we possibly can.

TOM: How has the work of dialogue changed you as a person?

DIANE: It's an identity for me. It's who I am. Unfortunately, I will say that for the Jewish community, this feels like a turning point because of the huge increase in antisemitism at large.

Even though I have retired from the work, every time I have an opportunity to get invited back in, there's no question whether to do it. The friends that I've

made outside the Jewish community and the connections that I have continue to be really important, especially when there's a need.

AFTAB: When you see some wrong being done against somebody else, it's not a responsible thing to say, "That's not my problem." Because that can easily be you. If you don't participate in fixing the issue, when it comes to your turn—and that turn will come—you want people standing up for you.

Our community has its annual convention at a mosque in Los Angeles that does not have a big enough car parking capacity. So, for the past many years, a nearby church has been opening its parking lot to us. And when their events happen, we open our place to them. That's a small thing, but you can extend that to any number of problems and issues. If only we would be able to figure out a way to pool our resources, the impact on each community would be just phenomenal.

DIANE: What I've discovered is that people trust me to be a source of those kinds of ideas and that openness. There's this sense of trust that you can emanate that opens doors for other people. That's the most important thing I can do right now—is just open those doors. ■

— The Principle —

# Embrace Civic Responsibility

“Citizens have power. Customers have needs.”

—Peter Block

A senior executive was being interviewed for the ALF Fellows program. When asked where he lived, he shared the name of a wealthy town in Northern California, which had recently been in the news for a slew of attacks by residents on elected officials. The city had been moving an initiative forward to promote equity, inclusion and belonging for its citizens. For that, as well as some COVID safety policies, leaders had been on the receiving end of vicious name calling at public meetings, ongoing harassment, damage to their property, threats of physical harm and a home break-in.

When asked his opinion about what was going on at City Hall, he responded with, “I don’t pay attention to the news. I let my wife worry about that.” This executive happened to be a person of color. Imagine how he might have felt if it were his wife on the receiving end of the racial harassment. Have we stopped paying attention to what’s going on in our own backyard?

Evidence of declining trust between our government and its citizens has been well documented. When the Pew Research Center began asking about trust in government in 1958, about three-quarters of Americans trusted the federal government to do the right thing almost always or most of the time. Trust in government began eroding during the 1960s, amid the escalation of the Vietnam War, and the decline continued in the 1970s with the Watergate scandal and worsening economic struggles. The 80s and 90s brought periods of higher trust, after 9/11 for instance, but since 2007, that figure has not risen above 30%.

It’s only logical that distrust and a

**We have a choice  
to lead with love  
and curiosity.**

lack of civic engagement are linked. How much do we as unengaged citizens bear the responsibility for poor quality candidates, thoughtless decisions and broken trust with the citizenry? If we choose to stay ignorant or “let someone else worry about that,” we don’t have room to complain, as they say.

Another potential Fellow who worked in tech expressed an interest in serving as a city parks commissioner for her small town. She was passionate about public space and ensuring that kids have adequate places to move and socialize. When a faction in the town learned that she was in favor of transforming an open space into a public park, the harassment began; escalating threats and name calling on social media. Widely advertising her home address. Calling on residents to bother her there to dissuade her advocacy for building a park. The heat became too troubling, as a mom and as someone who already held a more than full-time career with substantial, time consuming pressures. Who needs it?! She withdrew her application to be a city commissioner.

Is this politics as usual now? Why? What is the opportunity before us as human citizens, in this moment in our community and country? Is it someone else’s job to know who the Mayor is, where the money goes, and why potholes

aren’t filled or school board members are getting death threats for enforcing mask mandates during a pandemic? It begs the question - Whose democracy is this anyway?!

We have a choice to lead with love and curiosity – not only at home and work, but as contributing members of our neighborhoods and communities. The call to action here is to stay informed, ask questions, and care. We may need to manage our intake of news to protect our hearts and mental health, but choosing to disengage and instead make assumptions and point fingers can’t be the alternative if we’re to sustain our democracy.

We’ve witnessed seasoned leaders begin the Fellows program as private sector executives, and come out the other side running for office or joining a non-profit board. Why? When Fellows invest in relationship building across sectors, build trust and have authentic dialogue with leaders they otherwise may have prejudged and made assumptions about, a systems view of civic challenges begins to take shape. We begin to understand our complicity to problems, and the opportunity before us to engage in solutions.

INVITATION:

- With a “beginner’s mind,” have a conversation with someone in the public sector. Interview them about their work and challenges, with the goal of exposing your assumptions. Have you been complicit in perpetuating them? How?
- Explore ways to contribute civically. If you can’t take the time, at least seek to understand the systems.
- Vote. Every. Single. Time. |

# The ALF Magic Formula: Transformation to the Power of Trust

## The Equation the World Needs

By Keith Krach, ALF Silicon Valley Class XV

I grew up in Rocky River, Ohio, where my dad ran a machine shop. I worked for him as a welder. In good times, he had five employees; in tough times, I was his only one. My father encouraged me to get some “college knowledge,” and come back as an engineer so we could build a big company of 10 employees. While I did become an engineer, I never went back to work with my dad. But I believe he would have been proud of my career and my involvement in the American Leadership Forum.

At ALF, we aren't allied with any political causes or specific ideologies. Instead, we support the United Nations Human Rights Declaration of 1948, which states that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. This principle guides our work and values.

My life's work has been to create innovative companies, high-performance teams, and massive global networks based on trust. I believe the team with the best people wins—and that diversity of thought and experience is the catalyst for genius. That is why ALF's mission resonates so deeply with me. It revolves around forging networks of leaders who establish bonds of good faith, all with the aim of effecting change for the greater good. In essence, ALF is about two words: Transformation and Trust.

At the ALF Class XV retreat, we explored the many concrete ways that trust is the key to fortifying and expanding relationships, organizations, businesses, and noble quests. Trust is also essential to self-transformation. If you

want to supercharge your team, you must first trust yourself to lead. You have to look at yourself honestly and say: Can I trust my mind and my intentions? Can I trust that I'm acting not out of ego but with clarity, compassion, and integrity?

We concluded that trust is integral to all transformations. Being an engineer, I turned this into a single equation, which also serves as a memory aid whenever I lose focus.

Transformation to the Power of Trust, or simply T2.

**PROOF OF THE T2 EQUATION**  
- Transformation is the most powerful word in any language. Without it, we don't develop, prosper, or grow. If you're not transforming, you're dying—and the best way to control the future is to invent it.

My own transformational journey has been characterized by dramatic risk-taking. I didn't plan it this way, but every few years, I begin again, entering a whole new world with a new wheelhouse, vocabulary, cast of characters, and set of challenges—and of course brand new ways to fail. By living at my edge, and at the edge of massive cultural disruptions, has forced my heart and mind to grow. I truly believe the biggest risk of all is that we stop taking risks at all. One saying I like is “Don't be too careful; you might get hurt.”

Many of the leaders I admire most have a more prudent style. They transform incrementally, gathering information and testing-and-learning before changing course. Their transformations come into focus slowly,

but they can be every bit as radical and profound as a risk-taker's change. What I know for sure is that great leaders embrace change—and not just change, but wholesale change. Transformation.

That brings me to the second component in our T2 equation: TRUST. If Transformation is the most powerful word in any language, then Trust is the most important word.

When starting companies from scratch, I quickly found that my partners and teams had to be willing to take a flier on me. That's a lot to ask—but it's not something I'd ever take for granted. To earn trust is simple but not easy: First, I gut-check my own integrity at every turn. I do trustworthy acts. I keep my promises. I overdeliver. On the strength of my track record, people trust me the next time—and I trust them.

This principle drove me in the 1980s, when, as an upstart at GM, the company trusted me to build its industrial robots division, and I turned GMF into the largest manufacturer of industrial robots in the world.

It served me again in the 1990's at Rasna when engineers who tested our design software came to trust it with their most important calculations. It forever changed the way they work. And trust was central to building Ariba 20 years ago and inventing B2B commerce. Ariba now transacts \$3.7T/year—more than Amazon, eBay, and Alibaba combined.

At DocuSign, it became crystal clear that we were not in the software business, we were in the trust business.

DocuSign deals with people's most important contracts and relationships—the documents you sign. Our software is rock-solid, but our word is gold.

Today, the company name is a verb, and the DocuSign Global Trust Network has grown to 1 billion users and 1 million companies.

All of this was possible because of the trust I extended to others, and the trust they put in me. I have found that the shared values of trust define us more than our differences and that those shared principles can see us through our challenges. When trust is in abundance, everyone grows and prospers. When it's scarce, everyone suffers.

Unfortunately, the world now has some authoritarian leaders who don't grasp that point. They operate on networks of deceit and duplicity. But their attempts to manipulate our bonds of trust always incurs a heavy price: the loss of trust. It's ironic that even those who undermine trust need it. That is its undeniable power. No one in a globally interdependent world can survive without it.

**A DREAM I NEVER KNEW I HAD** - In December 2017, when I was running DocuSign, I went on a two-week listening trip to explore whether to enter the Chinese market. I have been visiting China since 1981 and am a lover of Chinese culture, history, and people. But this time it was different. First, it seemed odd that every 30 minutes at a conference I was being asked to download Tencent. Then it became clear the nonstop propaganda of the CCP was edged with new aggression. The surveillance state was using technology that the worst of history's dictators could have only dreamed of. I saw drone swarm technology. I heard about the One Belt One Road. It looked like a military supply chain to me.

In plain sight, the CCP was also carrying out horrific human rights abuses to ethnically cleanse the Uyghur population in the western province of Xinjiang.

In my business, the guys with the best technology win the war. And the CCP has malign intentions. As I was flying home, I wondered what the leaders in Washington were doing about this.

I only knew one government official: Vice President Mike Pence, whom I

met in passing when he was governor of Indiana, and I was the chairman of the board at Purdue. After I shared my concerns about China with him, the Vice President asked: "Have you ever thought about serving your country?"

I found myself saying: "That's a dream I never knew I had. I'd be honored."

Little did I know that the trust the U.S. government put in me at that moment was going to lead to the most important mission of my life. I was asked to serve as Under Secretary of State, and lead economic diplomacy for the United States.

I may have been new to government, but I fully appreciated the enormity of the role of "the E" in a time when the U.S. is facing accelerating cyberwarfare and ruthless techno-economic competition. Our rivals are playing the long game and they are playing for keeps.

In this high-stakes competition, a superpower advantage can vanish in an instant. To gain a competitive advantage over authoritarian rivals I set out to unify our powerful allies, to leverage the private sector, and to amplify the

**The Trust Doctrine states that every peaceful relationship must be based on a firm foundation of integrity, accountability, transparency, and reciprocity.**

moral high ground of democratic trust principles.

**DIVERSITY OF THOUGHT: CATALYST FOR GENIUS** - I have always prided myself on being a nonpartisan CEO, open to diversity of thought and immune to tempest-in-a-teapot controversies. So it was a badge of honor to have the rare distinction of being unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate, especially at a time of heightened polarization.

Popular wisdom is that if you want a friend in Washington, you should get a dog. We already had one, so I brought a dozen brilliant veterans to D.C. from DocuSign, Ariba, Rasna, GM, and XO Jet. I even recruited Purdue's Dean of Engineering, Mung Chiang who was recently named President of the University.

I paired them with foreign service officers in a synergistic team backed by 3,000 economic officers in the U.S. and every country around the world. We had the finest foreign service folk, and their North Star is always national security.

However, one experience they hadn't had was one I knew well: getting bloody on the battlefield of technological competition. The combination of the Silicon Valley veterans and the elite diplomatic corps proved extraordinary. I called it a 60/60 deal, because both parties not only respected but learned so much from each other.

We went to work aligning the team around a playbook—mission, vision, principles, goals, and strategy. The playbook would become the U.S. Global Economic Security Strategy (GESS). Among other goals, it lays out a plan to form a network of partnerships composed of like-minded entities that operate by a set of trust principles that are now called the Trust Doctrine.

**THE TRUST DOCTRINE** - The Trust Doctrine states that every peaceful relationship must be based on a firm foundation of integrity, accountability, transparency, and reciprocity. A peaceful relationship must further demonstrate respect for the rule of law, property rights, national sovereignty, the environment, the press, and human rights.

These are principles that the U.S. and our partners honor, while authoritarian regimes like China



and Russia flout them, and use our capacity for trust against us. In fact, the China-Russia partnership lays bare an opposite doctrine to ours: call it the Power Doctrine. Both governments are revolutionary relics known for lawlessness, duplicity, bullying, domestic oppression, thought control, coercive economic practices, and grave human-rights abuses. They dismiss the possibility of relationships built on trust, and instead rely on coercion to achieve their ambitions.

The Trust Doctrine, by contrast, puts a shared commitment to human dignity at the heart of international relations. It offers mutual and symmetrical benefits to those who align with the principles and extend them to others. We turn the tables on the Power Doctrine when we draw a bright line between trust relationships and power relationships. This gives our side the moral high ground, and a position of strength and solidarity from which to compete.

**CLEAN NETWORK ALLIANCE OF DEMOCRACIES** - We put the Trust Doctrine to the test on one of the most urgent threats from an authoritarian regime: China's plan to control global 5G communications.

If China controlled 5G today, the CCP would not only have access to every single cell phone's personal data, but they could manipulate everything from utility grids to autonomous vehicles, sanitation systems, power grids, and manufacturing processes. When I arrived at the State Department, the CCP's 5G masterplan seemed unstoppable. All previous U.S. efforts to stop them had failed. Both sides of the aisle were hitting the panic button.

Our breakthrough came when we asked our foreign counterparts a simple question: How's your relationship with the CCP? They invariably said, "They're an important trading partner." But then they'd lean in: "...but we don't trust them."

Understanding that the CCP was running empty on trust gave us the confidence to deploy the Trust Doctrine to both defeat the 5G masterplan and to create an enduring model by building the Clean Network Alliance of Democracies, which would defend against all of the CCP's techno-economic weaponry.

The Trust Doctrine cracked the

## I was summoned to a closed-door Senate Intelligence Committee meeting about China's technological threat. The senators were demanding a plan for accelerating the development of critical technologies.

code. In less than a year, and during the worst period of the pandemic, the Clean Network grew to 60 Clean Countries, as we called them. The Clean Countries represent two thirds of the world's global GDP, two hundred Clean Telcos, and a host of industry-leading Clean Companies.

Former U.S. National Security Advisor General H.R. McMaster said, "The Clean Network's defeat of the Chinese Communist Party's masterplan to control 5G communications was the first time a U.S. government-led initiative proved that China's economic warfare is beatable because it exposed their biggest weakness: Nobody trusts them."

**PRESERVING DEMOCRACY IN TAIWAN** - Taiwan is a linchpin of democracy and a role model of freedom. Its survival is vital to the wellbeing of democracies all over the world. The Trust Doctrine became the fulcrum of our efforts to shield Taiwan from the CCP's aggression. We used it to strengthen Taiwan's economic ties to the U.S. and our allies.

To Xi Jinping, Taiwan's existence as an extraordinarily vibrant Mandarin-speaking society disproves the CCP myth that democracy is incompatible with Chinese culture. He wants it gone. Our support of Taiwan is the Trust Doctrine in action.

Two groundbreaking initiatives, the Lee Economic Prosperity Partnership and the Science and Technology Cooperation Pact, served to strengthen a trusting, respectful relationship between Taiwan and the nations of the free world. Our team also brought the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), the world's leader in advanced semiconductor fabrication, to the U.S., in the largest onshoring in our nation's history.

I got the feeling that Beijing officials were a little upset with me for deepening Taiwan's democratic alliances because they sent a greeting party of 40 fighters and bombers when I became the highest-ranking State Department official to visit Taiwan in 41 years.

However, I knew the trip was worthwhile when Taiwan's President Tsai said my visit exemplified the remarkable possibilities of the Taiwan-US alliance, which has only grown stronger since that trip. Taiwan's U.S. ambassador even dubbed me, "Taiwan's number one friend."

**PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS**

The Trust Doctrine served as a prominent voice both to call out the CCP's genocide of the Uyghurs and to take concrete action to confront it.

First, we exposed CCP's human rights

abuses to multiple players—government, business, universities, pension funds, stock exchanges, financial institutions, the press, and civil society. We urged these institutions to act on their moral and fiduciary duty to disclose and divest from Chinese companies enabling human rights atrocities.

Nury Turkel, the Commissioner on Religious Freedom who was born in a China re-education camp for Uyghurs, took notice.

“Keith Krach was the first government official to openly label the CCP’s atrocities against the Uyghurs as genocide,” he said in a public statement.

“In addition to issuing the first business advisory, he compared the genocide in Xinjiang to the Holocaust, and called for divestment from Chinese companies complicit in human rights abuses. His letters to American CEOs, civil society leaders and university governing boards has spawned a divestment movement on college campuses.”

#### ARCHITECTING THE \$280B BIPARTISAN CHIPS ACT -

The power of unity through non-partisanship. In my second month on the job, I was summoned to a closed-door Senate Intelligence Committee meeting about China’s technological threat. The senators were demanding a plan for accelerating the development of critical technologies.

To their astonishment, following the meeting, we unveiled the Global Economic Security Strategy draft, which included the design of a tech research funding bill.

Soon after, we presented the outline of a bill to boost investment in high-tech research crucial for national security to Senators Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Todd Young (R-IN). The plan aimed to turn \$150 billion in government R&D funding into a \$500 billion investment, with matching contributions from the private sector and allied countries. A few months later, the two Senators, along with Reps. Ro Khanna (D-CA) and Mike Gallagher (R-WI.), introduced the Endless Frontiers Act, which substantially increased investments in AI, semiconductors, quantum computing, advanced communications, biotechnology, and clean energy.

To address the lack of manufacturing

plans in the U.S., particularly in the critical industry of semiconductors, we focused on onshoring TSMC to encourage other chip companies and suppliers to rebuild the U.S. chip ecosystem. Since the TSMC announcement, there has been over \$350 billion worth of semiconductor investment and jobs committed in the U.S. We also used TSMC’s investment as the crucial catalyst to design a bipartisan bill, then called CHIPS for America, with Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Mark Warner (D-VA.). American semiconductor manufacturing is already coming back.

## The world sorely needs a new generation of bold, trustworthy, transformational leaders.

The Endless Frontiers Act and the Chips for America Act eventually got combined into the monumental bipartisan \$280 billion CHIPS and Science Bill. After our term in office was over, we continued to work with the Senate, the House, and Commerce Secretary Gina Raimundo to pass the bill. I was invited to the White House on August 9, 2022, when President Biden signed the bill into law.

I was proud that the EE Times, the Bible for electric engineers, labeled me as the architect of the CHIPS and Science Act. But, without the team’s bipartisan efforts initiating and designing the first two packages, the \$280 billion bill would have never happened.

ULTIMATE SCORECARD - The final validation of our efforts came just one minute after my term ended. That’s when Xi Jinping imposed lifelong

sanctions on my family and me. The sanctions were a testament to our mission’s success. I view it as a badge of honor.

A year later, the Trust Doctrine received global recognition. To my amazement, I was nominated for the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize for “the creation and application of the Trust Doctrine to counter technological authoritarianism, bolster global economic security, uphold Taiwan’s democracy, and safeguard human rights.”

I am immensely proud of my team at the State Department. We created a transformational, trust-based diplomacy that integrates technology expertise and Silicon Valley strategies into foreign policy. Crucially, our non-partisan approach ensured policy continuity across administrations, a consistency that is vital to our allies. Nothing strikes fear into the heart of authoritarian regimes more than a truly United States and a solid democratic alliance.

Continuing our mission, we established the nonpartisan Krach Institute for Tech Diplomacy at Purdue, now a leading global authority for advancing freedom through trusted technology. The institute has launched expansive initiatives to bridge the digital divide in low-income nations and develop training programs for global diplomats. We have also been entrusted with leading the Global Tech Security Commission, with a mandate to forge a bipartisan tech-security playbook .

ALF MISSION - ALF is a call to action for the dreamers and doers of our time. The world sorely needs a new generation of bold, trustworthy, transformational leaders. The pace of change is accelerating, and global challenges are more complex than ever before. The call is out for leaders who can unify, motivate, and inspire.

As this climber looks back from the plain at this beloved mountain we call ALF, where I learned that a truly meaningful career is about giving back, I understand that T2 really is a magic formula for making a difference in this world. So, what does Transformation to the power of Trust equal? It equals all things are possible, or Infinity to the power of Infinity—is the biggest number in the universe. ■

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