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## Courage & commitment in a model citizenship

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**W**E, as a people, do need to have the courage to dream. To be what we can best be as a nation, we must KNOW what that state is. Kalaw began his framework with the trait of courage for a reason. For without the courage to dream of what our country can be, we have no vision of where we should be headed. What that dream is has already been defined in various literature, most recently with the "AmBisyonNatin 2040" program of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), which gives a specific collective vision of the Filipino nation in 25 years as actually based on targeted and comprehensive surveys of the aspirations of Filipinos from all walks of life.

A rudimentary review of NEDA's program readily reveals that all of our aspirations can be easily summarized into the four core values expressed in our national motto, as mandated by Republic Act 8491:

— *MakaDiyos*. We should learn to see

things from the perspective of the long, or strategic, view. Having deeply rooted religious beliefs facilitates such, as relentless faith facilitates enduring optimism in the face of consistent ethical challenges.

— *Makatao*. We should learn the duty to be active participants in our community, particularly through the exercise of collaborative leadership with a focus on the common good. The *Gawad Kalinga* movement is a perfect example of this orientation.

— *Makakalikasan*. We should be taught that all economic activity always entails the utilization of five forms of resources, or capital — financial, physical, social, human, and natural. We should therefore learn to be good stewards of each of these.

— *Makabansa*. To achieve the above, we should develop allegiance to our nation, primarily by emphasizing the benefits of unity in diversity through these four shared national values.

It is not enough to have the courage to dream. We should also have the discipline of commitment. Knowing what we collectively want, we must "FEEL" sufficient

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buy-in to get us to such state. With a common national dream, our inherently resilient nature, as highlighted by Kalaw, will in turn channel the realization of such through the everyday execution of the four key duties of the office of citizen.

— **The Duty of National Allegiance.** We should not treat our citizenship as a status with benefits or privileges (i.e., like how many countries our passport can get us into without a visa) but as an honor to be cherished. In short, we must prove that we deserve our citizenship. In truly exceptional circumstances, this can involve genuinely heroic leadership such as the examples of Jose Rizal and Jose Abad Santos.

— **The Duty of Informed Governance.** In line with our national value of "Makatao," we should always facilitate understanding before advocacy, as well as promote the meaningful participation of everyone in public and private governance processes.

— **The Duty of Community Service.** Again, also in line with our national value of "Makatao," we should actively contribute to our community in the various ways open to

us. An illustration of how we can go about this is detailed in Atty. Alex Lacson's popular book "12 Little Things Every Filipino Can Do to Help Our Country" (2005).

— **The Duty of Individual Diligence.** In contrast to the first civic duty that emphasizes the real possibility of heroic leadership, this duty highlights the continuing necessity of QUIET leadership; or exercising one's daily judgment deliberately in an ethical, informed, and positive manner.

We all need to build – individually and collectively – our commitment to exercising these duties every day. We best do such by recognizing that each of these duties entails a distinct kind of personal leadership, which together constitute the four kinds of citizen leadership:

— Heroic – when we demonstrate our duty of national allegiance.

— Thoughtful – when we exercise our duty of informed governance.

— Collaborative – when we engage in our duty of community service.

— Quiet – when we practice daily our duty of individual diligence.