



On September 11, 2001, the United States experienced a series of coordinated terrorist attacks. Four planes were hijacked to carry out suicide attacks against targets across the country. It was an attack unlike anything the country had ever experienced as nearly 3,000 people lost their lives and over 25,000 were injured.

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE IN RESPONSE TO THE ATTACKS

In the aftermath of this unprecedented attack, people came together in public displays of respect, sympathy and resiliency. There were untold numbers of individuals who showed great leadership and service in the days, weeks and months to follow the attacks.

Many people joined together to help the families of the victims, express gratitude to first responders and pay tribute to the many lives lost.

LEARNING MORE: PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

Even though you don't have your own memories, this event is considered part of our country's recent history. People who witnessed the attacks still have vivid memories of 9/11 and the times to follow. Many people stepped unexpectedly into leadership roles during a time of crisis and others remember receiving and giving acts of service, both big and small.

- ▶ One New York City resident who was stuck in the city, along with thousands of others, and had to walk five miles home that day. He remembers people coming out from their businesses with cups of coffee and ice-cold bottles of water for their fellow residents. Listen to a [short account](#) of his experience that day.
- ▶ An Army officer who was working in the Pentagon on September 11th recalls how he had to remain at his post in the Army Operations Center throughout the day to maintain communications and set up the Crisis Response Team. Watch his personal account [here](#).
- ▶ And Gander, a Canadian town in Newfoundland, welcomed 6,700 people—nearly doubling the population of the small island—when the attacks forced 38 planes to make an emergency landing there. Read more about their show of hospitality in [this article](#).

And these personal accounts are only the beginning. It is likely that you know someone—family members, a teacher or other adults in your life—who also have vivid memories of 9/11 and the days that followed. Select one person you know who was alive for the attacks and use the questions below to learn more about their experience. Use the space provided to take notes as you speak to them.

Q Where were you on September 11, 2001? How did you hear about the attacks?

Q What was your experience that day and in the time following?

Q How did people respond to the attacks? Did you see people coming together to support one another? Did you notice people stepping up as leaders or servants in their community?

(If the interviewee doesn't recall specific examples, consider sharing some of the personal accounts above and ask if they heard or saw similar stories.)

MY RESPONSE

As you learn about the events of 20 years ago you may find that you are inspired to view the world around you differently. Take some time to reflect on the personal accounts above and the interview you conducted. Select one example of leadership or service that stood out to you. Use the table below to examine the example and determine how you can apply it in your own life.

THE EXAMPLE OF LEADERSHIP AND/OR SERVICE I SELECTED IS:	THIS EXAMPLE STOOD OUT TO ME BECAUSE:	I CAN SHOW THIS TYPE OF LEADERSHIP AND/OR SERVICE IN MY LIFE BY:
<p>By demonstrating this type of leadership and/or service, I believe I'll impact the world around me in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ ▶ ▶ 		

Each year, people around the world now dedicate September 11th to remember the lives that were lost and to honor those who risked their own lives in service to others. This day is now known as a National Day of Service and Remembrance. You can also honor and remember these individuals by volunteering to help an organization that has meaning for you. You can spread kindness, serve others and use your leadership skills to help those that need them most.

Commit now to join Lead4Change and the 1.8 million students who have already put their leadership skills to work to serve their communities and make a difference in the world!