**Amazon.com:** Leading from Within: Poetry That Sustains the Courage to Lead

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| 5.0 out of 5 stars**A Double Treat**, March 20, 2008

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| By  | **James Quay "former Executive Director, California Council for the Humanities”** (Albany, CA)     |

This wonderful anthology gives pleasure two ways: first, as a source of a wide variety of new and interesting poets and poems you may not have encountered before, always an important service for an anthology to perform. Second, however, the brief introductions that each contributor offers to his or her poem are a revelation and often as powerful as the poem itself. Who would have guessed that Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and John Bogle, founder of the Vanguard Group, would both find inspiration in Tennyson's "Ulysses"? Or that a Congresswoman would be touched by Naomi Shihab Nye's "Kindness". If you are expecting a collection of sentimental poetic candies, fear not. A few old chestnuts are here: "Invictus", for example, offered by a philosophy professor at the U.S. Naval Academy, but when you read his reason for including it, you read the poem with a new appreciation. Poets like William Stafford, Mary Oliver, and Langston Hughes are cited multiple times, and much-anthologized poets like Robert Frost and T.S. Eliot are here too, but so are poets new to me: William Ayot, Carol Zippert, or Ezzeddin Nasafi. Mystics like Rumi, Hafiz, and William Blake. Public figures like Eugene McCarthy and Martin Luther King Jr. The 93 poems are thoughtfully grouped into eight sections with intriguing titles that will make sense to anyone who's been in a position of leadership: "Called", "Defining Moments", "Sometimes It Aches", "Pay Attention", "The Real Bottom Line", "Dare to Endure", "Leading Together", "Back At It". The editors have clearly paid attention to the poems and clearly thought deeply about leadership. We expect much of our leaders and project upon them powers and motives that only compound the responsibility they already carry. We hope they will inspire us, but we seldom think about where they find inspiration. This anthology offers their testimony and the result is an anthology that rewards multiple readings. Whether you lead a large corporation or a school PTA, you'll find it inspiring to listen to leaders praise the poems that inspire them.  |