

FROM THE VAULT: The Dangers of Autonomy

Many leaders long for autonomy, which is not a bad thing—it's natural to desire to dictate our own future.

The **drive for autonomy** can come from...

1. The fear of having to rely on others and risk the potential of someone else controlling your future.
2. A misunderstanding of successful people after experiencing only the highlight reels and the illusion that they're able to be completely self-governing.

If we aren't careful, the drive for autonomy can be a dangerous thing.

THE QUEST FOR AUTONOMY PRESENTS FOUR DANGERS FOR LEADERS:



There is a fine line between as free as you can possibly be and losing all the freedom you currently have.

Some expressions of freedom have the potential to undermine all or much of the freedom you've worked so hard for. **One** inappropriate expression of autonomy that crosses a line can cause you to lose **all** autonomy and control.



Power and wealth are intoxicating.

Power and wealth can lead to a sense of entitlement, and entitlement is addictive. As a leader **experiences** more autonomy, they **desire** more autonomy. An appetite is never fully satisfied, and there's a diminishing return: Today's "rush" won't be sufficient tomorrow.



Relationships become a means to an end.

Before long, you begin to **economize** your **relationships**, seeing everyone as a client, potential client, or a contact of some sort. You can be surrounded by people but nobody is close to you.



Ultimately the quest for autonomy leads to isolation.

When you're surrounded by people who **need** you—people who get a paycheck from you or are related to you—it's almost impossible for them to be **honest** with you. If you announce a bad idea and they don't push back, you're the one who pays the price. You can be surrounded by people but have no **friends**.

Total autonomy is a myth and an unworthy goal. No one wants to live in a world of absolute autonomy because we were made to be in community.