Daniel Meyer likes to shake things up with his message to students. You think you are our future leaders? Wrong!

You are leaders NOW!

“Young people are sick of being told that they are future leaders... {those} who are ready to be leaders of the NOW will change the future for the better if only we let them!”

That conviction prompted Daniel to found The Under a Tree Fund to help young people take the leap from thinking to doing, something Daniel admits he did not always do himself.

“I have made far more decisions throughout my life not to be involved in the field of social change than I have made to be actively involved.”

“I felt passionate about enacting social change but also felt angry and alone, unable (or perhaps unwilling) to translate my hope for a better world into an actionable blueprint for achieving that vision.”

Daniel had to go through a period of self-destructive behavior before he could find the strength and the purpose to move forward. “I needed an outlet--a healthy and sustainable one--for dealing with the world as it is without compromising what it might yet become. My work became the source of that sustenance and purpose.”

The Under a Tree Fund is designed to give students the tools they need to create their own blueprint for action. Students are invited to become Fellows, signing up for a 38-week course of study that helps them identify and develop the skills they need to navigate difficult decisions in a global society.

Through group activities, lively dialogues, community engagement missions, self-reflective journaling, and individual social impact projects, Fellows grapple with questions of identity, justice, ethics, and their own social and civic responsibility.
The success of their projects makes students eligible to compete for scholarships. To date, The Under a Tree Fund has given out $9,000 in scholarships, with an additional $11,000 to be awarded in June 2018.

The bottom line, says Daniel, is “to endow young people with the knowledge, skills, and guidance to translate their own ethics, values, and beliefs into positive, meaningful, and lasting social change.”

Which brings us to another surprising message Daniel likes to share—that his own significance in the world has actually been lessened by his work with The Under a Tree Fund. And that, he thinks, is the way it should be.

“The best teachers, I believe, make ourselves progressively obsolete. The longer we are around, the less we should be needed. The same goes for the work of social impact. The more success our efforts have and the greater the platform for sharing our views, the smaller we should feel. The more we empower others around us to lead autonomously and courageously, the less we should be needed to fuel and sustain that movement.”

Danny is the Founder and CEO of The Under a Tree Fund, a college scholarship fund with a mission of cultivating a new generation of ethical, compassionate and accountable civic leaders and social entrepreneurs through fellowship programs and a social impact curriculum.

Danny is making an impact in the U.S.

Ethical Citizens Fellowship Alumni, John-Paulo Torre, welcomes Under A Tree fellows and parents