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THE JOURNAL OF  
**JVBL**  
VALUES-BASED LEADERSHIP

Volume XIV | Issue II | Summer/Fall 2021

VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY

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Reviewer: Noreen Ohlrich — SUNY New York Project Staff

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## JVBL Mission Statement

The mission of the *JVBL* is to promote ethical and moral leadership and behavior by serving as a forum for ideas and the sharing of "best practices." It serves as a resource for business and institutional leaders, educators, and students concerned about values-based leadership. The *JVBL* defines values-based leadership to include topics involving ethics in leadership, moral considerations in business decision-making, stewardship of our natural environment, and spirituality as a source of motivation. The *JVBL* strives to publish articles that are intellectually rigorous yet of practical use to leaders, teachers, and entrepreneurs. In this way, the *JVBL* serves as a high quality, international journal focused on converging the practical, theoretical, and applicable ideas and experiences of scholars and practitioners. The *JVBL* provides leaders with a tool of ongoing self-critique and development, teachers with a resource of pedagogical support in instructing values-based leadership to their students, and entrepreneurs with examples of conscientious decision-making to be emulated within their own business environs.

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The *JVBL* invites you to submit manuscripts for review and possible publication. The *JVBL* is dedicated to supporting people who seek to create more ethically- and socially-responsive organizations through leadership and education. The Journal publishes articles that provide knowledge that is intellectually well-developed and useful in practice. The *JVBL* is a peer-reviewed journal available in both electronic and print fora (fully digital with print-on-demand options). The readership includes business leaders, government representatives, academics, and students interested in the study and analysis of critical issues affecting the practice of values-based leadership. The *JVBL* is dedicated to publishing articles related to:

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2. Creating ethical, values-based organizations;
3. Balancing the concerns of stakeholders, consumers, labor and management, and the environment; and
4. Teaching students how to understand their personal core values and how such values impact organizational performance.

In addition to articles that bridge theory and practice, the *JVBL* is interested in book reviews, case studies, personal experience articles, and pedagogical papers. If you have a manuscript idea that addresses facets of principled or values-based leadership, but you are uncertain as to its propriety to the mission of the *JVBL*, please contact its editor. While manuscript length is not a major consideration in electronic publication, we encourage contributions of less than 20 pages of double-spaced narrative. As the *JVBL* is in electronic format, we especially encourage the submission of manuscripts which

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utilize visual text. Manuscripts will be acknowledged immediately upon receipt. All efforts will be made to complete the review process within 4-6 weeks.

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- 1) The editor and/or his or her representative will conduct a cursory review to determine if the manuscript is appropriate for inclusion in the *JVBL* by examining the relevance of the topic and its appeal to the Journal's target readership. The editor may: a) reject the manuscript outright, b) request submission of a revised manuscript which will then be subject to a comprehensive in-house review, or c) forward the manuscript for review pursuant to the provisions of the following paragraph.
- 2) The editor will submit the manuscript to two reviewers emanating from the field of the paper's topic, unless the submission is invited. Once reviews are returned, the editor may: a) accept the manuscript without modification; b) accept the document with specific changes noted; c) offer the author(s) the opportunity to revise and resubmit the manuscript in response to the reviewers' and editors' comments and notations; or d) reject the manuscript.

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## Editorial Comments & Articles

12.     **SIMPLE TRUTHS OF LEADERSHIP AND POLITICS**  
         Ritch K. Eich — Thousand Oaks, California, USA  
         *Whether leading in sports, business, politics, the military, or any other profession, nothing is as sacred or as fragile as one's character and the ability to pursue and communicate the truth. Character defines who a person is, what values are held dear, where one's moral compass lands, and how one must respond to the test of resolving conflicting ethical principles.*
  
17.     **CONCLUSION: FEMALE LEADERS USING COERCIVE POWER MOTIVATE SUBORDINATES**  
         Mary Kovach — Oxford, Ohio, USA  
         *This manuscript proposes that the motivation levels of employees change, based on their locus of control and gender. There were 155 full-time professionals surveyed, this study concluded a positive relationship between the use of reward power and employee effort. Notably, the supplemental analysis indicated a positive relationship between female supervisors who exhibited coercive power and greater employee effort.*
  
44.     **MORAL IDENTITY, SELF-IMPROVEMENT, AND THE QUEST FOR GREATNESS: A LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY**  
         Cam Caldwell — St. George, Utah, USA  
         Verl Anderson — St. George, Utah, USA  
         *The focus of this paper is on explaining how leaders can follow the path of self-improvement by more fully understanding their moral identity. We begin by briefly reviewing excerpts from the literature about personal development and self-awareness to lay a foundation for the importance of leaders seeking to achieve their optimal effectiveness. Following that introduction, we include a new definition of moral identity that builds upon identity theory as developed by Peter Burke and Jan Stets (2009). After describing the elements of Burke and Stets' identity standard, we identify nine traits that link moral identity and leadership. Integrating moral identity with the pursuit of personal excellence, we offer twelve insights about the leader's responsibility to honor moral duties owed to those whom they serve. Following that review, we suggest six significant contributions of this paper for academic scholars and for individuals who seek to become more honorable leaders and conclude the paper with thoughts about opportunities for additional research about moral identity.*
  
58.     **DEVELOPING PRESENCING LEADERSHIP ACUMEN THROUGH FIVE NEGATIVE CAPABILITY INFORMED PRACTICES**  
         Olen Gunnlaugson — Québec, Canada  
         *In the face of myriad local and global challenges that humanity is currently facing, it is becoming clear that the future of leadership depends increasingly on a leader's capacity to make effective discernments and interventions that confront these deeper complex issues at their very root source. To advance progress towards this aim, this article makes the case for cultivating presencing leadership which involves connecting with, and leading from, the hidden source of optimal and sustainable forms of action.*
  
80.     **VALUES, THE FILTERS THROUGH WHICH WE THINK: INTEGRITY, TRANSFORMATION, GROWTH, AND HOPE**  
         and
84.     **HOPE PERSPECTIVES ON "AUTHENTIC" LEADERSHIP: "SEEKING SOMETHING GREATER THAN OURSELVES"**

**Joseph Hester** — Claremont, North Carolina, USA

Recent events involving the 2020 presidential election and its aftermath have exposed the complexities and disputations related to authentic leadership necessitating its re-evaluation. As we are aware, the social and moral developments important in our history inform understandings — of our values and culture — compelling judgment and imposing personal introspection. And so, in a time when ethics and authenticity have been truncated by narcissistic behaviors — including anti-democratic ideologies and violence —strengthening ethical authenticity's moral core as a significant leadership construct seems appropriate.

## ***Peer-Reviewed Articles***

### **106. OPTIMISTIC LEADERSHIP FOR THE 21ST CENTURY AND BEYOND**

**Vincent Techo** — Paris, France

This paper proposes a future-driven leadership theory — the optimistic leadership theory — suitable for leading global organizations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. The author argues that a new leadership approach is needed for these organizations due to the complexities that come with globalization, including the high need for knowledge and experience, distance decay, and cultural amalgamation. Five leadership approaches (Visionary Leadership, Differentiated Leadership, Servant Leadership, Flexible Leadership, and Reflective Leadership) are identified as the components of optimistic leadership. Following a review of the rare literature on these five leadership approaches, they are found to constitute the best determinants of successful future-driven leadership. There is an overlap of some approaches and some are within other leadership theories such as transformational leadership. A model of optimistic leadership is suggested, and a test based on the variables is proposed.

### **117. CAN INFUSING SERVANT LEADERSHIP INTO SUPERVISION MITIGATE AGAINST EMPLOYEE BURNOUT?**

**Daryl Mahon** — Wicklow, Ireland

The present conceptual paper sets out to answer the question, can a model of servant leadership be infused within supervision in order to mitigate employee burnout and negative stressful experiences in the health and social care sector? The discussion includes a brief targeted review of the literature undertaken to assess the extent of burnout in the health and social care sectors. The supervision literature was also explored for possible gaps in effectiveness. The outcomes associated with servant leadership were distilled, focusing on employee wellbeing and how these are linked to burnout.

### **137. DO COMMUNITY CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIORS BY LEADERS ENHANCE TEAM PERFORMANCE? EVIDENCE FROM THE "FIELD"**

**Daniel J. Slater** — Jackson, Tennessee, USA

Due to minimal available findings, Rodell (2016) put out a call for more research on the performance outcomes of community-focused behaviors such as volunteering while acknowledging the challenge of connecting "social movements to hard data" (p.79). This study answers that call by evaluating the community citizenship behaviors (CCBs) of leaders and the potential influence on team performance. Based on existing theory and findings, this study argues that leaders who engage in CCB are likely to enhance their leadership skills, inspire their followers and produce prosocial contagion and as a result we hypothesize they will increase their team performance. Using a sample of National Football League teams and players, the findings presented here support the hypothesis suggesting that investments in local communities produce a positive outcome for the community, the leader, and even the leader's team performance.

### **149. CORPORATE ETHICAL TRAINING: AN ANSWER TO WHITE-COLLAR CRIMES**

**Richard Pitre** — Houston, Texas, USA

**Claudius Claiborne** — Houston, Texas, USA

The modern business corporation is a culturally significant component of American Society. It is facing a cultural invasion of the highest order. The categorical imperative, an unconditional

principle that rational individuals must follow despite natural desires or inclinations to do otherwise, is today being called into question. This is most likely the result of grounding moral values upon information that is transient and unstable rather than upon established data. The social contract, which governs the formation and maintenance of individual morals, is a requirement in organizations that demands collective agency – employees acting together to set forth moral rules of behavior and eschew pernicious leanings and tendencies. From that perspective, ethical training becomes a key leveraging point in the disconnect between cultural expectations and individual behaviors in corporate America.

### ***Case Studies***

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### ***Book Review***

224. TIGHTROPE AMERICANS REACHING FOR HOPE  
**Authors:** Nicholas D. Kristof & Sheryl WuDunn  
**Reviewer:** Noreen Ohlrich, SUNY New York Project Staff



## *SIMPLE TRUTHS OF LEADERSHIP AND POLITICS*

— RITCH EICH, THOUSAND OAKS, CA, USA

Being a truthful politician should never be an oxymoron, but here we are.

Real leaders—including public servants—don't lie. Ever. Real leaders don't need to.

It's sad that we even need to have a discussion on this subject, but more than six months after a hotly-contested presidential election and more than four months after an insurrection on the Capitol, many people still believe the "Big Lie" that Joseph R. Biden didn't win the US presidential election. It's sad that many of our elected officials have chosen to exacerbate this propaganda instead of undertaking the work required to help get the country out from under after a pandemic that has killed more than 600,000 friends, family, and coworkers. It's time to face the truth, not fight it.

Franklin Roosevelt said, "Repetition does not transform a lie into a truth." As Representative Liz Cheney stated the day before she was removed from her senior leadership position within the House GOP, "Remaining silent and ignoring the lie emboldens the liar." Who would have ever thought Roosevelt and Cheney could be held up as defenders of truth in the same paragraph? It's unfortunate most of our so-called leaders not only believe it's acceptable to lie, they take it a step further: if you don't like the truth, just invent a story that cancels it out. Repeat the lie until it becomes reality. This is a standard technique of dictators and fascist regimes.

By definition, all of our elected officials are politicians, but too few are statesmen and women, real leaders. It's rare to find one who is able or willing to put the interests of the country first, for fear of being ostracized from their political coalitions and party bosses, and the campaign funds that would ordinarily flow to their reelection bids. The lie is that these elected officials care about their constituents—the truth is that they don't.

Not that long ago, bipartisanship was not only possible, it was expected and even welcomed. Working together to solve problems wasn't taboo; it was encouraged. Elected officials remembered they were there to serve their constituents, regardless for whom

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those constituents voted. Character was considered a strength, not a weakness. Truth was something to be respected, not an inconvenience to be swept aside.

Whether leading in sports, business, politics, the military, or any other profession, nothing is as sacred or as fragile as your character. Character defines who you are, what values you hold dear, where your moral compass lands, and how you respond to the test of resolving conflicting ethical principles. Whether you agree with her positions or not, Liz Cheney refused to bend to the whims of a party being torn apart by an individual who demands fealty and takes pride in belittling and berating those who don't toe that party's line. Instead, she demonstrated true leadership.

Character dictates that you do the right thing whether or not someone is watching, and truth is the foundation that supports it. When we can no longer count on our representatives and senators to act responsibly and truthfully, we are in danger of disintegrating into chaos, or worse, as a nation. And, don't think for a minute that China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and other adversaries aren't watching closely.

True leaders surround themselves with people who are comfortable in their own skin and are willing to speak truth to power. When a culture begins to reward yes-men and yes-women, it becomes toxic. It cannot survive indefinitely—at some point, it will disintegrate. It really is that simple. Leaders must always tell the truth, as painful as that truth may be. And they must surround themselves with people who do the same.

*I believe history will show that Gerald R. (Jerry) Ford was one of the best leaders who ever graced the public square. A man of deep faith, courageous, humble, decidedly honest, a good listener, and a molder of consensus, Ford didn't seek to become Vice President or President of the United States. An Eagle Scout, a summer Yellowstone Park Ranger (the only president to have served as such), and an All-American starting center on the back-to-back NCAA National Championship football teams at the University of Michigan, Ford would have joined the select company of Teddy Roosevelt in wildlife preservation annals had the Democrat-controlled Congress not twice rejected his multi-billion-dollar plan to improve all the national parks in his Bicentennial Land Heritage Act. Ford's bill resulted, in part, from a spirited Oval Office visit with the persuasive, famed landscape photographer and stellar environmentalist, Ansel Adams, whom Ford greatly admired.*



*President Gerald R. Ford (center) and Ansel Adams – American photographer talking with conservationist William Turnage (27 January 1975). Courtesy, Wikimedia*

If your elected official misrepresents the truth and promotes conspiracy theories they know to be false in order to stay in power, do you think they or their staffs can be trusted? Do you think they are looking out for your best interests?

Character can reign over corruption. But often a price must be paid. Mitt Romney has been harassed while waiting to board a plane and booed at his state's GOP convention. Peter Meijer, who holds Jerry Ford's old seat in Michigan's 3rd congressional district, has

received death threats. John Kasich has been belittled and Liz Cheney ostracized—all of them paying for truth-telling with their jobs and reputations. To quote Adam Kinzinger, “It’s leaders’ job to tell the truth even if that’s uncomfortable, and that’s not what we’re doing.” Cindy McCain, after being formally censored by the Arizona Republican Party, described it as an honor to be included among those who served so faithfully (including her late husband).

You don’t need to go back too far in history to see that character, truth, and standing for one’s principles can coexist. Olympia Snowe, who retired in 1984, was well known as a staunch defender of the truth, her party, and her constituents. She didn’t consider it a weakness to reach across the aisle to get things done—instead, she took pride in it. Senator Snowe served eight terms in the House and three terms in the Senate. She was unabashedly bipartisan, and her constituents rewarded her many times over for her efforts. When announcing her retirement, she foreshadowed the future when she said, “I do not realistically expect the partisanship of recent years in the Senate to change over the short term.”

If our elected officials really want to lead, they need to stop spreading lies and start facing the truth—and speaking it. They need to create solutions instead of wasting time inventing problems that don’t exist. Our elected leaders need to act like adults instead of spoiled children throwing temper tantrums when they don’t get their way.

On *Washington Post Live*, Robert Gates, a staunch Republican who served eight U.S. presidents of both parties and is the only Secretary of Defense to remain in office under a newly-elected president, said, “I often get asked... what is the greatest danger to America today, and I say it is not a foreign threat. It is our paralysis and our polarization



*Landmark for Peace* sculpture of RFK and MLK, Jr.’s outstretched hands (artist Greg Perry, 1994), Indianapolis, IN. Photo courtesy of Joan Eich

at home.”

Like Gates, I believe leaders need to have vision, challenge the status quo, take thoughtful risks, and show an ability to compromise while also recognizing that consensus is not always possible. They must be willing to be held accountable and have the strength to hold those around them accountable as well. I also believe that you praise in public and counsel in private—you never criticize someone in the public square. I was given this wise counsel by Congressman Meijer’s grandfather, grocery magnate Fred Meijer of Greenville, Michigan, who was an esteemed trustee of a hospital I served.

And you never lie. Ever.

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U. S. Senator Olympia Snowe's statement made to Associated Press, February 28, 2012.

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### About the Author

Ritch K. Eich, Ph.D. (Michigan), former hospital executive at St. Joseph Mercy Health System (Ann Arbor), at IU Medical Center (Indianapolis), chief of public affairs at Blue Shield of CA (San Francisco) and captain, U.S. Naval Reserve (ret), is the author of five books, the most recent is ***Leading with GRIT, GRACE & GRATITUDE: Timeless Lessons for Life***. Eich has served on more than a dozen boards of directors and trustees of both for-profit and non-profit organizations across the country. He also served on Congressional committees for the U.S. Senators, Carl Levin and Dan Coats.

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# Conclusion: Female Leaders Using Coercive Power Motivate Subordinates

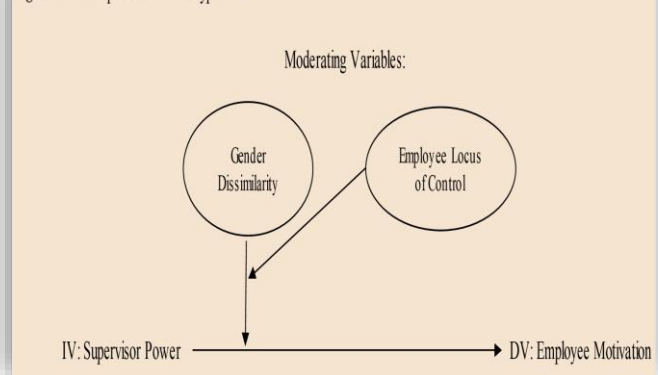
## Abstract

This manuscript advances prior research (Blau, 1964; Elangovan & Xie, 1999; French & Raven, 1959; Goodstadt & Hjelle, 1973; Hegtvedt, 1988; Randolph & Kemery, 2011; Zigarmi, Peyton Roberts, & Randolph, 2015) and capitalizes on supervisory skills using power dynamics within the workplace, by investigating employee effort resulting from gender dissimilar supervisor-employee dyads and employee locus of control. To offer a more focused approach, this is an evaluation specifically on reward and coercive power derived from French and Raven's (1959) five power bases. This manuscript proposes that the motivation levels of employees change, based on their locus of control and gender. There were 155 full-time professionals surveyed, this study concluded a positive relationship between the use of reward power and employee effort. Notably, the supplemental analysis indicated a positive relationship between female supervisors who exhibited coercive power and greater employee effort.

## Introduction

When exhibiting power, a dyadic relationship exists between dominant and submissive parties. Five years after the introduction of French and Raven's (1959) bases of power, Blau (1964) claimed the supervisor-employee (Sup-EE) relationship was vital to an organization's success. Additional studies analyzed across various contexts were conducted to

Figure 1 Conceptual Model of Hypotheses.



better understand the power dyad relationship in organizations. In fact, Elangovan and Xie (1999) demonstrated “clear evidence for the moderating effects of employee locus of control” (p. 370) and further argued supervisor power had various effects on employee (EE) motivation. This meant EEs could be motivated depending on the type of power their supervisor exhibited. However, gender was not taken into account in their study. Thus, *Figure 1* hypothesizes and summarizes these Sup-EE power dyads, specifically examining reward and coercive powers. The idea of issuing rewards has been used for centuries. Children are rewarded for good behavior, athletes are rewarded for hard work, and associates are rewarded for doing a good job in the workplace. All of these rewards serve as a threshold for accomplishment and motivation. Research from Randolph and Kemery (2011) suggested supervisors attempting to motivate EEs should use reward power, resulting in EEs willing to take on more responsibility. They found a positive correlation between supervisor use of reward power and EE empowerment.

Table 1 <i>Summary of the Role of Gender Studies in the Workplace</i>	
Authors	Key Points
Dobbins, G., Pence, E., Orban, J., & Sgro, J. (1983)	Found supporting evidence that gender played a significant role in the supervisor-employee dyadic relationship as related to various factors and outcomes, in a 210-participant study.
Thacker, & Ferris (1991)	Confirmed gender played a significant role when experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace.
Heilman, Block, & Martell (1995)	Revealed gender stereotypes in the managerial process and potential promotional process.
Shaffer, Joplin, Bell, Lau, & Oguz (2000)	Performed extensive global investigation from various geographic regions, confirming gender was a factor in job satisfaction and work-related stress, as well as strong correlations between job satisfaction and turnover, when various types of power were exhibited.
Valentine, & Godkin (2000)	Sampled 7,733 working professionals and confirmed that a supervisor's gender influenced employee job perception.
Eagly, & Karau (2002)	Examined and confirmed gender bias towards female leaders.
Elliott, & Smith (2004)	Established that adult women continue to experience (as victims) sexual harassment, with their physical boundaries violated.
Uggen, & Blackstone (2004)	Concluded gender was a direct result of discrimination.
Akinawo, & Fayankinu (2010)	Confirmed occupational challenges as a result of gender dissimilarity in the workplace.
Ergeneli, Ilsev, & Karapinar (2010)	Found gender affected the work-life balance and job satisfaction relationship.
Hutchinson, & Eveline (2010)	Learned that presenting workplace bullying as a gender-neutral issue actually masked the gender-based issue.
Stainback, Ratliff, & Roscigno (2011)	Concluded that a disturbing percentage of female executives experienced sexual harassment from male subordinates.
Fayankinu (2012)	Examined gender differences in power motivation and the imbalance between the two genders in leadership roles.
Grissom, Nicholson-Crotty, & Keiser (2012)	Confirmed the gender of a supervisor impacted both employee turnover and employee job satisfaction.
Schuh, Hernandez Bark, Van Quaquebeke, Hossiep, Friege, & Van Dick (2014)	Determined that discrimination existed in the workplace but the number of instances was reduced when that gender represented the numerical majority within that functional area (i.e. work group).
Calkin (2016)	Observed a need for transnational business initiatives specifically for girls to promote the demonstrated lack of gender equality from the author's research.

While EEs are motivated through various types of rewards, Zigarmi, Peyton Roberts, and Randolph (2015) correlated the use of supervisor reward power and positive EE emotions in the workplace. Therefore, expectations are favorable for a direct correlation between the use of reward power and EE effort; however, the EE's locus of control (LOC) may moderate different results.

Within the last 20 years, self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1995) was used

Type	Power Dynamic	Examples within the Marketplace
Formal	Legitimate Power	An example of legitimate power is a person within an organizational hierarchy with designated authority over others, including a manager with direct reports, a project manager with dotted-line or matrix supervision, or any person within the executive suite.
	Reward Power	Examples of using reward power include granting vacation, flexible, comp time, awarding merit increases or bonuses, promoting employees, issuing words of praise and/or encouragement, taking out someone to lunch, or otherwise publically recognizing (or privately); this power is often exhibited by a person in a position of authority.
	Coercive Power	Coercive power is removing or not granting vacation, flexible, or comp time, reducing pay or terminating employees, demoting employees, publically or privately reprimanding employees, intentionally being combative; someone exhibiting coercive power is often in a position of authority.
Informal	Expert Power	A person with expert power is the person called to fix an immediate specialized need; examples include inviting a representative from the Legal department when discussing vendor (or other external) contracts; contacting IT for technological issues, bringing in someone from Finance to forecast profitability on a potential new product/service. This power can be held at any level within the organization.
	Referent Power	A working professional with likability, carrying him or herself with charisma, confidence, and other characteristics that are attractive. This power can be held at any level within the organization.

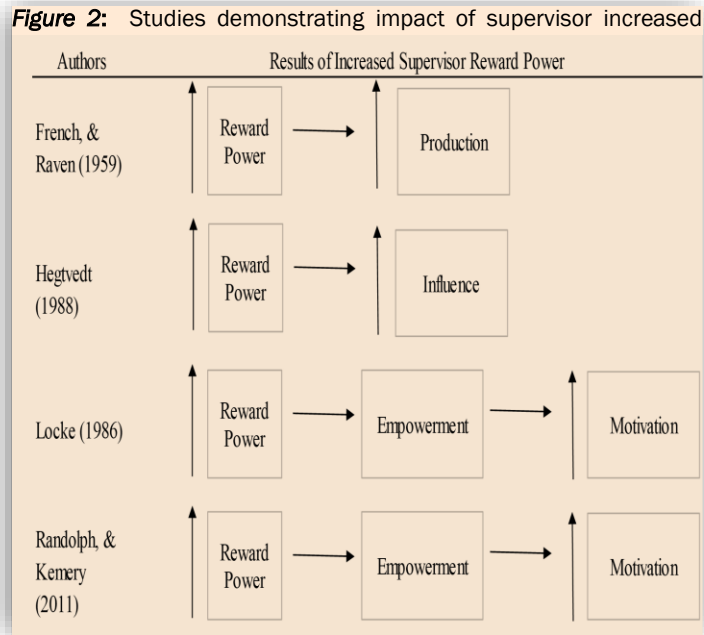
as a theoretical basis to study motivation. EEs who hold an intrinsic motivation, according to the SDT, will mirror behaviors of those with an internal locus of control (iLOC), regardless of gender. As *Table 1* outlines (above), nearly 40 years of gender studies in the workplace, this study seeks to add to current literature by understanding the impact power has on EE effort while validating whether gender is a factor in enhancing or mitigating EE effort. *Table 2* provides examples of power demonstrated in the workplace. It is not believed that gender is a factor in

determining EE motivation. However, in 1966 Rotter began his research on LOC and various scholars have since studied it across disciplines (Curtis & Trice, 2013; Lloyd & Hastings, 2009; Mooney, Sherman, & Lo Presto, 1991), all concluding similar results. EEs with an external locus of control (eLOC) demonstrated less workplace motivation with examples including reduced accountability and procrastination (Aziz & Tariq, 2013). Therefore, this manuscript seeks to advance current research by examining why EEs with internal and external loci of control should lead to power effecting EE motivation in different manners.

## Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

To describe and hypothesize the supervisor impact on EE motivation, two moderators are used analyze why the type of supervisor influence used results in enhanced or mitigated EE motivation: gender (primary) and LOC (secondary). There are two sets of hypotheses below for reward and coercive power. Additional hypotheses for each power dynamic are related to each of the moderating variables, respectively, beginning with reward power.

Research spanning six decades demonstrated the value of reward power in the workplace and its motivational effects on EEs, resulting in increased EE effort (French & Raven, 1959; Hegtvedt, 1988; Locke, 1986; Randolph & Kemery, 2011), see *Figure 2*.



Supervisors using reward power are perceived as more influential by their EEs. Hegtvedt (1988) uncovered individuals (i.e., supervisors) were perceived as more powerful when withholding rewards. Thus, when supervisors attempted to motivate EEs (i.e., enhance effort) and demonstrated reward power, it was more influential than when coercive power was the primary means of influence. Therefore, when supervisors positively exhibit legitimate authority (i.e., reward incentives), it is expected that this type of influence will motivate EEs to

increase their work effort.

Prior research (Hegtvedt, 1988; Randolph & Kemery, 2011) established that supervisors exhibiting reward power resulted in EE motivation. Supervisors providing EEs with rewards for achieving predetermined targets motivated EEs to increase their work effort. Therefore, reward power exhibited by direct supervisors will have a positive impact on EEs (Zigarmi, Roberts, & Randolph, 2015). Most EEs are motivated when supervisors influence with reward power, demonstrating a positive correlation between these two variables. Thus, the proposed hypothesis for reward power is as follows:

***Hypothesis 1: Reward power positively relates to motivation.***

If the supervisor using reward power is the same gender as the EE, the gender (dis)similarity in this dyadic relationship will not cause the EE's motivation to be enhanced or mitigated because of the type of power exhibited by the supervisor in this relationship. While previous research (Eagly et al., 1995) indicated a gender bias towards men in leadership roles, more recent research (Paustian-Underdahl, Walker, & Woehr, 2014) indicated overall meta-analysis results that "there is a nonsignificant gender difference in leadership effectiveness" (1140). Other researchers found gender roles to influence workplace expectations (Ergeneli, Ilsev, & Karapinar, 2009). To build upon existing research, this study seeks to determine why gender similarity between supervisors and EEs impacts EE motivation. Specifically, gender similarity enhances EE motivation and gender dissimilarity diminishes EE motivation. Therefore, the following is the second hypothesis:

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***Hypothesis 2: Gender dissimilarity moderates reward power such that the relationship between reward power and motivation will be enhanced when dyads are gender similar and mitigated when gender dissimilar.***

Regardless of the supervisor's gender using reward power, the EE's motivation is unlikely to change because of the EE's inherent form of motivation (i.e., LOC). Meaning, EEs with an iLOC have a high level of motivation not significantly impacted by external factors (Rotter, 1966). The supervisor's use of reward power will positively affect the EE's motivation or be neutralized, rather mitigated, because EEs with an iLOC are not likely to be influenced by external factors (Rotter, 1966) such as supervisor power. Scholars previously confirmed that supervisor power was a fundamental source of EE motivation and that reward power positively correlated to EEs who maintained an eLOC, and ironically, those EEs who maintained an iLOC demonstrated a reduced work effort (Elangovan & Xie, 1999). These researchers also validated EEs with an iLOC were more likely to exhibit a motivated work effort, detailed in *Table 3*.

Authors	Participants/Scope	Key Points
Elangovan, & Xie (1999)	165 business graduate students compared self-esteem and locus of control to perceived supervisor power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Internal LoC: Increased stress levels when Supervisors exhibited legitimate and referent power</li> <li>* External LoC: Lower stress levels</li> <li>* Participants with low self-esteem: Direct relationship between legitimate power and internal LoC and EE work effort</li> <li>* Participants with high self-esteem: Weak relationship</li> </ul>
Coelho, Cunha, & Souza Meirelles (2016)	Case study. Investigated power relationship between a consultant and hiring organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Concluded 3 types of client-consultant relationships (dependency, autonomy, and cooperation)</li> <li>* Each relationship type exhibited a balance of knowledge and power</li> </ul>
Wisker, & Claesson (2013)	Conducted focused interviews, assessments and papers. Studied dyadic relationship between graduate students and supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Supervisor learning behavior determined by discipline/background and prior personal experience of being supervised</li> <li>* Backgrounds provided insight into managerial behaviors</li> </ul>
Sheu (2014)	Empirical study with questionnaire. 3rd Party acted as power source between producer and retailer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* The greater the independence, the stronger the dyadic relationship</li> </ul>
Nyaga, Lynch, Marshall, & Ambrose (2013)	Investigated power balance between buyers and suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Adaptive behavior has significant, positive impact on performance but no significant effect on collaborative behavior</li> <li>* Non-mediated power has weak impact on both collaborative and adaptive behaviors</li> <li>* Largest impact on operational performance: quality of relationships, reputations, and expertise</li> </ul>
Olekalns, & Smith (2013)	Researched dyadic relationship between hiring organizations and resulting degree of value (claiming vs. creating)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Those with legitimate power claimed value</li> <li>* Those in lower-powered position created power</li> </ul>

Gender dissimilarity is an important external factor, and LOC moderates this phenomenon. Prior research confirmed moderating influences of LOC (Elangovan & Xie,

1999). If a supervisor using reward power is not the same gender as the EE, the EE with an eLOC would be more likely to be influenced, i.e., the EE's motivation would be enhanced or mitigated because the EE is impacted by external factors (Rotter, 1966), such as gender. The supervisor's use of reward power will positively affect the EE's motivation (Zigarmi, Roberts, & Randolph, 2015). However, if EEs unfavorably receive gender dissimilarity, it will likely result in a more decreased motivation than if the reward power only had LOC as a moderating variable. The next hypothesis expects to corroborate the findings of Elangovan and Xie (1999), and Zigarmi, Roberts, and Randolph (2015) but incorporate the addition of SDT, and include gender as a second moderating variable in measuring EE effort. The dissimilarity in gender will not result in increased motivation because reward power does not impede upon the Sup-EE dyadic relationship, and the use of this power will likely increase motivation or keep it neutral. It will not mitigate EE motivation. Therefore, the third hypothesis is as follows:

***Hypothesis 3: Employee LOC and gender (dis)similarity simultaneously moderate the relationship between reward power and motivation such that the enhancement effect from gender similarity will be insignificant for employees with an iLOC and significant for employees with an eLOC.***

Research on coercive power continues to evolve. For example, Teven (2006) found EEs negatively perceived supervisors who spoke in verbally aggressive manners. Five years later, Randolph and Kemery (2011) conducted research and suggested supervisors attempting to motivate EEs should not use coercive power. Also, note EEs did not feel empowered to take on more responsibility when being influenced by coercive power. Lastly, Zigarmi, Peyton, and Roberts (2015), and Randolph (2015) reiterated the notion that supervisors displaying coercive power are more likely to produce negative feelings within their EEs, and thus, their EEs would be less likely to put forth greater work effort. They go as far as to recommend to supervisors not to use coercive influence upon their EEs. Based on existing literature suggesting coercive power caused a decrease in work effort, the proposed hypothesis for coercive power is as follows:

***Hypothesis 4: Coercive power negatively relates to motivation.***

Gender incivility exists when negative behaviors (e.g., condescension) between gender dissimilar dyads are present (Hutchinson & Eveline, 2010). Moreover, supervisors or anyone in an authoritative workplace position has the ability to influence EEs through power (Zigarmi, Peyton, & Roberts, 2015). Those using coercive power intend to trigger a particular result from the EE (Thacker & Ferris, 1991). Hence, the similarity in gender will not result in decreased motivation but the use of coercive power will likely decrease motivation. The degree of coercive power used will likely positively correlate to the decrease in the EE's motivation.

Additionally, gender dyads consisting of male supervisors were more likely to exhibit coercive behavior with female subordinates than female supervisors exhibiting coercive behavior to male subordinates (Uggen & Blackstone, 2004). Specifically, a negative correlation will exist between EE motivation and supervisor coercive power. Furthermore, if the gender dissimilarity is received unfavorably by the EE, it will likely result in further

decreased motivation than just the supervisor using coercive power. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

***Hypothesis 5: Gender (dis)similarity moderates coercive power such that the relationship between coercive power and motivation will be enhanced when dyads are gender dissimilar and mitigated when dyads are gender similar.***

Coercive power directly influences EE motivation (Nesler, Quigley, Aguinis, Lee, & Tedeschi, 1999; Taucen, Tamasila, & Negru-Strauti, 2016). The type of power a supervisor exhibits has a direct effect on EE motivation (Zigarmi, Peyton, & Roberts, 2015). EEs who believe outcomes are attributed to their own efforts will be motivated in a different manner (i.e., motivation will be enhanced or mitigated) than those who believe outcomes are attributed to external sources (Rotter, 1966). It has been empirically determined that coercive power positively correlated to EEs who maintained an eLOC, and those EEs who maintained an iLOC demonstrated a reduced work effort (Elangovan & Xie, 1999). Prior research (French & Raven, 1959; Nesler, Quigley, Aguinis, Lee, & Tedeschi, 1999) concluded supervisors exhibiting coercive power resulted in increased EE motivation. Supervisors influencing with coercive power do motivate some EEs to increase work effort. Consequently, the use of this power dynamic was used to increase EE motivation.

In the case with coercive power, EEs who believe outcomes are attributed to their own efforts will be motivated in a different manner (i.e., motivation will be enhanced or mitigated) than those who believe outcomes are attributed to external sources (Rotter, 1966). It has been empirically determined coercive power positively correlated to EEs who maintained an eLOC, and those EEs who maintained an iLOC demonstrated a reduced work effort (Elangovan & Xie, 1999), however, gender was not taken into consideration. If the supervisor using coercive power is the same gender as the EE, the EE's motivation will not change because of the EE's eLOC. The supervisor's use of coercive power may negatively affect the EE's motivation. The degree of coercive power used will likely positively correlate to the decrease in the EE's motivation. EEs with high motivation (i.e., iLOC) are often not impacted by external factors, unless those external factors are severe in nature.

Therefore, LOC is a moderator of gender dissimilarity as a primary moderator. Gender dissimilarity is the external factor that stimulates the direct effect from power to effort. EEs with an iLOC are less dependent on this external factor (i.e., gender), whereas EEs with an eLOC are more dependent on this external factor. For example, the supervisor's use of coercive power will negatively affect the EE's motivation. This is because EEs with low motivation (i.e., an eLOC) are likely to be negatively influenced by external factors such as supervisor power. EEs with high motivation (i.e., iLOC) are often not impacted by external factors, unless those external factors are severe in nature. Based upon their responses to external factors, coercive power used by a supervisor would cause a stronger response by EEs with an iLOC than those with an eLOC, who would feel as though the result is outside of their influence (Elangovan and Xie, 1999). Thus, coercive power may potentially change the overall anticipated trajectory of the slope. EEs with high motivation (i.e., an iLOC) are not likely to be dramatically influenced by external

factors such as supervisor power (Rotter, 1966). If the supervisor using coercive power is not the same gender as the EE, the EE's motivation is likely to change because the EE inherently has a low level of motivation that is significantly impacted by external factors. The supervisor's use of coercive power will negatively affect the EE's motivation; however, the dissimilarity in the supervisor's gender is additionally likely to decrease motivational outcomes because EEs with low motivation (i.e., an eLOC) are likely influenced by external factors (e.g., supervisor power and gender). Thus, coercive power may change the overall anticipated trajectory of the slope. Table 4 summarizes each of the hypotheses presented.

***Hypothesis 6: Employee LOC and gender (dis)similarity simultaneously moderate the relationship between coercive power and motivation such that the enhancement effect from gender dissimilarity will be significant for EEs with an eLOC and neutralized with EEs with an iLOC.***

Table 4		
Summary of Hypotheses Results		
Hypothesis Number	Hypothesis	Supported/Not Supported
1	Reward power positively relates to motivation.	Supported
2	Gender dissimilarity moderates reward power such that the relationship between reward power and motivation will be enhanced when dyads are gender similar and mitigated when gender dissimilar.	Not Supported
3	Employee locus of control and gender (dis)similarity simultaneously moderate the relationship between reward power and motivation such that the enhancement effect from gender similarity will be insignificant for employees with an internal locus of control and significant for employees with an external locus of control.	Not Supported
4	Coercive power negatively relates to motivation.	Not Supported
5	Gender (dis)similarity moderates coercive power such that the relationship between coercive power and motivation will be enhanced when dyads are gender dissimilar and mitigated when dyads are gender similar.	Not Supported
6	Employee locus of control and gender (dis)similarity simultaneously moderate the relationship between coercive power and motivation such that the enhancement effect from gender dissimilarity will be significant for employees with an external locus of control and neutralized with employees with an internal locus of control.	Not Supported

## Methodology

### Participant Sample

Data was collected using the Qualtrics' panel service, wherein 155 full-time working professionals participated in this study. The study consisted of two different surveys at two different time points, with 2-weeks between survey distributions. A quality control question was included in both surveys. After the first distribution of surveys, 315 surveys were collected and 311 of those completed surveys passed the quality control measures

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(98.7%). After the second distribution of surveys, 155 surveys passed the quality control measures (49% of original participant data set). The demographics of this participant pool included 65 males (41.9%) and 90 females (58.1%), ranging in age from 20 to 71 years old (mean age = 42.5 years old). Each participant identified himself or herself with the following ethnicities: 84% Caucasian, 8% of the participants indicated two or more races, 5% Asian, and 3% Hispanic/Latino. Participant education distributed as follows: 17 (11%) participants graduated from high school, 31 (20%) had some college, 28 (18%) earned a 2-year degree, 54 (35%) earned 4-year degree, and 25 (16%) had post-graduate education. Participant salaries ranged from minimum wage to an annual salary of \$240,000, with a mean average salary of \$54,175.

Participants were working professionals self-identified as *employees*, working under a direct manager and not self-employed. While many EEs (44.4%) indicated they worked for their current supervisors for 1-3 years, the mean average was 4.1 years ( $SD = 4.3$ ). Their direct supervisor's gender was evenly divided: 77 males (49.7%) and 78 (50.3%) females. Participants anticipated their supervisor's age ranged from 25 to 85 years old, with a mean age of 47.6 years old. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained for this study.

### Procedure

A question to verify that participants were paying attention to the survey was inserted in both Time 1 and Time 2, reading *Please select "Strongly Disagree" to confirm that you are not randomly responding*. Both surveys contained direct reminder statements of confidentiality reading *REMINDER: Your answers are 100% confidential. Please answer honestly*. Throughout the survey process, incomplete surveys were discarded by Qualtrics. Upon survey completion, Qualtrics provided a data file to be imported and analyzed in SPSS.

### Measures

Within the study, a 5-point Likert scale was employed (i.e., score of 5 indicated the participant *strongly agreed* down to a score of *1 strongly disagreed* with the statement). In total, there were two surveys measuring reward power, coercive power, EE motivation (i.e., effort), and LOC in this study. EEs self-rated the first moderating variable, gender. All participants completed demographic information, including participant, age,

Table 5

Reliability statistics: Cronbach's alpha for reward power

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.88	4

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item - Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
My supervisor can... increase my pay level.	8.79	13.88	0.80	0.82
My supervisor can... influence my getting a pay raise.	8.47	13.50	0.79	0.82
My supervisor can... provide me with special benefits.	8.97	16.64	0.63	0.88
My supervisor can... influence my getting a promotion.	8.49	14.64	0.73	0.84

ethnicity, current salary, highest level of degree, job type, tenure with organization and supervisor. Surveys for EEs were given at two different time increments to mitigate causality and bias concerns.

Demographics were obtained at Time 1. Also at Time 1, internal consistencies for reward

Table 6				
Reliability statistics: Cronbach's alpha for coercive power				
Reliability statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items			
0.91	4			
		Item-Total Statistics		
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item - Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
My supervisor can... give me undesirable job assignments.	8.52	14.58	0.68	0.93
My supervisor can... make my work difficult for me.	8.66	13.21	0.85	0.87
My supervisor can... make things unpleasant here.	8.65	13.03	0.85	0.87
My supervisor can... make being at work distasteful.	8.74	13.39	0.83	0.88

Table 7				
Reliability statistics: Cronbach's alpha for employee effort				
Reliability statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items			
0.89	5			
Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item - Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Using the scale... When there's a job to be done, I devote all my energy to	16.23	7.45	0.72	0.87
Using the scale... When I do work, I do so with intensity.	16.34	7.13	0.72	0.87
Using the scale... I work at my full capacity in all of my job duties.	16.43	8.51	0.74	0.86
Using the scale... I can strive as hard as I can to be successful at my work.	16.10	7.13	0.72	0.87
Using the scale... When I work, I really exert myself to the fullest.	16.40	6.51	0.77	0.85

power ( $\alpha = 0.88$ ) (Table 5) and coercive power ( $\alpha = 0.91$ ) (Table 6) using Hinkin and Schriesheim (1989) 16-item scales were obtained. At Time 2, EEs completed Brown and Leigh's (1996) EE effort scale ( $\alpha = 0.89$ ) (Table 7). ILOC ( $\alpha = 0.77$ ) (Table 8) was measured using Spector's (1988) 16-question Likert scale. Results indicated whether the participant had an iLOC (accountable for his/her own results) with a high value or an eLOC (believed fate or chance was responsible for results) with a low value.

## Results

### Descriptive Statistics

These descriptive statistics are intended to summarize the data set within this study of 155 participants reporting to a direct supervisor. As previously described, the Likert

Table 8				
Reliability statistics: Cronbach's alpha for locus of control				
Reliability statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items			
0.77	16			
Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item - Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Using the scale... A job is what you make of it.	48.17	59.54	0.25	0.77
Using the scale... On most jobs, people can pretty much accomplish whatever they set out to accomplish.	48.35	57.59	0.40	0.76
Using the scale... If you know what you want out of a job, you can find a job that gives it to you.	48.35	55.14	0.55	0.74
Using the scale... If employees are unhappy with a decision made by their boss, they should do something about it.	48.34	64.68	0.05	0.78
Please answer the following questions using the provided scale. - Getting the job you want is mostly a matter of luck.*	47.46	59.99	0.38	0.76
Please answer the following questions using the provided scale. - Making money is primarily a matter of good fortune.*	47.45	40.48	0.39	0.76
Using the scale... Most people are capable of doing their jobs well if they make the effort.	48.16	58.24	0.31	0.76
Please answer the following questions using the provided scale. - In order to get a really good job you need to have family members or friends in high places.*	47.30	58.84	0.42	0.75
Please answer the following questions using the provided scale. - Promotions are usually a matter of good fortune.*	47.45	59.57	0.42	0.76
Please answer the following questions using the provided scale. - When it comes to landing a really good job, who you know is more important than what you know.*	47.75	60.07	0.28	0.77
Using the scale... Promotions are given to employees who perform well on the job.	48.26	55.64	0.49	0.75
Please answer the following questions using the provided scale. - It takes a lot of luck to be an outstanding employee on most jobs.*	47.63	59.11	0.41	0.76
Please answer the following questions using the provided scale. - People who perform their jobs well generally get rewarded for it.*	47.15	60.13	0.44	0.76
Using the scale... People who generally perform their jobs well get rewarded for it.	48.42	58.18	0.40	0.76
Using the scale... Most employees have more influence on their supervisors than they think they do.	48.57	61.56	0.26	0.77
Please answer the following questions using the provided scale. - The main difference between people who make a lot of money and people who make a little money is luck.*	47.22	58.58	0.45	0.75
Notes. *=reversed coded.				

scale used within each of the questionnaires had a minimum value of 1.0 and a maximum value of 5.0. The mean value for reward power scored was 2.89 ( $SD = 1.25$ ), while the mean value scored for coercive power was 2.88 ( $SD = 1.21$ ). The mean value scored for motivation (i.e., effort) was 4.07 ( $SD = 0.65$ ), and lastly, the mean value scored for LOC was 3.19 ( $SD = 0.51$ ) (Table 9).

Table 9

*Descriptive Statistics*

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Reward Power	1.00	5.00	2.89	1.25
Coercive Power	1.00	5.00	2.88	1.21
Employee Effort	1.20	5.00	4.07	0.65
Locus of Control	1.38	4.81	3.19	0.51
Gender Similarity	0.00	1.00	0.68	0.47
Employee Age	20.00	71.00	42.48	13.08
Gender	1.00	2.00	1.58	0.50
Education	1.00	5.00	3.25	1.26
Organization Tenure	0.08	39.00	8.53	8.41
Supervisor Tenure	0.08	24.00	4.08	4.32
Salary	609.92	240,000.00	54,175.33	33739.72
Supervisor Gender	1.00	2.00	1.50	0.50
Supervisor Age	25.00	85.00	47.61	10.52

Notes. Male = 1, Female = 2. Education is 1 = high school, 2 = some college, 3 = 2-year degree, 4 = 4-year degree, 5 = post-graduate. Gender Similarity = 1, Gender Difference = 0.

***Pearson Correlation***

Significant Pearson correlations were found at both the 0.01 level (2-tailed) and at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). First, correlations for both reward power and coercive power were statistically significant ( $r = 0.40$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ). Additionally, EE effort and LOC were strongly

Table 10

*Correlations among reward power, coercive power, employee effort, and locus of control variables*

	Reward Power	Coercive Power	Employee Effort	Locus of Control	Gender Similarity	Employee Age	Supervisor Gender
Reward Power							
Coercive Power	0.40						
Employee Effort	0.24	0.16					
Locus of Control	0.27	0.01	0.33				
Gender Similarity	-0.18	-0.07	-0.06	-0.10			
Employee Age	-0.06	0.04	0.10	0.04	-0.06		
Supervisor Gender	0.05	0.01	0.17	0.09	-0.06	-0.06	
Supervisor Tenure	-0.10	-0.03	0.04	-0.02	0.10	0.54	-0.18

correlated with reward power ( $r = 0.24, p \leq 0.01$  and  $r = 0.27, p \leq 0.01$ ), respectively. Gender similarity demonstrated a negative correlation with reward power ( $r = -0.18, p \leq 0.5$ ). The coercive power and EE effort correlation ( $r = 0.16$ ) indicated a positive relationship (Table 10).

### Analytical Approach

To test the direct effect of reward power (Hypothesis 1) and coercive power (Hypothesis 4) on EE effort, hierarchical regression analysis was used. To test the moderating effect of gender (dis)similarity (Hypotheses 2 and 5) and the simultaneous moderation of gender dis(similarity) and LOC (Hypotheses 3 and 6), Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes' (2007) PROCESS macro was used, which gives a statistical significance test of the effect of the independent variable (reward or coercive power) at various levels of the moderators. Table 11 demonstrates the regression model summary for reward power.

Table 11

Regression model summary for reward power

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> <sub>adj</sub>	Std. Error of the Estimate	R <sup>2</sup> Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.17 <sup>a</sup>	0.03	0.02	0.64	0.03	2.15	2	151	0.12
2	0.32 <sup>b</sup>	0.10	0.08	0.62	0.07	12.37	1	150	0.00

DV: Employee effort

Notes. Tenure with supervisor, employee age, and reward power; df = degrees of freedom;

R = multiple correlation; R<sup>2</sup> = squared multiple correlation; R<sup>2</sup><sub>adj</sub> = Adjusted R Squared multiple correlation

Table 12

Regression coefficients for reward power and employee effort

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					Collinearity Statistics			
Model		Unstandardize d	Coefficient s	Standardize d				
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients	1	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.84	0.18		21.62	0.00		
	Age	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.80	0.42	0.88	1.14
	Supervisor Tenure	0.02	0.01	0.13	1.51	0.13	0.88	1.14
2	(Constant)	3.39	0.21		15.39	0.00		
	Age	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.99	0.33	0.88	1.14
	Supervisor Tenure	0.02	0.01	0.15	1.79	0.08	0.88	1.14
	Reward Power	0.14	0.04	0.27	3.52	0.001	0.99	1.01

a. Dependent variable: Employee effort

Notes. Unstandardized B = unstandardized beta coefficient; Sig. = p value; VIF = variance inflation factor.

Hypothesis 1 suggested reward power was positively related to EE effort. The findings

Table 13

## Regression model summary for coercive power

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> <sub>adj</sub>	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
Supervisor Tenure, Age	.17 <sup>a</sup>	0.03	0.02	0.64	0.03	2.15	2	151	0.12
Coercive power	0.23 <sup>b</sup>	0.05	0.04	0.64	0.03	4.09	1	150	0.05

DV: Employee effort

Notes. Age = employee age; R = multiple correlation; R<sup>2</sup> = squared multiple correlation;

R<sup>2</sup><sub>adj</sub> = Adjusted R Squared multiple correlation; df = degrees of freedom.

Table 14

## Regression coefficients for coercive power and employee effort

Model	Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				Collinearity Statistics			
	Unstandardized B	Standardized Beta	Std. Error					
1	(Constant)	3.84	0.18	21.62	0.00			
	Age	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.80	0.42	0.88	1.14
	Supervisor Tenure	0.02	0.01	0.13	1.51	0.13	0.88	1.14
2	(Constant)	3.61	0.21	17.09	0.00			
	Age	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.74	0.46	0.88	1.14
	Supervisor Tenure	0.02	0.01	0.13	1.53	0.13	0.88	1.14
	Coercive Power	0.09	0.04	0.16	2.02	0.05	1.00	1.00

a. Dependent variable: Employee effort

Notes. Unstandardized B = unstandardized beta coefficient; Sig. = p value; VIF = variance inflation factor.

Table 15

## The moderating effect of gender similarity on the relationship between reward power and employee effort

Model 1			
Y:	Employee Effort		
X:	Reward Power		
W:	Gender Similarity		
Covariates:	Age, Supervisor Tenure		
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	P
	0.32	0.10	0.01
Model	coeff	se	p
Constant	3.81	0.17	0.00
Reward Power	0.14	0.04	0.00
Gender Similarity	-0.04	0.11	0.72
Reward Power x Gender Similarity	0.03	0.09	0.77
Age	0.00	0.00	0.34
Supervisor Tenure	0.02	0.01	0.08

Notes. R = multiple correlation; R<sup>2</sup> = squared multiple correlation; R<sup>2</sup><sub>adj</sub> = Adjusted R Squared multiple correlation; coeff = correlation coefficient; se = standard error. Gender Similarity = 1, Gender Difference = 0.

illustrated that relationship between reward power and EE effort was positive and statistically significant ( $b = 0.14, p < .001$ ), lending support for *Hypothesis 1* (Table 12). *Hypothesis 2* suggests that gender (dis)similarity moderates the effect of reward power on EE effort. *Hypothesis 2* was not supported, as the interaction between gender (dis)similarity and reward power on EE effort was not statistically significant ( $b = 0.03, p = 0.77$ ) (Table 15). *Hypothesis 3* suggests that gender (dis)similarity moderates the effect of reward power on EE effort. *Hypothesis 3* was not supported, as the interaction between gender (dis)similarity and reward power on EE effort was not statistically significant ( $b = 0.06, p = 0.68$ ).

Table 13 demonstrates the regression model summary for coercive power. *Hypothesis 4* suggested that coercive power negatively related to EE motivation. Interestingly, the results suggest the opposite, as coercive power was positively related to EE effort ( $b = 0.09, p < 0.05$ ). Thus, *Hypothesis 4* was not supported (Table 14). *Hypothesis 5* suggests that LOC and gender (dis)similarity simultaneously moderate the effect of

Table 16

*The moderating effect of gender similarity on the relationship between coercive power and employee effort*

Model 1			
Y:	Employee Effort		
X:	Coercive Power		
W:	Gender Similarity		
Covariates:	Age, Supervisor Tenure		
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	P
	0.25	0.06	0.08
Model			
	coeff	se	p
Constant	3.87	0.18	0.00
Coercive Power	0.08	0.04	0.08
Gender Similarity	-0.08	0.11	0.45
Coercive Power x Gender Similarity	-0.09	0.09	0.29
Age	0.00	0.00	0.55
Supervisor Tenure	0.02	0.01	0.08

Notes.  $R$  = multiple correlation;  $R^2$  = squared multiple correlation;  $R^2_{adj}$  = Adjusted R Squared multiple correlation; *coeff* = correlation coefficient; *se* = standard error.

Gender Similarity = 1, Gender Difference = 0.

reward power on EE effort. *Hypothesis 5* was not supported, as the interaction between LOC, gender (dis)similarity, and reward power on EE effort was not statistically significant ( $b = -0.09, p = 0.29$ ) (Table 15). *Hypothesis 6* suggests that LOC and gender (dis)similarity simultaneously moderate the effect of coercive power on EE effort. Tables 16 and 17 demonstrate the moderating effect of gender similarity on the relationship between employee effort and both reward and coercive power. *Hypothesis 6* was not supported, as the interaction between LOC, gender (dis)similarity, and coercive power on EE effort was not statistically significant ( $b = -0.17, p = 0.21$ ) (Table 18).

Table 17

The moderating effect of locus of control and gender similarity on the relationship between reward power and employee effort

Model 3			
Y:	Employee Effort		
X:	Reward Power		
W:	Gender Similarity		
Z:	Locus of Control		
Covariates:	Age, Supervisor Tenure	R	R <sup>2</sup>
		0.40	0.16
		P	0.00
Model			
	coeff	se	p
Constant	3.83	0.17	0.00
Reward Power	0.10	0.04	0.02
Gender Similarity	-0.01	0.11	0.92
Reward Power x Gender Similarity	-0.02	0.09	0.79
Locus of Control	0.36	0.11	0.00
Reward Power x Locus of Control	-0.05	0.08	0.55
Gender Similarity x Locus of Control	0.09	0.22	0.70
Reward Power x Gender Similarity x Locus of Control	0.06	0.15	0.68
Age	0.00	0.00	0.31
Supervisor Tenure	0.02	0.01	0.22

Notes. R=multiple correlation; R<sup>2</sup>=squared multiple correlation; R<sup>2</sup><sub>adj</sub> = Adjusted R Squared multiple correlation; coeff= correlation coefficient; se= standard error.

Table 18

The moderating effect of locus of control and gender similarity on the relationship between coercive power and employee effort

Model 3			
Y:	Employee Effort		
X:	Coercive Power		
W:	Gender Similarity		
Z:	Locus of Control		
Covariates:	Age, Supervisor Tenure	R	R <sup>2</sup>
		0.42	0.17
		P	0.00
Model			
	coeff	se	p
Constant	3.88	0.17	0.00
Coercive Power	0.08	0.04	0.07
Gender Similarity	-0.04	0.11	0.73
Coercive Power x Gender Similarity	-0.10	0.08	0.26
Locus of Control	0.45	0.11	0.00
Coercive Power x Locus of Control	-0.07	0.07	0.33
Gender Similarity x Locus of Control	0.25	0.20	0.22
Coercive Power x Gender Similarity x Locus of Control	-0.17	0.14	0.21
Age	0.00	0.00	0.48
Supervisor Tenure	0.02	0.01	0.17

Notes. R=multiple correlation; R<sup>2</sup>=squared multiple correlation; R<sup>2</sup><sub>adj</sub> = Adjusted R Squared multiple correlation; coeff= correlation coefficient; se= standard error.

### Supplemental Analysis

Several supplemental analyses were conducted to further investigate the general research question. First, supervisor gender (male vs. female) was investigated, instead of supervisor-subordinate gender difference. Also included was EE gender as a control in the supplemental analysis. As illustrated in *Tables 19* and *20*, the interaction between reward power and supervisor gender on EE effort ( $b = -0.07$ ,  $p = 0.41$ ) and between coercive power and supervisor gender on EE effort ( $b = 0.11$ ,  $p = 0.21$ ) was not

statistically significant. Second, aligning with the original hypotheses, the simultaneous moderation of iLOC and supervisor gender was investigated. Again, EE gender was identified as a control. As illustrated in *Tables 21* and *22*, the interaction between reward power, supervisor gender, and iLOC on EE effort was not statistically significant ( $b = 0.28, p = 0.11$ ) and between coercive power, supervisor gender, and iLOC on EE effort ( $b = -0.19, p = 0.19$ ) was not statistically significant. Interestingly, the pattern of results for the original hypotheses and the supplemental hypotheses illustrate that iLOC has a

**Table 19**  
Supervisor gender as moderator of reward power

Y: Employee Effort			
X: Reward Power			
W: Supervisor Gender			
Covariates: Age, Supervisor Tenure			
		R	R <sup>2</sup>
		0.36	0.13
		P	0.00
<i>Model</i>			
		coeff	se
	Constant	3.72	0.17
	Reward Power	0.14	0.04
	Supervisor Gender	0.21	0.10
	Reward Power x Supervisor Gender	-0.07	0.08
	Age	0.01	0.00
	Supervisor Tenure	0.03	0.02
		p	
		0.00	
		0.00	
		0.04	
		0.41	
		0.18	
		0.04	

*Notes.*  $R$  = multiple correlation;  $R^2$  = squared multiple correlation;  $R^2_{adj}$  = Adjusted R Squared multiple correlation; *coeff* = correlation coefficient; *se* = standard error.

**Table 20**  
Supervisor gender as moderator of coercive power

Y: Employee Effort			
X: Coercive Power			
W: Supervisor Gender			
Covariates: Age, Supervisor Tenure			
		R	R <sup>2</sup>
		0.29	0.09
		P	0.02
<i>Model</i>			
		coeff	se
	Constant	3.79	0.18
	Coercive Power	0.08	0.04
	Supervisor Gender	0.20	0.10
	Coercive Power x Supervisor Gender	0.11	0.09
	Age	0.00	0.00
	Supervisor Tenure	0.02	0.01
		p	
		0.00	
		0.08	
		0.05	
		0.21	
		0.28	
		0.10	

*Notes.*  $R$  = multiple correlation;  $R^2$  = squared multiple correlation;  $R^2_{adj}$  = Adjusted R Squared multiple correlation; *coeff* = correlation coefficient; *se* = standard error.

strong effect on EE effort. This is not surprising, as the correlation between the two variables is  $b = 0.25$  ( $p = 0.01$ ).

This may suggest that LOC is overpowering the influence of supervisor reward power and coercive power. Thus, another simulation was run using gender differences and supervisor gender as moderating variables controlling for iLOC. As illustrated in *Tables 23 and 24*, the interaction between reward power and supervisor gender on EE effort as not statistically significant ( $b = -0.005$ ,  $p = 0.41$ ). However, the interaction between coercive power and supervisor gender on EE effort ( $b = 0.14$ ,  $p = 0.09$ ) was statistically

Table 21

*Supervisor gender and locus of control as moderators of reward power*

Y:	Employee Effort			
X:	Reward Power			
W:	Supervisor Gender			
Z:	Locus of Control			
Covariates:	Employee Age, Supervisor Tenure, Employee Gender	R	R <sup>2</sup>	P
		0.45	0.20	0.00
<i>Model</i>		coeff	se	p
	Constant	3.80	0.17	0.00
	Reward Power	0.11	0.04	0.01
	Supervisor Gender	0.17	0.11	0.11
	Reward Power x Supervisor Gender	-0.21	0.09	0.76
	Locus of Control	0.42	0.12	0.00
	Reward Power x Locus of Control	-0.12	0.09	0.17
	Supervisor Gender x Locus of Control	-0.22	0.23	0.34
	Reward Power x Supervisor Gender x Locus of Control	0.28	0.17	0.11
	Age	0.01	0.00	0.19
	Supervisor Tenure	0.02	0.01	0.14

Notes.  $R$  = multiple correlation;  $R^2$  = squared multiple correlation;  $R^2_{adj}$  = Adjusted R Squared multiple correlation; *coeff* = correlation coefficient; *se* = standard error.

Table 22

*Supervisor gender and locus of control as moderators of coercive power*

Y:	Employee Effort			
X:	Coercive Power			
W:	Supervisor Gender			
Z:	Locus of Control			
Covariates:	Employee Age, Supervisor Tenure	R	R <sup>2</sup>	P
		0.45	0.20	0.00
<i>Model</i>		coeff	se	p
	Constant	3.78	0.17	0.00
	Coercive Power	0.06	0.04	0.16
	Supervisor Gender	0.25	0.10	0.01
	Coercive Power x Supervisor Gender	0.16	0.08	0.06
	Locus of Control	0.46	0.10	0.00
	Coercive Power x Locus of Control	0.01	0.07	0.93
	Supervisor Gender x Locus of Control	-0.05	0.20	0.79
	Coercive Power x Supervisor Gender x Locus of Control	-0.19	0.14	0.19
	Age	0.01	0.00	0.20
	Supervisor Tenure	0.01	0.01	0.28

Notes.  $R$  = multiple correlation;  $R^2$  = squared multiple correlation;  $R^2_{adj}$  = Adjusted R Squared multiple correlation; *coeff* = correlation coefficient; *se* = standard error.

significant, albeit at a reduced statistically significant threshold. The slope differences were evaluated for the effect of coercive power on EE effort (controlling for age, tenure with supervisor, and LOC) for male versus female supervisors (Tables 23 and 24). The results illustrated that the positive effect of coercive power on EE effort was not significant for male supervisors ( $b = -0.03$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), which demonstrated the flattest line (least slope with slight upward trajectory) among the three lines compared (representing males, females, and all genders). However, there was positive and statistically significant results

Table 23

*Supervisor gender as moderator of reward power, controlling for locus of control*

Y: Employee Effort  
X: Reward Power  
W: Gender Similarity

Covariates: Employee Age, Supervisor Tenure, Locus of Control

	R	R <sup>2</sup>	P
	0.36	0.16	0.00
<i>Model</i>	<i>coeff</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	2.84	0.17	0.00
Reward Power	0.10	0.04	0.00
Gender Similarity	-0.01	0.10	0.04
Reward Power x Gender Similarity	0.00	0.08	0.41
Age	0.00	0.00	0.18
Supervisor Tenure	0.03	0.02	0.04
Locus of Control	0.31	0.10	0.00

Notes.  $R$  = multiple correlation;  $R^2$  = squared multiple correlation;  $R^2_{adj}$  = Adjusted R Squared multiple correlation; *coeff* = correlation coefficient; *se* = standard error.

Table 24

*Supervisor gender as moderator of coercive power, controlling for locus of control*

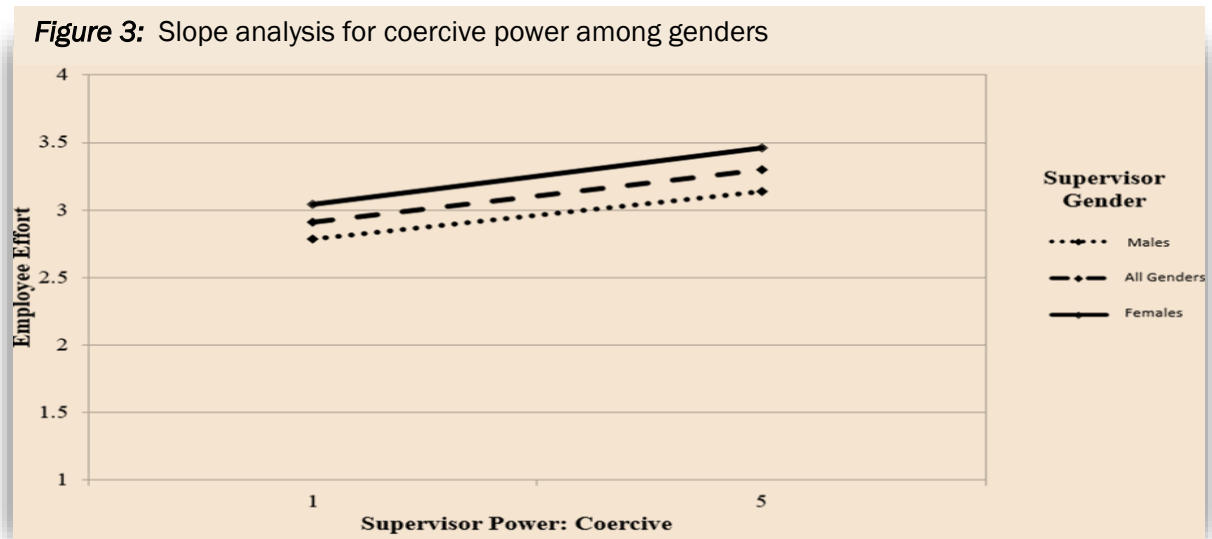
Y: Employee Effort  
X: Coercive Power  
W: Supervisor Gender

Covariates: Employee Age, Supervisor Tenure, Locus of Control

	R	R <sup>2</sup>	P
	0.44	0.19	0.00
<i>Model</i>	<i>coeff</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	2.46	0.35	0.00
Coercive Power	0.07	0.04	0.08
Supervisor Gender	0.24	0.10	0.02
Coercive Power x Supervisor Gender	0.14	0.08	0.09
Age	0.00	0.00	0.23
Supervisor Tenure	0.01	0.01	0.22
Locus of Control	0.42	0.10	0.00

Notes.  $R$  = multiple correlation;  $R^2$  = squared multiple correlation;  $R^2_{adj}$  = Adjusted R Squared multiple correlation; *coeff* = correlation coefficient; *se* = standard error.

for female supervisors ( $b = 0.14$ ,  $p = 0.09$ ) demonstrating the strongest upward slope (Figure 3).



## Discussion

This study pursued working professionals to determine whether their motivation was impacted by the type of power their direct supervisor exhibited. Additionally, it sought to determine whether or not dyadic gender differences and LOC impacted EE motivation. Results proved only *Hypothesis 1* was supported — a positive relationship existed between supervisors exhibiting reward power and EE motivation. Ironically, *Hypothesis 4* was not supported but statistically significant in the opposite direction, indicating a positive relationship between supervisors exercising coercive power and EE motivation. Furthermore, the supplemental analysis suggested a positive relationship between female supervisors who displayed coercive power and increased EE effort. A summary of theoretical implications, practical implications, limitations, and future research is discussed below.

## Theoretical Implications

Individuals in supervisory roles have a responsibility to their EEs, organizations, cultures, and society when demonstrating any form of power. When these supervisors know and understand which of the five power dynamics to exemplify in a given scenario (assuming they possess the ability to exemplify more than one dynamic), they have the opportunity to positively enhance the Sup-EE relationship and positively motivate the EE.

Although coercive power encompasses a negative connotation, there is a positive relationship between coercive supervisor power and EE effort. Coercive power can be a result of EE behavioral challenges. A supervisor may naturally be rewarding and create a pleasant work environment, but to be fair and just, the supervisor may have to act coercively as a reaction to particular EE behavior. For example, the supervisor may implement strict time standards for specific EEs with absentee issues. The other EEs

appreciate the fair nature of the environment, even though the supervisor is understandably obliged to exhibit coercive power to particular EEs. However, for male supervisors, this does not always result in motivated EEs.

The stereotypes for females in the workplace include being submissive, cooperative, friendly (McClelland, 1975), nonaggressive, sympathetic, and reliant on others (O'Brien, Robinson, and Taylor, 1986) as well as treasuring interpersonal relationships and communication in the workplace (Kovach, 1987). However, considering the historical nature of what female supervisors in the workplace had to overcome, and assuming that stereotypes were somewhat true, female supervisors may have used coercive power in an attempt to maintain the respect of their subordinates. This is important, as prior research suggested that supervisors attempting to motivate EEs should not use coercive power (Randolph & Kemery, 2011).

Historically, studies demonstrated differences in how power was exhibited as a result of gender. Thus, societal expectations create an inherent struggle for female supervisors. In 2017, the #MeToo movement once again opened the door to conversations on gender equality, including in the workplace (Kovach, 2020). For example, Horner (1968) suggested that an opportunity cost existed for female leaders between power and femininity, whereas women who sought power would have to forego femininity and expect some degree of social rejection. These female leaders who continued to remain in leadership roles despite socially adverse consequences may have been a motivating factor for EEs, regardless of the type of influence used by female supervisors (Forbes, 2019). In other words, EEs were more motivated because they had female supervisors who, while having to be successful in their supervisory role, had to defeat societal stereotypes. Their EEs were able to see first-hand what female supervisors had to overcome to obtain their position within the organization and be successful.

Furthermore, McClelland's (1975) study on gender power differences revealed gender played a major role in the manner gender expressed power as a direct result of cultural norms. He argued that women maintained a high need for power, but often submitted to society's gender role expectation as a result. Because women continued to operate within the workplace in a disadvantaged position, although equally qualified, female supervisors may have felt the need to express power (i.e., behavior) differently to increase EE effort. If coercive power was exhibited, EEs would be more likely to increase effort because they knew female supervisors were motivated to be successful and take necessary actions to prove their worth (Mainiero, 1994).

Two decades later, Hegtvedt (1988) studied power specific to different genders as related to "stereotypical expectations" (p. 144). Results studying positional power, outcome equity, and status congruence indicated no differences in gender dissimilar dyads between EEs and supervisors. However, the idea of developing and initiating such a thorough examination further uncovered the ongoing question about gender and power in the workplace. To further support this argument, Kovach (1987) concluded that "women in the workplace have different problems than do men; many are still trying to cope with their traditional roles as housewives along with their roles as workers" (p. 61). Druskat (1994) studied how traditionally masculine organizations (e.g., the Roman

Catholic Church) did not present work environments that promoted the transformational leadership styles of females to thrive. She surveyed nearly 6,400 subordinates in nontraditional circumstances who rated female supervisors as displaying considerably more transformational leadership traits than males. As time passed, Appelbaum, Audet, and Miller (2002) further examined gender and leadership; specifically, they studied whether male leadership was more effective than female leadership. They concluded that gender was not the determining factor of supervisory effectivity, but that social standards were the driving factor for the implication that males are more effective leaders. Most recently, Paustian-Underdahl, Walker, and Woehr (2014) conducted a meta-analysis of 95 studies concerning gender and leadership effectiveness, finding no differentiating leadership effectiveness between female or male supervisors, although self-ratings among these leaders revealed male supervisors rated themselves substantially higher than females. Ironically, further analysis (including other variables) exposed that female supervisors were “significantly more effective than men” (p. 1129). Similar to this study, overall results showed no significant difference between female or male supervisors exhibiting power. However, upon further examination, female supervisors demonstrated EE motivation through coercive influence.

Current literature continues to recount a difference in the perception of female leaders from a greater cultural or societal perspective, rather than the actual reported results directly from EEs. This study also found no significant difference between EEs and the gender of the supervisor exhibiting reward power. When evaluating supervisor gender and coercive power, the difference recognized was that female supervisors exhibiting coercive power were more likely to motivate EEs than male supervisors. This study further contributes to the existing body of knowledge concerning EEs’ motivation as a direct effect of supervisor gender. Additionally, it introduces a specific type of power that is not traditionally associated with female characteristics, particularly in supervisory roles.

### ***Practical Implications***

This study concluded that when reward power or coercive power was exhibited by a direct supervisor over an EE, the EE was motivated. As previously discussed, EEs were more likely to enjoy working for a supervisor who exhibited reward power rather than coercive power. However, supervisors may not be concerned with their likability, knowing either influence (reward or coercive) would result in EE motivation. Results showed (a) both reward power and coercive power lead to increased effort, and (b) reward power does not have a downside. Coercive power does have a downside (e.g., decreased job satisfaction (Teven, 2006)). Therefore, organizations should give managers resources that allow them to reward as opposed to punish. Although managers may be getting the necessary effort to achieve objectives, it may have detrimental, long-term implications.

Ironically, when further analyzing coercive power, study results demonstrated a relationship between coercive power and the gender of the EE’s immediate supervisor. For male supervisors, coercive power did not lead to increased EE motivation. This means that when male supervisors withhold rewards, for example, EEs are no more

motivated; male supervisors who favor using coercive power should use caution. This study found that coercive power used by male supervisors does not increase EE effort. In contrast, female supervisors exhibiting coercive power positively related to EE effort, suggesting female supervisors who exercise coercive power by these same examples, increase EE effort.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

There were a number of limitations within this study. First, all responses were based from an EE perspective, whereas a more comprehensive examination would include the direct pairing of Sup-EE dyads and include supervisor responses. As derived from the demographic portion of the survey, these EE participants have diverse backgrounds (e.g., age, work experience, education levels), all factors that contribute to self-perception. EEs should self-report effort because they know the source of their own motivation best. However, they are limited to their own perception of themselves and therefore, present one side of the assessment.

Future research comprised of both Sup-EE dyads would continue to benefit workplace conditions and EE output. Specifically including participants with direct Sup-EE reporting relationships. Particular focus could examine an EE's LOC and perception of power (Anderson, John, & Keltner, 2012). Perception of power research would provide insight and perspective 1) for supervisors to understand how they are perceived in the workplace, and 2) how subordinates view supervisor influence. It could also examine whether power distance orientation influences Sup-EE relationships. Lastly, Anderson et. al (2012) suggested future research identifying an EE's LOC, as related to the supervisor's power. Determining the subordinate's LOC and pairing it with particular types of power in additional research could further define EE motivational factors in the workplace and represent a complete dyadic relationship.

A second limitation was that surveys were distributed in two different time segments over the course of a two-week time period. While this method mitigated concerns and causality, it was not a longitudinal study tracking EE motivation or EE-Sup relationships over a significant period of time. A longitudinal study would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the EE-Sup dynamic and highlight different relationship milestones and outcomes.

A third limitation is that participants were limited to those registered within the Qualtrics panel service. These participants met the criteria for the study and were paid a nominal fee. Participants were full-time working professionals reporting to a direct supervisor. However, they may not have been fully representative of the working population. This led to a fourth limitation. All participants in this survey were categorized as EEs, whereas further research and analysis could likely demonstrate where their leader is positioned within the organizational hierarchy. Perhaps different levels of the hierarchy have less (or more) control on the degree to which they are capable of engaging in reward and/or coercive power. Future research categorizing these levels of hierarchy may provide additional insight into the Sup-EE relationship.

The fifth limitation was also a strength within the study. Because of the strong diversity within the participant group, only age and gender similarity were studied. Future research could include focused demographics. Sheu's (2014) research on workplace collaboration between multiple power sources, indicated that future research should include young professionals in the workforce. Further examination of different generations within the workforce could also prove advantageous in understanding EE-Sup relationships. In parallel to examining age, examining measurements such as career paths and/or tenure could alter the degree of EE motivation.

The last limitation is that this study focused on only two of French and Raven's (1959) five power dynamics. To present a more thorough analysis on power, French and Raven's (1959) other three power dynamics should be investigated. Therefore, future research should include supervisors exhibiting expertise, referent, and legitimate influence on EEs to determine whether motivation will increase or decrease.

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Dr. Mary Kovach is an associate professor with 15 years of undergraduate teaching experience. She earned her Ph.D. from Miami University, an MBA from Cleveland State University, and a Bachelor's degree from Baldwin Wallace University. Additionally, Dr. Kovach earned a LEAN Six Sigma black belt (LSSBB) certification as well as multiple Agile certifications. She had 15 years of demonstrated career growth and earned management awards at Fortune 500 companies, managing global business units around the world and leading projects from inception to completion. Furthermore, Dr. Kovach recently published her latest book "Rockstar Manager: From Theory to Practice" sold exclusively at Barnes and Noble, and she has her own YouTube channel (Dr. K – The Management Professor).

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## **MORAL IDENTITY, SELF- IMPROVEMENT, AND THE QUEST FOR GREATNESS:**

### **A LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY**

#### **Abstract**

*The focus of this paper is on explaining how leaders can follow the path of self-improvement by more fully understanding their moral identity. We begin by briefly reviewing excerpts from the literature about personal development and self-awareness to lay a foundation for the importance of leaders seeking to achieve their optimal effectiveness. Following that introduction, we include a new definition of moral identity that builds upon identity theory as developed by Peter Burke and Jan Stets (2009). After describing the elements of Burke and Stets' identity standard, we identify nine traits that link moral identity and leadership. Integrating moral identity with the pursuit of personal excellence, we offer twelve insights about the leader's responsibility to honor moral duties owed to those whom they serve. Following that review, we suggest six significant contributions of this paper for academic scholars and for individuals who seek to become more honorable leaders and conclude the paper with thoughts about opportunities for additional research about moral identity.*

#### **Introduction**

Among the most exciting ideas about the human potential is that each person can improve and achieve a higher potential than (s)he has ever imagined to be possible (Maslow, 1994). Despite our human foibles and imperfections, we each possess qualities that can be nourished and improved upon – giving us opportunities to not only change our own lives but to benefit others as well. Stephen R. Covey (2004, p. 98) was a lifelong believer in the untapped human potential that each person possesses and challenged leaders to “find their voice and help others to find theirs” as well. To Covey (2004), the concept of voice represented the unique significance and best version of self that each individual possessed – if only in embryo. Covey emphasized, however, that the obligation to examine oneself was especially important to the leaders of organizations.

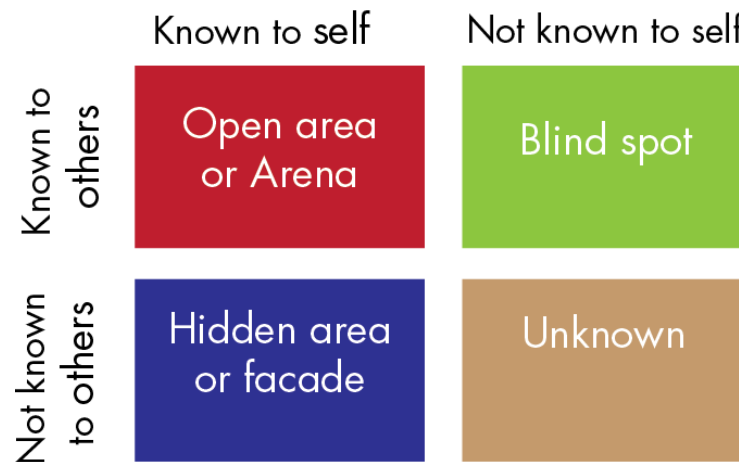
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## Self-Awareness and Personal Development

The personal development process begins with the ability to clearly identify one's own strengths, characteristics, beliefs, and assumptions. The capacity to honestly "look in the mirror" to objectively examine who we are has long been recognized as an important starting point for moving forward in our daily progress (Luft, 1961; Thomas, 1962). Examining oneself and identifying opportunities for self-improvement are common rituals – not just as annual New Year's resolutions but as part of the reflective process that occurs in each individual's life. Self-reflection and evaluating one's potential is not only a leader's obligation for her/his own improvement, but enables leaders to more fully meet the needs of employees, organizations, and society as well (Burns, 2010; Anderson, Ndalamba, & Caldwell, 2017).

Finding one's voice and reaching one's highest potential is nonetheless a difficult process that is filled with challenges (Bartz, 2018). The Johari Window, a well-respected tool for understanding the realities associated with some of those challenges, identifies the fact that individuals often have blind spots that limit their growth. *Figure 1*, shown below, is a diagram of the Johari window which identifies the importance of becoming more self-aware by being open to others' feedback (Luft, 1961).

**Figure 1: The Johari Window**



The Johari Window helps explain the importance of integrating that which is known to self with that which is known to others – including the importance of asking others for feedback and being open to others' insights. This window can also be a means of helping individuals to recognize that they may be guilty of not sharing information about that which can be of value to others (Saxena, 2015). The process of self-development demands open and committed personal honesty, a willingness to confront reality, and a passionate desire to overcome individual shortcomings (Duckworth, 2018). Rationalization, denial, and self-deception are barriers to becoming more self-aware, to overcoming weaknesses and bad habits, and to improving relationships (Caldwell, 2009). Leaders who view their responsibilities as a "covenantal" obligation to their

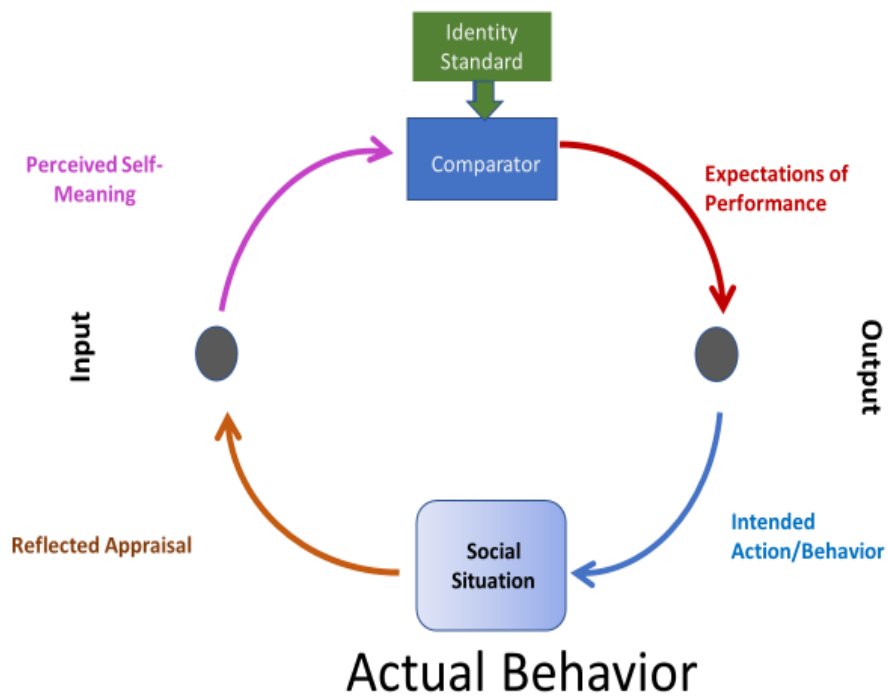
organizations and to those whom they serve are more capable of striving for personal improvement than others who lack that same moral commitment (DePree, 2004; Covey, 2004; Pava, 2003).

By finding their highest potential and developing their own unique capabilities, leaders not only set an outstanding personal example but take upon themselves the obligation to support employee efforts by creating organizational systems that help employees to learn, to grow, and to be empowered (Beer, 2009). A leader's personal example models the way – but more importantly it demonstrates to employees that their organization cares genuinely about them as partners and as people, rather than simply as hired task performers who contribute to an organization's bottom line (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

### Moral Identity and the Leader's Role

Moral identity is the predictor of the likelihood that a person will engage in moral or immoral conduct and has begun to be widely recognized as an important part of the leader's responsibility (Yang, Cai, Yong, & Shi, 2020). Hardy and Carlo (2011, p. 212) described moral identity as the degree to which being a moral person is important to an individual. According to identity theory (Burke & Stets, 2009), each person's identity involves an ongoing set of ethical choices about daily conduct. This "identity standard" is often established at the subconscious level but plays a major role in influencing an individual's actions and self-perceptions. The process used in personal growth, self-development, and the moral identity is presented as *Figure 2* below.

**Figure 2: The Identity Standard**



Each of the eight elements of this model applies to the leader's responsibilities in honoring duties owed to employees (Caldwell & Anderson, 2021). *Table 1* briefly describes each of the eight elements of this model and clarifies the moral and ethical nature of each of the elements.

**Table 1: The Identity Standard and Its Moral and Ethical Nature**

Identity Element	Description	Moral Component	Comment
<b>Comparator</b>	The comparator is a set of general ideals by which a person defines his/her own standards for guiding personal conduct.	These standards typically incorporate moral variables about duties, rules, relationships, and responsibilities.	Moral identity incorporates this comparator as a generalized definition of beliefs and values.
<b>Expectations of Performance</b>	Expectations of performance translate the general ideals into more specific guidelines for actions and personal conduct.	Expectations are generalized but are nonetheless moral and ethical, principle-centered, and value-based.	These expectations translate general ideals into much more specific guidelines for relationships with others.
<b>Output</b>	The output constitutes criteria about one's identity and what a person believes to be his or her specific obligations.	Outputs are morally and ethically important identifiers that equate with how one ought to act in relationships.	Outputs are the metrics by which a person evaluates his or her standards and conduct.
<b>Intended Actions or Behavior</b>	The output is equated to specific actions and behaviors that demonstrate a person's commitment to beliefs and values.	Actions or behaviors are anticipated responses that are duty-based but often situation-dependent as well.	Intended actions and behaviors are the means whereby standards are equated to conduct.
<b>Social Situation</b>	The social situation is the context in which a person interacts with others and includes her/his capacity to act in that situation.	The social situation determines whether intended actions are more or less likely to be realized.	Although intentions are the best predictor of a person's actions, intervening factors can also occur.
<b>Reflected Appraisal</b>	Reflected appraisal includes feedback from others but also is made up of how actions, compare with intentions.	The reflected appraisal can result in guilt about actions or can reinforce positive intentions actually carried out.	This reflected appraisal provides the opportunity to assess one's conduct, based upon a situation.
<b>Input</b>	Input is the value-based self-assessment that results from one's personal choices and affirms or disconfirms	Input becomes a moral and ethical self-assessment opportunity based upon the criteria of	This assessment of value is a positive or negative data point for evaluating

	one's identity.	the comparator.	personal conduct.
<b>Perceived Self-Meaning</b>	A perceived self-meaning is the inference that a person draws about her/his ability to conform conduct to the identity standard.	The perceived self-meaning can reinforce values or cause a person to reevaluate his/her future comparator.	Rationalizing can occur to protect one's self-esteem or can inspire a person to make a greater effort.

Consistent with the leader's role, the obligations of moral identity require honoring the duties of being just, fair, and compliant with established rules (Kohlberg, 1984) but also include caring about others and fulfilling responsibilities that assist people to become healthier and happier individuals (Gilligan, 2016; AlSheddi, Russell, & Heggarty, 2020). Caldwell and Anderson (2021) have suggested that the moral identity applied to leadership incorporates the identity theory model. We have defined moral identity as ***“the constantly evolving conscious and subconscious standards by which an individual establishes the criteria by which (s)he will interact with others in honoring duties owed and which reflect the complex expectations which govern that individual's behavior.”*** Elaborating on that definition, we have identified nine leadership traits related to moral identity (Caldwell & Anderson, 2021) which apply to self-improvement and to serving others. Table 2 explains each of those leadership traits and identifies the linkage between moral identity and leadership.

**Table 2: Nine Leadership Traits Related to Moral Identity**

<b>Leadership Trait</b>	<b>Trait Description</b>	<b>Impact on Moral Identity</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Commitment to Fairness</b>	Fairness includes the ability to understand the contextual implications of a situation in recognizing the priority of conflicting values that may exist.	Universal rules may sometimes be in conflict and fairness requires the wisdom to know which ethical priorities most apply.	Moral behavior acknowledges the importance of recognizing the circumstances of choices that affect fairness-related outcomes.
<b>Persistent Effort</b>	The ability to be unyielding in one's dedication to achieving desired outcomes applies to moral decisions in the same way it applies to other goals.	Working on overcoming personal shortcomings and developing the ability to make the best possible choices in a difficult world takes this persistence.	The reality of life is that individuals constantly learn from their experiences and that achieving success demands constant effort and persistence.
<b>Clarity of Vision</b>	Clarity is the capacity to focus on factors that most influence outcomes and the ability to recognize the cause-and-effect relationships of choices.	Making moral choices demands understanding how those choices affect self and others. Clear vision is a necessary rational capacity.	Seeing the implications of choices and recognizing both long-term and short-term impacts are acquired skills that improve decision quality.

<b>Self-Understanding</b>	Recognizing one's tendencies and being aware of how one thinks in situations is a critical acquired skill of enhanced self-awareness.	Knowing oneself and being aware of one's past mistakes and their impact are part of the moral learning process that applies to everyone.	Self-deception occurs when individuals fail to make the effort to assess their past choices and their implications on self and on others.
<b>Caring Concern</b>	Being deeply committed to the implications of one's actions and being sensitive to the needs of others are at the heart of caring concern.	The ability to care authentically for others and to make moral choices based upon others' needs are keys to caring actions.	The capacity to love others and to be committed to their welfare, growth, and wholeness is a profound virtue and is fundamental to caring.
<b>Self-Discipline</b>	The ability to control oneself and to act effectively to achieve what is best for self and others are key qualities of an intelligent person.	Self-discipline enables individuals to make the personal choices that allow them to best respond in difficult situations.	Learning to be self-disciplined and to control one's responses in emotionally charged situations are acquired skills.
<b>Passionate Engagement</b>	Passionate engagement drives personal commitment and enables an individual to continue to endure, despite challenges and disappointments.	Passionate engagement requires being personally committed to a set of moral values, even under circumstances when change and growth have not occurred.	The ability to recognize the ultimate value of principles, values, and outcomes demands a heart-based commitment to moral priorities in order to sustain effort.
<b>Unyielding Integrity</b>	Integrity goes beyond being simply honest and includes establishing one's personal standards and holding to them.	Moral choices often require the ability to hold true to one's values, despite the pressure from others.	Integrity requires being absolutely sure of one's values and priorities and consistently honoring those standards.
<b>Personal Humility</b>	Humility includes knowing oneself, being open to others' feedback, caring about others, and being dedicated to constant improvement.	Moral growth is the ultimate personal learning process and requires the application of each of the capacities of personal humility.	Being committed to constantly learning and having the courage to make necessary changes require humility and consistent application.

Each of these nine leadership traits relates closely with the nature of moral identity and enables leaders to be worthy to lead others. Leaders who exemplify these traits earn the right to be perceived as trustworthy exemplars who demonstrate that they are deeply committed to their organizations, their employees, and the needs of the greater society (Gini, 1997; Cameron, 2011).

## Leadership Insights about Moral Identity

We suggest that individuals who excel as moral leaders increase that effectiveness when they possess twelve important insights that are closely associated with their moral identities. These twelve insights also enable those leaders to bridge the gap of distrust that prevails in many employer-employee relationships today (Clifton & Harter, 2019; HR Research Institute, 2019). Each of these insights is consistent with findings suggested by a variety of other leadership experts and affirms the validity of the link between leadership and moral identity.

**1. *Moral Identity emphasizes the pursuit of long-term rather than short-term value creation.***

Becoming committed to achieving what is best for themselves and others, leaders who refine their moral identities recognize that it is both dangerous and dysfunctional to compromise long-term value creation for short-term outcomes that compromise the future. Their moral identities enable leaders to recognize their responsibility to society to add optimal value and generate long-term wealth (Manville & Ober, 2003; Anderson, Ndalamba & Caldwell, 2017).

**2. *Leaders with a clear moral identity learn from their mistakes but are not defined by their past.*** The ability to understand the nature of self-improvement and the nature of the identity affirms to leaders that their life is about overcoming mistakes and affirming their values (Fromm, 2006). Leaders with a clear moral identity choose not to define themselves in terms of their mistakes but use past experiences to help them to learn and to strive to be better (Burke & Stets, 2009).

**3. *Leaders with a clear moral identity have learned to love and respect themselves, despite their imperfections.*** According to M. Scott Peck (2003), love is the commitment to someone's welfare, growth, and wholeness. Loving oneself means recognizing that one is worthy of self-love without being required to be perfect – and one loves oneself best by never giving up and constantly improving (Fromm, 2006). The ability to love oneself is a necessity for leaders if they are to also show love to others (Anderson, Caldwell, & Barfuss, 2019).

**4. *Moral identity enables leaders to fully recognize the great value of others with whom they work.*** Moral identity provides perspective. Leaders who understand their role in improving themselves, building others, and optimizing the success of their organizations recognize that others, like themselves, have incredible potential and great worth (Covey, 2004). Moral identity is enhanced when leaders increase their ability to care about others and appreciate their potential (Owens & Hekman, 2016).

**5. *Moral identity enables leaders to develop and improve their Emotional Intelligence.*** Emotional Intelligence is an amalgam of greater self-knowledge and self-control, increased empathy in understanding others, uncommon clarity in recognizing the most effective ways to address problems, and a deep motivation to use those skills to solve problems and help others (Goleman, 2005). Leaders who have grown in their understanding of their moral identities also increase the level of their Emotional

Intelligence because they see themselves and the world more clearly and accept their obligation to serve (Caldwell & Anderson, 2021).

6. ***Leaders with moral identity are deeply committed to justice, fairness, and openness.*** One's moral identity enables a leader to realize that (s)he is obligated to live a life based upon moral principles (Hardy & Carlo, 2011). Treating others with respect and kindness (Haskins, Thomas & Johri, 2018), creating organizations that enable others to thrive and grow (Greenberg & Colquitt, 2003), and being open to others' ideas (Schein & Schein, 2018) are all consistent with the best elements of moral identity and enable leaders to be more effective.
7. ***Moral identity inspires leaders to be unyielding in their commitment to excel and to improve.*** The commitment to persevere and the passion to endure are highest when leaders clearly understand who they are, what they can achieve, and why self-improvement matters (Duckworth, 2018). The experience of seeing oneself improve and accomplish what once seemed impossible is a thrilling part of the moral identity process and compels leaders to renew their efforts – even when disappointments occur (Caldwell, Dixon, Atkins, & Dowdell, 2011).
8. ***Moral identity drives leaders to help their organizations and their employees to optimize potential.*** As a leader increases her/his moral identity, (s)he recognizes the level of responsibility that leadership imposes on individuals and organizations (Burns, 2010; DePree, 2004; Pava, 2003). Being “good” is no longer good enough (Collins, 2001). The clarity that moral identity provides motivates leaders to rethink their obligations to others and to understand with insightful precision what they and their employees need to do to become their best (Beer, 2009; Covey, 2004).
9. ***Leaders achieve a clearer moral identity as they pursue a course which puts service over self-interest.*** A moral identity constantly reinforces to a leader the reality that (s)he is first and foremost a servant to others (Greenberg, 1998; Van Dierendonck, 2011). As stewards to others, leaders with a clear moral identity recognize the importance of putting service over self-interest (Block, 2013). Their stewardship role is fraught with a deep commitment to not only doing their best but to helping others to also achieve their best (Hernandez, 2008 & 2012; Caldwell, Bischoff, & Karri, 2003).
10. ***Moral identity is enhanced when leaders align their lives with universal truths.*** Self-awareness and moral identity are closely connected constructs and leaders who strive to live in harmony with universal truths become more self-aware (Covey, 1992 & 2004), expand their potential to grow (Hayes & Caldwell, 2016), and increase their moral identities (Caldwell & Anderson, 2021). The constant process of self-assessment enables leaders to strengthen their moral identities as they strive to understand their choices at the conscious level (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2015).
11. ***Leaders with a clear moral identity recognize the virtue of forgiving self and others.*** The process of constant assessment and improvement that is the foundation of the moral identity is founded on the importance of learning from past experiences and using that knowledge to reframe the identity (Burke & Stets, 2009). Guilt can be a

positive motivator when an individual recognizes the need to make changes. At the same time, a strong moral identity acknowledges that forgiveness is also necessary to become one's best – including forgiveness of self and forgiveness of others (Okpala & Caldwell, 2019; Caldwell & Dixon, 2010).

12. ***Moral identity inspires leaders to adopt a “power with” rather than a “power over” relationship with others.*** Because the moral identity inspires leaders to become their best and to help their organizations to excel (Covey, 2004, p. 99), they recognize the importance of the “power with” collaborative leadership approach, rather than the emphasis on a “power over” relationship with others (Follett, 2013). The evidence about empowerment and engagement clearly confirms that top-down authoritative management models are not effective in enabling organizations to become their best (Clifton & Harter, 2019; Human Resource Research Institute, 2019).

These insights about leadership apparently are not understood by many of today's leaders who persist in treating employees like commodities rather than like valued partners (Clifton & Harter, 2019; Block, 2013; Christensen & Raynor, 2013) – confirming an overwhelming body of evidence that suggests that those who lead struggle to be trusted by their employees (Edelman, 2021). Rather than continuing to adopt a leadership approach that has proven to be unsuccessful, perhaps leaders can begin to see the wisdom of honoring their moral obligations to others and incorporating insights about moral identity into their leadership approach (Cameron, 2012; Beer, 2009; Pfeffer, 1998).

### **Six Contributions of the Paper**

As a topic of focus for scholars and practitioners, understanding the moral identity can provide rich opportunities for academic research and for the improvement of leaders and organizations. This paper makes six contributions to the current academic and practitioner literatures about the relationship between the moral identity and ethical leadership.

1. ***In explaining the nature of personal improvement, it emphasizes the moral obligations of leaders and organizations to others.*** Constant improvement is an important goal for leaders and organizations and includes the responsibility to not only improve oneself but to honor obligations owed to employees, to organizations, to society, and to God (Covey, 2004; Pava, 2003).
2. ***By emphasizing identity theory's ethical and moral elements, this paper provides added insights about the nature of moral identity.*** This is the first paper that has explained moral identity in terms of identity theory's eight elements and identifies the importance of those elements from a moral perspective (Burke & Stets, 2009).
3. ***In linking nine leadership traits to moral identity, the paper emphasizes the importance of moral and ethical duties that merit greater application.*** Those nine leadership traits have powerful potential for leaders and organizations and can help leaders to restore trust that is often lacking in today's organizations (Harrington, 2017).

4. ***By offering twelve insights about expanding a leader's moral identity, the paper provides opportunities for leadership scholars to explore and test the application of those insights in academic research.*** A growing body of research about the importance of thoughtful self-reflection and honoring moral duties has been undertaken by outstanding scholars (Cameron, 2012; Kouzes & Posner 2017), but that research and its implications apparently are not being practiced in many organizations (Human Resource Research Institute, 2019; Clifton & Harter, 2019).
5. ***In identifying leadership insights that practitioners can apply, the paper affirms the importance of leaders increasing their self-assessment efforts in understanding their moral identities.*** Moral identities can be strengthened and enhanced when leaders increase their conscious understanding of their moral and ethical responsibilities. The twelve insights provided herein reinforce the importance of self-reflection in becoming moral leaders (Caldwell & Anderson, 2021; Caldwell, 2020).
6. ***By clarifying the importance of understanding the moral identity at the conscious level, the paper confirms the validity and importance of the identity standard and its practical value.*** The nature of the identity is often subconscious and understanding the importance of the identity standard and its elements at the conscious level is extremely important in the quest for self-improvement (Hayes & Caldwell, 2016; Burke & Stets, 2009; Maslow, 1994). Increasing that conscious understanding of their moral identities can enable leaders to increase their ability to honor the many ethical responsibilities implicit in leadership (DePree, 2004).

Each of these contributions provide opportunities for an enhanced understanding of the practical value of the moral identity, as well as its theoretical importance in the scholarly literature.

### **Opportunities for Additional Research**

Although the evidence is growing about the need for leaders and organizations to adopt a better approach to working with employees, there is a great need to research the practical implications of better leadership models and strategies for improving organizations. Acknowledging that the 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought extremely difficult challenges, the compelling opportunity exists to begin to examine more thoroughly the “inside-out” approach to improving leadership effectiveness advocated by Stephen R. Covey (1992, 2004, 2013) and a host of other scholars (Cameron & Spreitzer, 2011; Dutton, Glynn, & Spreitzer, 2005; Quinn, 1996).

Further research can build on efforts to integrate practitioners and academics in studying the problems facing leaders and organizations today (Human Resource Research, 2019; Anderson, Ndalamba & Caldwell, 2017; Poff & Caldwell, 2018; Caldwell & Anderson, 2017; Caldwell, 2014). Clearly, leaders and organizations need a “revolutionary approach” to rethink yesterday’s approaches to the problems facing organizations today and in the future (Szalek & Caldwell, 2020). Although the data has not been universally confirmed that moral identity and effective leadership improve organizational success, there is compelling evidence – and powerful logic – that suggest

that leaders who increase their self-awareness and understand their moral identities will be able to not only achieve their own greatness but help others and their organizations to do so as well.

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## Developing Presencing Leadership Acumen through Five Negative Capability Informed Practices

### Introduction

Our current historical moment is unprecedented. COVID-19. Extreme weather. Climate change. Political unrest. Institutional breakdowns. Urban and refugee displacement. Digital propaganda. Information warfare and the growing list of concerning global developments unfolds. The widespread reach of these challenges is presently testing leaders in ways we could not have anticipated. The term VUCA (Millar, C. et al, 2018), initially coined by the American military to describe conditions of war and later adapted by management scholars to describe the new culture of business, has become commonplace in describing current unrest and the unsettling degree of uncertainty this entails for everyone. In the past year alone, the COVID-19 pandemic brought out leadership frailties to the fore internationally, humbling leaders across all sectors of society in unexpected ways that continue to call into question our most cherished human ideals of progress and modern life.

Added to the growing list of challenges that leaders are facing currently is how to effectively engage in leadership sense-making practices in a rapidly changing, complex, and uncertain global culture — particularly one that is becoming increasingly vulnerable to contentious, postmodern thinking habits that disparage facts and truth, subvert civil and timeless values, and mindlessly intensify polarizing habits of thinking and communication. This has given rise to new problematic shock and awe-driven media expressions of bullshit culture (Ball, 2017) that indulge “wilful misinterpretation” (Frankfurt, 2005; Kelly, 2014) and unclarifiable unclarity (Cohen, 2006; Pennycook et. al., 2015) with increasing irony and lack of conscience. As a more recent global social phenomena, this controversial specter in its various expressions has introduced new sense-making and meaning-making challenges for leaders and organizations.

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With a growing disparity between appearance and reality, particularly on social media where “the strongest appearance passes for reality” (Steve, 2018), this development has had the pernicious collective effect of breaking down our “cognitive immunity” (Levy & Ross, 2021), otherwise known as the age-old ability to discern truth and facts from falsehood. In a number of respects, the erosion of critical norms of evidential argument and reason has further exacerbated our current geo-political climate. The growth of disinformation and various forms of propaganda has had the unwitting effect of downplaying the authority of scientific consensus and de-legitimizing established knowledge and wisdom in the face of a growing ethos of collective frustration and denial. As a subversive societal and recent political trend of perpetuating false views over established truths, indifference over empathy, and entitlement over basic decency, leaders from all walks of life and culture are facing navigation and sensemaking challenges not previously anticipated. In the language of Theory U (Scharmer, 2007), many of these negative developments reflect an underlying dynamic of “absencing.”

Scharmer (2018) elaborates:

*Presencing means to sense and actualize the highest future possibility in the now. Absencing is the opposite: it means being disconnected from the environment outside your bubble, and frozen in your past identities and intentions. Absencing is based on a closed mind (not seeing the new), closed heart (not feeling outside of your bubble, no empathy), and a closed will (no capacity to let go of the old and allow the new to take its place). What do we call a system that exhibits these three features? We call this fundamentalism (p.1).*

Instead of leaders “presencing” their future leadership from the greatest collective common good, these various absencing dynamics have contributed to a deep fraying of the moral fabric that has held together communities, societies, and cultures since time immemorial.

In the face of myriad local and global challenges that humanity is currently facing, it is becoming clear that the future of leadership depends increasingly on a leader’s capacity to make effective discernments and interventions that confront these deeper complex issues at their very root source. To advance progress towards this aim, this article makes the case for cultivating presencing leadership (Gunnlaugson, 2020; Gunnlaugson & Brendel, 2021, 2020, 2019), which involves connecting with, and leading from, the hidden source of optimal and sustainable forms of action. As a means to realizing this aim, the wisdom approach of “negative capability” (Keats, 1899), which I will speak to in a moment, serves as a reference for cultivating a more robust presencing leadership.

Through the course of developing, deepening, and maturing one’s presencing leadership, leaders uncover a deeper resilient source of transpersonal meaning and purpose (Gunnlaugson, 2020; Gunnlaugson & Brendel, 2021, 2020, 2019) that can be potentially drawn from to develop our ethical compass and moral perception (Bai, 1999) at this difficult time. By practicing an ethic of leadership care (Atwijuka, S. 2017) that aspires to encompass the common good of all of humanity and species in nature (Gunnlaugson, 2020), in looking out for each of us and all of us, presencing leadership

presents an approach to leading that is guided by our deeper wisdom and intelligence, both individually and collectively.

Working with developing and refining our acumen for a more robust presencing leadership requires a critical sense-making education and re-education of the traditional role and function of the intellect, as well as a skillful re-integration of the subtle senses, imagination, embodied and other forms of knowing (Gunnlaugson, 2020, 2012; Gunnlaugson & Brendel, 2021, 2020, 2019). By learning how to discern, suspend, bracket, and see through the aforementioned sense-making crisis that is contributing to conceptual and epistemological overload, leaders can work with transforming this challenge at its very source. In this way, emerging presencing-based forms of leadership offer the means to restore the heart, mind, and soul of what it means to be human and to lead from this place. Such forms of post-conventional leadership (Boiral et al., 2013; Brandt et al., 2019) will require leaders to discover and reclaim for themselves directly, a deeper underlying process foundation of “experiential” rather than static representative meaning that takes root through inner existential and spiritual dimensions of embodiment and outer engagement.

For the purposes of this article, I contextualize the project of developing presencing leadership as finding attentional empowerment through a more in-depth understanding and practice of negative capability. Negative capability (Keats, 1899) was coined by the Romantic poet John Keats in a 1817 letter penned over 200 years ago wherein it was described as a desired state of consciousness in which someone “is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts without any irritable reaching after facts and reason” (Keats, 1899, p. 23). This term has since been taken up in education (Burt, 2014), in social psychology (Cornish, 2011), leadership studies (Bennis, 1989; Handy, 1989) as well as organizational contexts (Simpson, French, & Harvey, 2002).

French (2001, p.487) elaborates:

*Negative capability is relevant to organizational change management because it represents the ability to absorb and respond creatively to the emotional turmoil which can both arise from and in turn cause change. It implies the development of mature intuition, of the ability to ‘see’ what is going on and what is needed on the basis of one’s own inner experience. It demands the ability to help others to manage themselves, to see the relation of parts to the whole, and to act on ‘faith’ (Simpson, 1997).*

As the basis for what I am calling “Negative Capability Practice” (NCP), NCP supports leaders in developing their presencing acumen across greater professional and life contexts, where insights have not yet emerged, resources are not yet available, or relationships not yet sufficiently developed — in other words, in contexts where presencing leadership is needed.

At the root of NCP is a way of establishing a subtle and patient relationship with the daily paradoxes, ambiguities, indeterminacy, and complexities of leadership practice, learning to let situations develop rather than rushing to solutions, and being comfortable amidst

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uncertainty. This includes, in a presencing context, learning to develop an existential rooting in the deeper present, our deeper presence, and the unknown. Where forms of positive capability (Simpson et al., 2002, Grint, 2010) facilitate familiar leadership expressions of quick and effective action, negative capability works with cultivating presencing leadership by apprenticing leaders in the arts of learning to wait without forcing expectations and to creatively hold the deeper tensions, stresses, and pressures to enact solutions or results before their time. This deeper containment and suspension of immediate action and premature judgement create conditions for leaders to indwell the creative process more fully and to aspire instead to enact a more subtle or gentle action (Peat, 2008).

This is not to suggest that other forms of immediate action become less important, rather it is to point out that this deeper contemplative context of subtle action holds an invaluable and potentially transformational purpose for shifting the inner place from which leaders actually lead and influence, moment to moment. In learning how to uncover and sustain a deeper creative perception and effective presencing process, leaders can refrain from prematurely engaging emotionally or reactive forms of action. By learning to serve the presencing process of discerning creative emergence directly, negative capability practice is actually deeply positive to the extent that it fosters a more refined awareness of timing, which is central to leadership effectiveness and mastery. When we act prematurely or too late on a decision, choice or intervention, we effectively miss the moment. By creating an intermediate or transitional space where leaders can draw and resource their perception, NCP as a whole brings support amidst the turmoil and froth of workplace life and culture, as well as the encroaching collective challenges facing humanity acknowledged above.

In doing this, leaders develop the ability to read between the everyday lines of experience more skillfully, to understand the place from which effective action arises, and to take a stand for stewarding the wisdom of their presencing leadership more effectively. In turn, it becomes possible to see through and beyond our filter bubbles and to learn to lead from a more coherent basis of wisdom sourced and resourced action. Because such forms of leadership are subtle and entail an evolutionary developmental process within leader's consciousness (Boiral et al., 2013), as well as re-orientation of learning through the subtle senses and faculties, this approach requires a different, felt-based experiential and consciousness-guided curriculum to mature and develop a leader's capacities in this direction — hence the five NCPs.

As the moorings of our institutional, professional, and personal lives continue to be seriously confronted for the reasons mentioned at the beginning of this article, leaders from around the world are currently facing the shared existential challenge of finding daily ways to uncover a viable basis for being and orienting not only effectively, but wisely among these emerging life-world conditions that resemble nothing that has come before, historically speaking. Lacking a foundational, clear-cut sense of certainty about what the right thing is and how to go about doing it has brought about a pervasive global climate of uncertainty and contingency that touches upon deeper philosophical questions of morality, identity, and meaning. In place of advocating for a new philosophy, ideology, or

set of foundational beliefs, I am making a case instead for fostering a dynamic process of leadership inquiry, discovery, and post-conventional development through the cultivation of presencing-based forms of leadership. Because the NCP leadership curriculum I am advocating here is, at heart, process-based, it centralizes the inner dimensions of being-in-context (i.e. interiorly, intersubjectively, and in the presencing field) as the basis for guiding our sense-making and wisdom-based leadership education from the inside-out.

When this inner shift in leadership takes place, conditions for engaging wisdom-based leadership development become present. From this inner place, a post-conventional mindset or stage of consciousness is potentially enacted. As important as, if not more so than mindset, is learning to shift or deepen our underlying “beingset,” that is, developing the ability to lead from a wisdom way of being. When we learn how to be with the essential nature of our experience as we lead and reflect, this connects leaders to the deeper ethical dimension of timeless wisdom and intelligence that is prior to thought, experience itself, and conditioning. Learning to source our actions and thinking from this inner wisdom place is central to the task of presencing leadership.

In an age where our sense-making faculties are mediated through secondary forms of knowledge in online environments of organization, commerce, and community, a return to empowering and enlivening *primary* forms of experiencing based on our direct experience at the root source is needed to guide leaders in uncovering viable and sustainable pathways into the future. As our inherent sense-making and meaning-making faculties are capable of not only directly perceiving this emergent wisdom and intelligence, but awakening into a way of being that is in touch with this living dimension of reality, the current call for effective leadership can be supported by NCP as pathways into cultivating core presencing leadership capacities. As a whole, this NCP curriculum supports philosopher Martin Heidegger’s (1962) insight that — the real education lays hold of the soul itself and transforms it in its entirety by first of all leading us to the place of our essential being and accustoming us to it (p.167).

## The Five-Fold NCP Curriculum

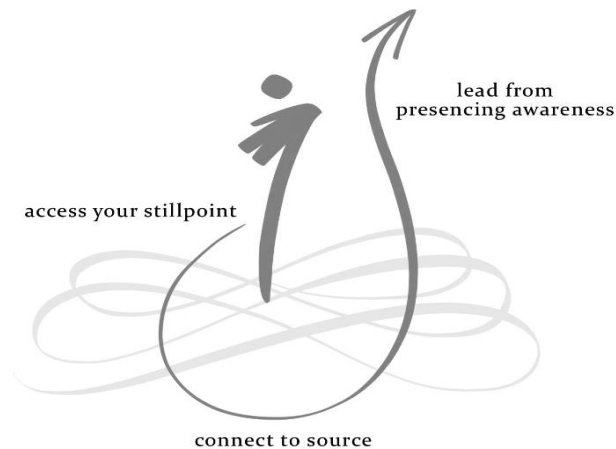
*Every age has its own collective neurosis. The existential vacuum which is the mass neurosis of the present time can be described as a private and personal form of nihilism; for nihilism can be defined as the contention that being has no meaning (Frankl).*

Victor Frankl reminds us of the necessity for leaders to embrace approaches that involve carving out an actual ground of viable meaning in and through being and the deeper dimensions of our direct experience. For the current edge of 21st century leadership to rise to the challenge of co-creating sustainable and ethically-desirable social realities that offer a real basis for hope by making a difference for their organizations, their members, and the world at large, this article makes a case for presencing leadership to offer not only direction and focus but a foundation from which to skillfully direct one’s perception and attention. Meaning comes alive through our “why,” and today’s leader

needs a viable process to support this discovery and foundational empowerment of their purpose.

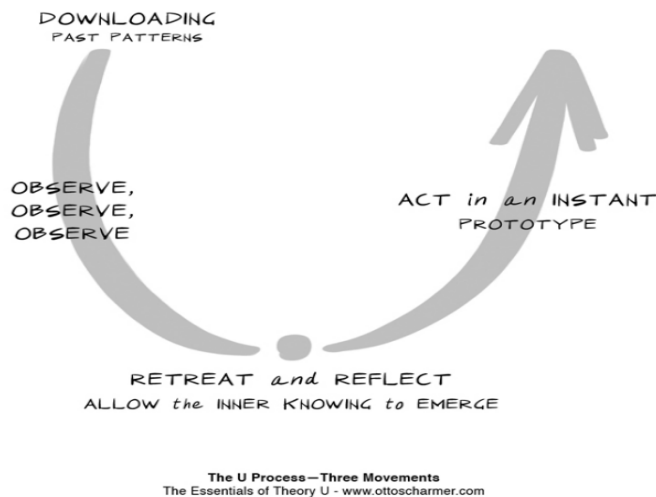
Towards this end, I propose a five-fold NCP curriculum to support the emergence of more robust and advanced forms of presencing leadership that are informed by two principle presencing approaches.

First, the leadership approach of Dynamic Presencing (Gunnlaugson, 2020):



**Figure 1.0: The Core Movement of Primary Leading**

And secondly, the practice of presencing as articulated in Theory U, at the bottom of the U:



**Figure 2.0: The U Process – Three Movements**

Working from both of these presencing lineages, this NCP curriculum consists of five key practices. Each practice fosters a renewed overall presencing leadership and way of

perceiving the heart of the creative and ethical challenges currently facing leaders. Each NCP practice uncovers a particular inflection or dimension of negative capability in the context of supporting and developing a more integrated and robust presencing leadership. By learning a more in-depth form of suspension, leaders develop the ability to reconnect and become attuned to the emerging heart of reality itself. In developing the staying power for a sustained suspension in one's existing presencing leadership practice, with the support of these NCP practices, leaders are able to stay in contact with the underlying source of their perception, effectively bracketing out the noise and uncovering a deeper sourced signal to orient their presencing leadership in our work and lives.

### **Negative Capability Practice #1:**

#### **Embracing darkness as a fertile path into *presenced being***

Broadly speaking, the subject of darkness, in its associations with suffering and negative or destructive shadow realms of human experience, tends to be overlooked as a context for leadership development. This is problematic in that certain forms of darkness (i.e. as the interior fertile state of being and inner experiencing) are richly connected with world wisdom — existential philosophical and romantic poetic traditions from East and West alike (Huxley, 1945). Within the Buddhist lineage, darkness is encountered as the inner milieu of being through the subtle senses as we explore our consciousness interiorly in practices such as meditation and contemplative inquiry. From the existential lineages, darkness is the inner bedrock of our root experience wherein philosophical insight is hewn. And in the romantic poetic traditions, darkness is embraced via negative capability as a chief means through which the imagination finds its most potent hour of expression. Calling forth an exploration of the fertile forms of darkness to assist our deeper leadership purposes here, in learning to enter into the womb-like depths of our ground of being through practices like meditative and contemplative practice, philosophical reflection or poetic reverie, possibilities for encountering a deeper underlying personal and shared interior context of being await us. Here it is possible to not only nurture, but effectively transform and birth new forms of presencing awareness, depths, and sensitivity in ways not typically explored in conventional leadership development contexts.

As our knowledge and information age continues to accelerate, there is a corresponding need for leaders to both speed up and decelerate and learn the ancient ways of pausing, slowing down, and stopping (Applebaum, 1995). To effectively engage this latter curriculum of presencing leadership, the professional development project of learning how to effectively manage our experience can be deeply supported by the inner milieu of being and its respective forms of darkness. Whether in stillness by candlelight reading late at night, on an extended solitary meditation retreat in nature, or in the twilight hours of dreaming before waking at dawn, the multi-faceted forms of darkness connect us to the older, cave-like fireside imagery and wisdom lineages of our ancestors.

Rumi (Whyte, 1992, p.35) elaborates:

*You darkness from which I come,*

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*I love you more than all the fires  
that fence out the world  
for the fire makes a circle  
for everyone  
so that no one sees you anymore.  
But darkness holds it all...*

In learning how to “root down ascendant, like trees” (Whyte, 1992), we, in turn, open ourselves to a deeper source of wisdom nourishment. Learning to let go of the habituated movements and rhythms of our conditioned, discursive minds, this negative capability practice calls us to descend into the groundless ground of presence and being to uncover another inner movement of being. Darkness invites us to make contact and rest in and from this deeper form of healing quiet and presence, which when sensitively attended to, stirs subtle discoveries and realizations from the depths. The descent into darkness shifts us into an inner place of felt receptivity towards what is not yet known, and in this coming-to-know through a deeper coming-to-be process of negative capability, the possibility of beginning to re-connect with the subtle interior landscape of our being, that underlying felt horizon and dark ground itself awaits. With the inner journey of embracing darkness comes a deeper timeless wisdom ground from which to steward our presencing leadership.

When leaders learn to effectively discern and decode darkness as an inner quality of stillness, of creative void-like emptiness, through deeper released forms of surrender and letting go, among other presencing expressions, here, darkness embraces us as support. Here, darkness is an ambient inner environment where it becomes possible to not only encounter the realms of being and source that comprise who we are, but also the navigational possibility of learning how to orient one’s inner nature and being from these levels of reality directly. In this sense, darkness can assist presencing leaders in finding a deeper trusted source of inner light from which to orient and learn to lead. As leaders learn to connect to this deeper causal dimension of being, philosophical bedrock, or poetic imaginal place, from this spacious yet subtly embodied state of wisdom, darkness becomes core to the place which source is contacted and experienced in our presencing leadership. By entering into a deeper union with source directly via the presencing experience, leaders restore an essential wisdom foundation from which to presence. Here, darkness becomes the unknown inner surround from which the impulse of life itself springs forth and leads us forth. From this essential void, new possibilities in the form of directing our presencing leadership are accessed. As leaders learn to cultivate a subtle relationship and inner receptivity to darkness from their own self-sourced depths via negative capability with colleagues, clients, and their followers, this in turn develops their capacity for a more in-depth sourced presencing leadership.

Following from this point, the first negative capability practice of embracing darkness in our presencing leadership practice helps us hear through the noise of the more problematic developments outlined at the beginning of the article. As our capacity for presencing deepens and matures by learning to relax our attention inside the ambiance of this deeper wisdom-supporting ground, we can in turn begin to reconnect with the

depth-dimension of timeless truth of who we really are and the core values and sense of purpose that awaits us there. Embracing inner as well as outer environments and experiences of sacred darkness assists our journey of presencing leadership as a deeper supportive ground through which we can uncover new ontological and consciousness-guided ways of resourcing our presencing leadership.

In encountering the regenerative, creative, and healing realms of both inner darkness (within our own rested states of inner calm and being) and outer darkness (with the seasonality of winter, and the collective hibernation happening during this COVID-19 period with social distancing and working at home), our presencing leadership can mature and develop through a deepened form of inner guidance. By uncovering a new negative-capability informed source of self-understanding, this fosters the possibility of having our lives, work, and leadership be resourced from the unknown as a way of being alive to the very fabric and foundation of one's experience. Embracing darkness is thus needed to reach a level of trust within our own deeper nature, as well as a trust in the deeper shared universal human ground of being of which we are each inseparably a part — both of which are foundational to developing a more robust presencing leadership. It is, in fact, the case as Rumi points out in his above poem, that “darkness holds it all,” leaders need to reconsider the implications of learning the negative capability practice of embracing darkness as a core life- and support-line for developing their presencing leadership.

## **Negative Capability Practice #2:**

### **Anchoring in our Ground of Presence as a pathway into *presenced knowing***

*Discard your memory; discard the future tense of your desire; forget them both, both what you knew and what you want (Bion, 1980, p. 11).*

For the second negative capability practice, the focus is letting go of the past and future to anchor into our ground of presence phenomenologically through an embodied felt contact with our inner body in the deep present. NCP #2 cultivates our presencing leadership by maturing the quality of our presence by learning how to anchor it somatically in our inner body in a sustained way amidst action and reflection. The research on presencing leadership to date has emphasized learning to access the presencing field rather than the underlying ground of presence that sustains our presencing self (Gunnlaugson, 2020) as the site or context out of which presencing-based knowing and leadership unfolds. This has created a blind spot where our ground of presence, a powerful negative capability foundation and resource, tends to be overlooked.

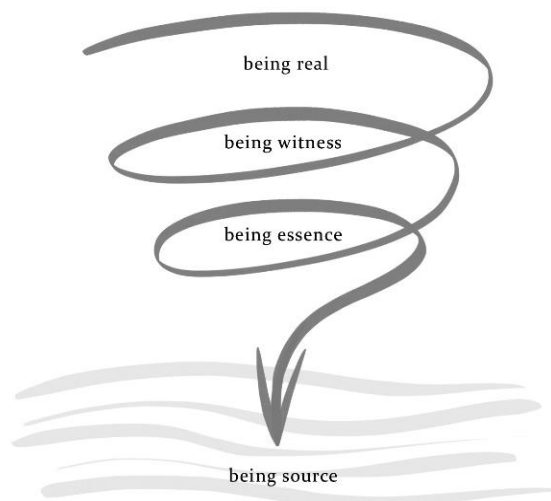
In the work of Dynamic Presencing (Gunnlaugson, 2020), I make a case for contacting and then uncovering this deeper ground of presence. Learning to anchor our presencing awareness in our underlying ground of presence (i.e. there are four in total) via our inner body develops an embodied inner nexus point through which we can then effectively engage the presencing field. The addition of uncovering and learning to abide in our presencing ground provides an inner infrastructure to leverage our presencing awareness from directly. Without this leverage point, leaders are vulnerable to the

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assumption that presencing takes place or originates in the social field. In practice, however, uncovering this ground of presence serves as a buffer against a premature presencing knowing or quick projection that is not-yet sufficiently embodied. By learning to anchor our attention in the subtle non-verbal dimensions of presence, leaders can deepen the foundational roots of their presencing knowing.

With the inner body and felt-sense guiding our enactment of presence, this second NCP asks that we reorient our attention from the “cognitive” dimensions of mind to attending somatically to the “felt-embodied” dimension of being and the source of our presence arising there. By relaxing a focus on the “external” environment out there in the social field, anchoring in our ground of presence asks that we redirect attention through our felt-awareness to the “internal” sense of being. This bending the beam of cognitive awareness back to connect with the subtle felt somatic awareness of our own presence sensed inwardly is a necessary preliminary step for leaders to uncover a viable negative capability-informed pathway into presencing knowing. Instead of searching or seeking contact with the presencing field outside or beyond ourselves, we connect with the internal locus of presencing awareness that is arising from our ground of presence within. By learning to contact via the felt-sense, the immediacy of our own presence acclimates leaders to establishing an embodied inner reference point for our presence to take root in us and as us.

Grounding initially in our inner bodies gives our sense-making faculties the chance to reset and resource from embodied stillness and the unknown source within. In cultivating a state of presence which enables leaders to let go of their need for security in the known, the threat response of not knowing is mitigated through subtle contact with the inner physiological points of presence. This opens our somatic attention up to the particular ground of presence and well-being that is supporting and anchoring us inside our presencing self. Here we are able to make the journey into the four grounds of presence, as illustrated via the core movement of Primary Presence (Gunnlaugson, 2020) in *Figure 3.0* below:



**JOURNAL O** *Figure 3.0: The core movement of primary presence (Gunnlaugson, 2020)*

From here, we establish roots inside the somatic landscape of our ground of presence, which is essential to supporting our presencing self. By relaxing the self's need for security and trusting instead in the felt connection to our ground of presence, leaders become more capable of connecting to the existential truth in each leadership encounter. By returning to this ground of presence, leaders mitigate prior levels of uncertainty and anxiety, which threatens fresh presenced knowing. Instead, leaders can suspend the pressures to go on existing knowledge or to adapt new ideas too quickly and instead put their attention on becoming a generative space of grounded presence that when skillfully engaged, supports the emergence of new thoughts, perceptions, and insights from which to lead.

This alternative routing from cognition with the leader as *separate*, to anchoring in our ground of presence with the leader as *connected*, shifts our presenced knowing to a dynamic, embodied, and interconnected place of engagement. In turn, our presencing leadership benefits from establishing core essential embodiment conditions that reconnect us to the sensory nature of reality that precedes our thought, analysis, and interpretive structures, referred to throughout the work of Dynamic Presencing (Gunnlaugson, 2020) as *what-is*. Through contact with the sensory dimension of reality via *what-is*, before it is made into a concept, leaders learn to rest *in*, *from*, and *as* our ground of presence, which, in turn, becomes the principal gateway for leaders to bring ourselves more fully into contact with the whole of the situation and essential reality wherever we are, whatever we may be doing.

Grounding our presencing self through our inner bodies in this manner opens a form of presencing knowing that is more permeable, flexible, and interconnected, helping leaders access a more fluid form of presencing leadership. By developing the capacity to access a presenced knowing or ability for fresh thinking in the present moment despite the complexity of conflicting or ambiguous demands experienced at work, this NCP uncovers a sound foundation to draw from in the otherwise frothy sea of disinformation that threatens to mislead or engulf leaders. The anchoring of our sense of who we are in our actual ground of presence opens up a powerful somatic foundation for internal leadership support that builds upon the first NCP of embracing darkness.

Overall, exploring our ground of presence via the wisdom approach of negative capability brings additional support through a resourceful and distributed felt experience of inner stillness. Assisting us in aligning with embodied stillness and presence interiorly then spills over inter-interiorly into the presencing field, creating core activating conditions for discerning the “emerging future” (Scharmer) or “arising new” (Gunnlaugson, 2020). By dissipating excessive or non-sourced mental activity, our attention becomes well grounded through our inner bodies as we engage the presencing field. With this deeper nexus point restored and supported, the second NCP plays an essential role in empowering our presenced knowing, which is foundational for a viable and robust presencing leadership practice.

### **Negative Capability Practice #3: Staying-with ambiguity as a path into *presenced seeing***

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By suspending our deeper resistance to the unknown or not-knowing, the third NCP “staying-with ambiguity” plays a role in helping leaders unhinge their perception from existential anxiety or fears that may otherwise lead to projection or moving away from being with reality as-it-is. Learning to connect with *what-is* and perceive the fullness of reality that lies outside the constructs of our mind and experience, the practice of staying with ambiguity offers a path from which to stay open and suspend the arising content of our immediate experience and access a more discerned presencing leadership. Developing the capacity to stay with the multiple dimensions of reality more effectively helps leaders cultivate the ability to be in an open and curious state when encountering forms of ambiguity at work and in their lives, understanding this to be a precursor to learning, insight, and deeper discovery. When ambiguity is present in a leadership situation, learning to stay with it develops our tolerance of ambiguity by helping leaders better understand the nature of mind and how it can assist as well as obstruct the creative process depending on how skillfully we relate to and engage it.

When there is a sufficient surrendering of our ordinary separate self-sense or egoic self into making contact with reality-as-it-is via our immediate perception, the third NCP fosters the ability to relate more constructively and creatively with ambiguity, in turn helping leaders relax past their fears as a precursor to presencing leadership and effective action. From the perspective of staying with ambiguity, there is a reframe from ambiguity as being the cause of intellectual or cognitive distress to ambiguity as a creative pathway into insight, revelation, and discovery, enabling leaders to embrace the hidden constructive features of ambiguity that contain valuable information, knowledge, or wisdom. Here, uncertainty, unpredictability, conflicting information, multiple demands, and perspectives are noticed and worked with in a manner of curiosity, learning, and discovery. Process-wise, practicing staying with ambiguity involves resting in and from an underlying somatic grounding in stillness, establishing rooting from the deeper unmoving, unchanging source of reality, and being with what-is where presencing awareness awaits. By connecting with their deeper source ground of presencing awareness (Gunnlaugson, 2020), leaders develop the negative capability skillset of resourcing their perception from a place of presence, stillness, and equanimity.

This form of inner resourcing requires a more fluid relationship to our ordinary sense of self and identity. In presencing leadership, leaders become adept at shifting their self-sense from a place of individuality where they may experience themselves as separate from their followers to an essential ground of authentic self-expression where they experience themselves as fundamentally interconnected, serving their followers from a place of “inter-being” (Nhat Hahn, 2000). From the perspective of interbeing, we radically coexist and are fundamentally interrelated with what is “other” unlike the Cartesian dualistic account of human experience, in which we exist independently in and for ourselves. Staying-with ambiguity potentially gives us a glimpse of what it means to connect with others from this underlying process-oriented dimension of reality, helping us experience how our leadership is richly interconnected, interdependent, and interrelated with our organizational culture.

In learning how to engage, lead, and reflect from this place of underlying interconnected wisdom, the leader working with the NCP of staying with ambiguity begins to develop an instinctive familiarity to this underlying source ground of presence through the discovery of who they are in the most fundamental sense. Here, leaders begin to awaken to the possibility of letting ambiguity be an integral part of shaping the “seeing” or perceptual part of the presencing process. Instead of trying to control or mitigate ambiguity, it can now not only be tolerated, but acknowledged as a stage in the complex unfolding of the multi-faceted interwoven nature of reality and day-to-day organizational life. By learning to lead via presencing from our deeper authentic natures and source itself, leaders shift into a clearer seeing and capability for working with ambiguity as a creative precursor to discovery rather than a problem to be managed or solved. This gives way to a new appreciation of ambiguity as a preliminary stage in the presencing process, a stepping stone to effective leadership.

For this to be possible, the third NCP facilitates an inner shift in our perception from resisting or trying to control the ambiguity to being with it from a place that allows it to unfold and be what it is, without premature resolution, projection, or interference. In other words, a deep suspension (Gunnlaugson, 2014) of initial conclusions, premature judgements, and assumptions is typically needed. This activates a process described as “proprioception of thought” (Bohm, 1996) or what is referred to as an awareness-based engagement of thought or embodied mindfulness of one’s thinking process. As we think, we become aware of the content of what we are thinking and we become mindful of the thinking process as it is happening. This reduces reactive and habitual tendencies of thinking and opens us to a more creative relationship with the thinking process itself.

Learning to witness, see, and bracket our own consciousness in action and to be able to engage ambiguity from this place of skillful, self-managed perception in turn facilitates a presenced seeing. In learning to be with and apprehend the fullness of reality, which includes more of its ambiguous nature, we practice observing and dis-identifying with our prior thoughts and conditioning that invariably arise. This bracketing via deep suspension opens a clearing or generative space for a direct presencing seeing of what is emerging as it is emerging in the moment. Because our discernment of emergence arises out of a deeper generative contact with the present moment (Gunnlaugson, 2020) as described above, staying-with ambiguity reveals a more complex and nuanced presentation of reality.

Reducing our emotional reactivity and discomfort with ambiguity opens up a way of relaxing into a more curious and non-defensive apprehension and trust of it. Staying with ambiguity makes it possible to be with contrasting or even conflicting positions that may not present us with a simple either-or choice or set of conclusions. Instead, a presenced seeing of reality unveils it, allowing our understanding to be carried beyond our initial preconceptions, which tend towards being misconceptions when premature conclusions are drawn. By suspending premature tendencies to manage ambiguity, leaders instead focus on managing themselves and their own perception to develop a capacity for a presenced seeing from this ground source of not knowing and the unknown.

As this underlying ground source is the invisible site wherefrom new creations, insights, and breakthroughs emerge, learning to draw our presenced seeing from source directly (as a way of being) is a crucial redirection of our awareness here. Initially it requires a certain courage to befriend the anxiety and to hold the pressures evoked by a deeper underlying uncertainty that comes with not knowing in the face of certain forms of ambiguity. However, learning to entrust ambiguity as a precursor to a richer presenced seeing cultivates an openness to being influenced from the ambiguity directly, again as a pathway into a filled-out, presenced leading. From this third negative capability practice, there is a subsequent releasing from the anxieties and fears of not-knowing with the realization that this is precisely what we need to embrace to arrive at a more intelligent and wiser acknowledgement of our situation and presenced seeing of reality as its unfolding. This, in turn, empowers our presencing leadership from the inside-out.

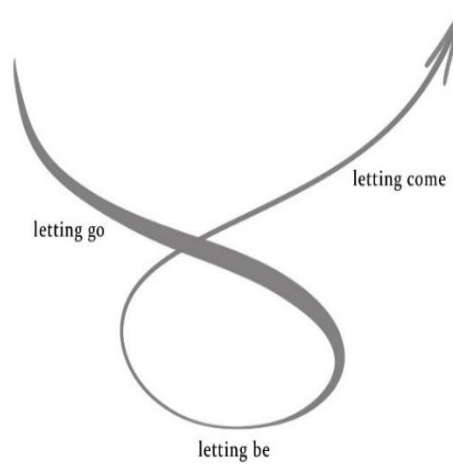
#### **Negative Capability Practice #4:**

##### **Becoming a generative holding environment as a path into *presenced communicating***

Negative capability supports the deliberate and skillful holding of presencing awareness in one's moment-to-moment communication as well. To attend to the creative process of leading in a way that subtle insights, discoveries, and hunches can emerge fruitfully opens up a powerful negative capability skillset that is useful to leadership communication. Dispensing with both a fixed personal identity and arrogant certainty about the nature of life and the creative process, Keats drew important attention to an open way of relating with the unknown by stressing the fluid nature of a poet's identity. For our purposes, this fluidity reflects the deeper nature of the presencing self, both of which are connected to a hidden, emergent source of creativity.

In communication contexts, the effective management of our egoic self and its problematic tendencies towards absencing acknowledged at the beginning of this article is a necessary precondition to generative communication. As the egoic self is enmeshed in the immediacy of its own prior conditioning and habit structures, it lacks the ability to be aware of thought, our position, and various perspectives we inhabit as they arise. Typically imbedded in the default mode of "downloading" (Scharmer, 2007), the egoic self is unable to be meta-aware of its own viewpoint and perspective. As such, it is fused to the conditioned workings of thought, feeling, and self, which closes down the possibility of presencing creative possibilities that lie within leadership situations.

Following from this point, leaders practicing presencing leadership work with letting go of this default setting of the self and learn instead to access their true voice, which opens a path to listening from a deeper authentic self-location informed by their presencing nature. This creates negative capability conditions for a generative holding environment within and between leaders. For our purposes here, a holding environment is a conversational milieu, clearing, or container that is being held and related to from a place of deeper presence and presenced awareness.



**Figure 4.0: The core movement of primary knowing (Gunnlaugson, 2020)**

This fourth NCP practice, which I describe as becoming a generative holding environment as a path to *presenced communicating* is paradoxically activated when we move into the inner posture of letting be (Gunnlaugson, 2020). Letting be is the hidden central dimension of presencing knowing, where we enter into a receptive state of orienting from inside the dark “negative” space of the unknown. Inside the posture of letting be, it becomes possible to discover an underlying creative basis and ground for presencing communicating to begin to take root. In presencing leadership, as attention is redirected away from the emerging future temporarily, there is a suspension of our practical and action driven reflexes. Instead, via this NCP, we let our curiosity openly explore the nature of the ambiguities, uncertainties, and complexities of the unknown rather than tolerating them or trying to control them. By holding our desire to communicate as a creative tension point with the unknown, this moves us into a communication clearing where new emergence can be experienced through this polarity.

The presencing movement of “letting be” (Gunnlaugson, 2020) in between the Theory-U based presencing movement of “letting go” and “letting come” (Scharmer, 2007), develops our presencing knowing to function more like a generative holding environment or container where we can hold and behold the tensions between the known and unknown in a more constructive manner, as well as resource our sense of self from the presencing state of being directly.

When this creative tension is ontologically held well via presence, and somatically held and embraced well from the allowing spaciousness of letting the process be, letting our sense of identity be, we provide an occasion for the fullness of reality to open. Such subtle expressions of letting be help us become a generative holding environment in our way of being and communicating with others. This puts us in service of discerning the truth of the overall situation as the principal stimulus for learning and discovery in the moment. Given that the gesture of letting be is neither a determined nor fixed mode of being, as a negative capability practice it is openly responsive to the particular as well as contextual aspects of what-is, making it helpful in supporting the germination of our presencing awareness as leaders. In turn, becoming a generative holding environment in how we engage with others serves our communication as leaders in several ways.

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The receptive and allowing posture of letting be supports the development of a presencing communicating that is born from immersive contact with the known coming into contact with the unknown. As we let go of our preconceived and known self and ideas, we surrender into an embodied not-knowing from our presencing selves. This is the heart of the presencing state that informs presencing leadership. In deepening into the dynamic ground of our presence through letting be, this subtly embodied form of not-knowing (which within it contains a receptivity and openness to a subtler order of disclosed primary knowing) supports core ground conditions for revealing wisdom from a place of negative capability that is currently obscured or hidden from our general awareness. With practice, there is a growing sense of being enfolded into and guided by this not knowing and having it directly inform our presencing awareness as we listen and as we speak. Letting be also assists us in staying in contact with the unknown amidst complex challenges and situations, but perhaps more importantly, offers a tangible and with sufficient practice, “felt-guided” means to fruitfully experience and be comfortably led by the unknown inside the presencing process as we learn to lead from this place.

Inside letting be, we rediscover a form of primary communicating from our deeper presencing nature and life, further freeing our participation with the emerging future in a way that is less restricted and more wisdom-oriented. As this movement begins to unfold us, letting be develops and strengthens our capacity for coherence and non-dispersal of our energy and attention. Letting be also develops and coheres a kind of staying power with what-is. Again, this helps us become more skillful in our subtle holding of whatever tensions, anxieties, paradoxes, and dilemmas may arise amidst the communication process. This develops our capacity for engaging the presencing field in a more immediate, discerned, and comprehensive way by honing our ability to access and navigate our communication from presencing awareness directly in both individual and collective contexts, as well as arrive at a more nuanced understanding of the subtle nexus of our presencing self as it engages the presencing field.

In learning to become a generative holding environment, we explore communicating from presencing awareness directly, both listening and speaking in a way that integrates our presencing self in the presencing field. Navigating our presencing awareness in this way opens us into contact with dimensions of presencing reality that were previously not possible with the social field alone. Without this communication holding environment present, different blind spots tend to develop in our presencing practice, creating imbalances in how we work with the presencing field as a whole. When it is presumed that our individual presencing capacities are being developed indirectly through our collective presencing practice in the social field, key embodied capacities to discern, ground, and access presencing intelligence directly in our experience tend to be overlooked.

Our presencing communication practice requires a grounding and rooting at the very core levels of our inner experience. When our presencing selves are bypassed as we engage the presencing field, we overlook a foundational part of the presencing process. Instead of subverting the wisdom and intelligence of our presencing nature, the

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presencing self is brought into a new symbiotic role with the presencing field with the second NCP. This opens up new ontological leadership territory of presencing knowing for us to become a generative holding environment that is capable not only of substantive presencing awareness without, but more importantly understanding the interior basis and means for learning to lead and live from that very presencing awareness as a way of being and communicating. Overall, this fourth NCP brings a critical update to the practice of presencing leadership by being relationally-attuned and contextually-precise in its overall orientation and service in stewarding the arising new in one's presenced communicating.

## **Negative Capability Practice #5:**

### **Stillpoint indwelling as a path into *presenced leading***

The heart of the fifth NCP is learning to indwell and lead from our stillpoint (*Figure 1.0*, above). Indwelling from our stillpoint involves cultivating the ability to suspend immediate action and rest in deeper underlying stillness. Resting and holding our awareness from stillness opens up a negative-capability path into presencing leadership. With stillness becoming co-extensive of our inner bodies and presencing field, as leaders, we can become conduits for presencing awareness in action. Stillness, when contacted somatically, provides a felt-bridge to our deeper presencing nature. Our stillpoint is the felt inner region of stillness within our ground of presence within the presencing field. When approached as a negative capability practice, leaders are attentive to the paradoxical nature of stillness that co-exists amidst activity. Upon this subtle inner activation, our stillpoint serves as an inner GPS that keeps us in synch with a core condition for enacting presencing leadership. By establishing subtle felt-contact with our presencing nature from the inside-out, learning to indwell from our stillpoint serves as an embodied negative capability support system that can be accessed in any leadership situation.

Slowing down and becoming present to the essence of reality via our stillpoint brings us into attunement with the underlying source dimension of any conversation or leadership situation. The experience of accessing our stillpoint through our inner body varies from practitioner to practitioner. For some, it is a felt core region of stillness that is dropped into, helping us access the ground of our presence and presencing nature. For others, this felt experience of stillness is activated in a more subtle and distributed manner that connects us with the presencing field. Regardless of how one accesses their stillpoint, learning to approach it as a negative capability practice helps us appreciate the importance of sustaining a felt continuous contact with our own embodied presence.

In practice, connecting with our stillpoint is a way to touch stillness through to the depths of our presencing self. In other words, it is vital to allow our stillpoint to actively shape and unfold our presencing nature through our ground of presence, not only sensing stillness at the surface level of sensation alone. In doing this, we strengthen our ability to hold and anchor ourselves from the ground of presence as well as the greater presencing field. This makes it possible to uncover a new stillness-centered foundation within which our presencing self may take root. By locating the activation of our

presencing nature via our stillpoint, presencing grows to become accessible at the very subtle energetic and structural levels of our being, helping us actively integrate our presence as a leadership stance and commitment to who and how we are.

It can be helpful to view our stillpoint as an inner negative-capability inspired sensory dock where our presencing self and field connect. This has the effect of reconfiguring the boundaries of our presencing nature to include the presencing field. If we move into the presencing field without connecting to our stillpoint, there is a tendency to overlook this nexus point between the presencing self and field and to put our focus exclusively on the field. With our stillpoint active, we are able to hold our individual presencing self-sense in fluid relation to the collective field-space we are in.

As discussed above, there has been a tendency in presencing leadership discussions to conflate our presencing nature with the interior of the presencing field. For some practitioners, this has had the effect of externalizing our presencing nature onto the presencing field and displacing us from our presencing self. To correct this oversight, the fifth NCP works with establishing a seamless integration and dynamic coupling of the interior dimensions of our presencing self and presencing field via our stillpoint. The aim here is to help us access a more cohesive, integrated, and robust presencing experience in any leadership situation.

Learning to rest in and from a place of inner stillness as the main vehicle and container for our presencing leadership grows to become the prevailing inner environment by which we access presence in the presencing field. In presenced leading, felt inner stillness from our stillpoint becomes a conduit for generativity by keeping our presencing awareness refreshed at its source. From indwelling in our stillpoint as an NCP, we develop the subtle energetic capacity for a more resilient presencing leadership. In turn, our capacity to rest with surface disturbances and stressful situations amidst action in life and the workplace grows, again making it possible to lead more effectively under such conditions.

Connecting to source via our stillpoint becomes an energetic ground zero to resource our presencing attention from inside any leadership situation. In doing this, as leaders we can more effectively manage the conditioned psychological and social habits of relating and communicating that otherwise draw our attention elsewhere in the moment. By discovering how to keep our attention rooted from source at our stillpoint, we develop the negative capability-based staying power to sustain presencing as a way of being. Indwelling from our stillpoint fosters a deepened trust in our ability to handle leadership challenges that were previously not possible before by helping us be more fully available and resourced to the situation at hand. Again, this is due in part to the activation and increased capacity of our presencing self that operates outside the limited parameters of the egoic-based mindset.

By learning to engage with emergence from a place of source calm, presencing impulses, hunches, and sense-making movements are revealed with greater clarity and ease. Overall, stillpoint indwelling opens our presencing perception and leadership to a broader and deeper range of possible moves that empower our presencing nature in the

field through a refined felt-sensing, increased sensitivity to resonance, integrated embodied attention, among other qualities of presence and well-being.

### Closing Remarks

The above proposed fivefold NCP curriculum serves and supports the development of a more discerned and actionable presenced leadership, which holds the potential to play an invaluable role in supporting leaders in addressing the sense-making and meaning-making challenges that accompany our current historical moment. By developing the key capacities to work with this growing array of complex problems at their root source, leaders become capable of effectively handling and transforming these VUCA situations from the inside-out. The notion of a more negatively capable leadership developing through skillful containment and working with the deeper nature of our experience is entirely consistent with the wisdom of presencing. Particularly inasmuch as a more developed suspension, acuity of deep seeing, relatedness with one's self and others, and the leadership field bridge access to creating viable shared meaning with others insofar as leaders are able to stabilize presencing at the level of their perception and action.

In apprenticing with the above five practices of the NCP curriculum, leaders will find support effectively navigating our global information ecology and its sense-making challenges. This, in turn, cultivates supportive sensory, physiological, and embodied-based approaches to presencing leadership. Working with the NCP curriculum at the level of our presencing faculties — that is, of our being, thinking, perception, communication, and leading — supports an unfolding self-management process that ultimately builds capacity for presencing-based forms of leadership mastery.

Negative Capability is, in this respect, a deeper form of *positive capability* in disguise in that it provides and supports key subtle conditions for the eventual transformation of leader's consciousness and perception at its very root. In today's VUCA world, approaches that work at this source-level of intervention are becoming an increasing imperative to address these aforementioned challenges. By coupling NCP with presencing leadership, generative pathways open into becoming the desired change and wisdom-based values we know in our heart of hearts are needed to optimally engage and transform our lives, organizations and world at this time.

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## About the Author

Olen Gunnlaugson serves as an Associate Professor in Leadership and Organizational Development at Université Laval (Canada) where he journeys into the human dimensions of business with his students through MBA courses in leadership, management skills, and group communications. With an eclectic research background in leadership growth, development, and consciousness-based approaches to transformation, as well as contemplative and generative practices of communication, he received his SSHRC funded Ph.D. at the University of British Columbia and did his Post-Doctorate at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver. To date, his work has been published in 13 books as well as 35 articles and chapters in academic journals and books. He has presented and keynoted at numerous international conferences, received five prestigious faculty level awards for excellence in teaching from universities in Canada and the USA, and taught several thousand emerging leaders, managers, and executives at leading schools in

Canada, USA, Austria, Sweden, and South Korea. Over the past several years, he has been researching and developing Dynamic Presencing. As the focus of his recent book, Dynamic Presencing is an in-depth process for developing advanced presencing capacity and mastery in leaders, coaches, creatives, and change agents.

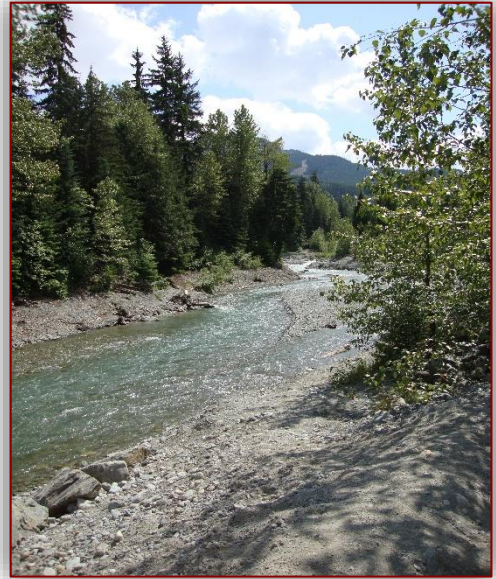
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# Values, the Filters through Which We Think

## *Integrity, Transformation, Growth, and Hope*

— JOSEPH HESTER, CLAREMENT, NORTH CAROLINA, USA

For more than a decade, I have been writing about “values-based leadership,” expressing my ideas about issues and constructs seeking clarity and understanding. Here, I return to my philosophical and spiritual roots to share what I believe is the energy shaping my values and the behaviors it espouses. I grew to manhood in the South and here I was educated and enculturated. My roots are in evangelical Christianity and perchance you have read some of my articles in *JVBL* or the *Humanities Bulletin* you have discovered that I take a more philosophical approach to ethics and moral issues having distanced myself from my evangelical past. Even my small book on the Golden Rule – *A Summoned Life* – takes a philosophical bent rather than being “belief oriented.” This has been a challenge as many of my ideas and much of my thinking find their origin in my experiences in the church, the years I spent in divinity school, and the fact that most of my family and many of my friends are immersed in evangelical Christianity. No one completely escapes his or her cultural origins; about this I make no apologies.



Four major themes have shaped my life, work, and relationships: “**integrity, transformation, growth, and hope.**” These denote behaviors and attitudes that have defined my values and have grown from my conviction that values are the filters through which we think. These themes minimally involve three major actions:

- (1) extending one’s inner values outward through personal integrity and trustworthiness,
- (2) maintaining positive, growth-oriented relationships, and
- (3) developing ethical behaviors that not only connect us locally but to a wider world of people, ideas, and events. I could use other words to describe my values-orientation, values associated with civility and moral purpose, but civility and moral purpose are essentially involved in the four themes I have chosen.

The behaviors identified by these themes are generated and maintained individually and collectively by those who put values and ethics at the heart of their lives, families, and

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organizations. I can't emphasize the communal nature of values enough; without the support of family and friends our values often lie limp as we are unable to muster the courage for their activation. Support is needed from those in one's community of family, friends, and work. Values-based leaders should remember this and lead by example as well as by compulsion. Values-based leaders are people who are committed to moral integrity, habits of intellectual inquiry, high standards of moral reasoning, truth-seeking, and a willingness to re-examine their behaviors and the beliefs, values, and purposes driving their work.



## Actions

*Special attention is given to the men and women who are able to withstand the pressures to conform and maintain their creativity and creative instincts throughout their lives. These are more often than not men and women of ambition, aspiration, and tenacity. For people of purpose, to put it plainly, it all adds up to a life well-lived with a fully operational sense of perspective. Although daily pressures may cause us to lose our focus as stress and anxiety creep in, with time, dealing with pressure becomes a normal way of life and the ability to sustain purpose strengthens. Nothing seems to perplex those who understand the meaning and direction of their lives; their behavior conveys reassurance. Their creative and intuitional qualities speak of this gift—how they discover it, and how they maintain a steady path over a lifetime.*

(1) **Extending inner values outward with the courage to live virtuously** includes self-awareness, patience, self-confidence, a willingness to listen and share, understanding individual differences and uniquenesses, and developing goals for positive and responsible growth. Here is something I wrote in 1995 for a speech at the Torrance Center at the University of Georgia which I think is apropos to this subject:

(2) **Maintaining positive, growth-oriented relationships** means being receptive to new and unusual ideas, respecting and appreciating the opinions of others their skills and growth, understanding and appreciating the value of work, and creating positive social relationships and attitudes. As I have written,

*In time we learn that our lives are largely built on a scaffolding of relationships. Understanding this takes many years as most of us learn this lesson late in life. Relationships—good and bad—create the web of our lives. Finding purpose in our web is difficult for much that happens to us is either incidental or accidental. Purpose is intentional and a difficult and foreboding task. When we discover our purpose we are able to maneuver through life in more productive ways.*

(3) **Finally, connectedness focuses on accepting others** on the basis of human equality, respecting the value of individual differences, being responsible to others and to the environment, understanding the importance of family, faith, and community as originators of personal and collective values. As I wrote in 2018 in my article, "Seeking Community in a Divided World":

*Seeking Community in a Divided World seeks a common moral vision amongst values diversity. It recognizes the value confusion and conflicts burdening our lives but asks for dialogical conversation based on such principles, as human integrity and dignity,*

*decency, fairness, responsibility, and equality. These common, but uncommon values are a framework for building moral communities. We acknowledge that our lives are a web of relationships and that ethical bonds are needed for building strong moral communities, nations, and the protection of the environment.*



## Themes

The four themes guiding my ethic are *integrity, transformation, growth, and hope*. A powerful force driving our values is HOPE. Hope is a metaphor used Biblically and signifies spiritual energy, an energy that leads to a life of kindness, honesty, and caring for each other. This energy includes what I call “spiritual wisdom” which is not limited to any form of religious expression. Rather, spiritual wisdom is an intrinsic predisposition indigenous to all humanity. It stirs within us the recognition of our moral center thus drawing respect for humanity as a sacred trust. Paul, in his letter to the Hebrews, provides a clue to the meaning of “hope” when he said, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Faith is thus the energy that lies at the heart of hope driving a life of benevolence and compassion.



Many will interpret “faith” as “belief in a higher being,” and the more secular will render it as “belief in self and others or even in democracy and its goals.” Paul defines “faith” as “the substance of things hoped for.” Either way, whatever one’s focus, *faith provides a pathway for our moral acuity and hope articulates this pathway in a life of moral integrity*. Using this sense of hope — as promise, fulfillment, spiritual, and as a positive directive — we are able to understand how faith and ethics are inter-connected. Hope then is a metaphor for a life of

kindness and compassion, of altruism, goodwill, and understanding, and benevolence. Hope expresses our faith in others respecting their dignity and self-worth.

For the religious person, it is quite natural to turn to the sources of one’s faith for ethical understanding and meaning. The secular individual will have to explore other sources, even the experiences of life itself. Both could discover inspiration in their commitment to democracy and its principles of freedom, equality, and responsibility. Hopefully, the truth and meaning found in their search will have moral roots reaching deeply into the soil of ordinary living with sustaining growth and nourishment. One must agree that it is within the human ferment of dialogue and behavior, where faith and belief informs ethical practice so that within our relationships with others, we are able to uncover the importance of ethics and the moral principles guiding our lives. Truth, goodness, and ethical behaviors comprise the nourishment for the human community.

Of course, we're tempted to hold up our religion as a model for life and goodness, but this doesn't mean that such goodness can't be found elsewhere. Try as we might to understand the views of others, we discover that in the act of thinking and interpreting, the voice we hear is so often our own. If the voice of morals and truth are heard only through our own filters – conceptual metaphors tainted by time and circumstance – the hope and the possibility for ethical dialogue and community understanding will be lost, dying a death of a thousand qualifications and authoritarian and repressive indictments. Spiritual wisdom dictates that no one person or one group of persons possesses a monopoly on morality or a control on knowledge and truth.

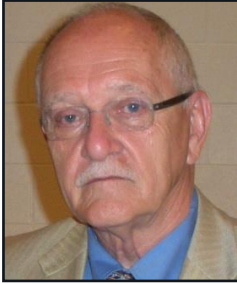
Living with ethical intentions gives meaning to life, to family, and community. It also widens our capacity for understanding and compassion. Our moral integrity includes respect and dignity for others. These attitudes are important for the survival of the human community – they are the crucibles through which “humanity as community” must pass. To be a community or to live in community is to be shaped and reshaped by a culture we are helping to produce. Within the nexus of history and culture, of belief and meaning, we are challenged to discover, as well as help create, the fundamental



principles and discernible ethical patterns that have universal and lasting qualities. Our goal is, or should be, to live an ethical life so that we can share with others through word and example a vision of a more ethical world. Ideally, this world will be exemplified by

└ integrity,  
   └ transformation,  
     └ growth &  
       └ hope.

## Perspectives on “Authentic” Leadership “SEEKING SOMETHING GREATER THAN OURSELVES”



— Joseph P. Hester, Claremont, North Carolina, USA

### Introduction

Recent events involving the 2020 presidential election and its aftermath have exposed the complexities and disputations related to authentic leadership necessitating its re-evaluation. As we are aware, the social and moral developments important in our history inform understandings — of our values and culture — compelling judgment and imposing personal introspection. And so, in a time when ethics and authenticity have been truncated by narcissistic behaviors — including anti-democratic ideologies and violence — strengthening ethical authenticity’s moral core as a significant leadership construct seems appropriate. To bring clarity to this discussion and ground it both practically and

#### RESEARCH FINDINGS

Personal characteristics and ethical leadership:

*This research revealed that ethical leaders were those that were honest, trustworthy, and fair, made decisions based on principles, acted ethically in their professional setting and personal lives. This was defined as a moral person component of ethical leadership.*

— Copeland, Mary Kay, p. 122.

See also: Treviño, L., Brown, M., & Hartman, L. (2003). A qualitative investigation of perceived executive ethical leadership: Perceptions from inside and outside the executive suite. *Human Relations*, 55, 5–37. Treviño, L., Hartman, and Brown, L. (2000). Moral person and moral manager: How executives develop a reputation for ethical leadership, *California Management Review*, 42, 128–142.

philosophically, assistance is sought in the research of Mary Kay Copeland<sup>1</sup> and theoretical views of Charles Taylor.<sup>2</sup> Although they write for different purposes and several decades separate them, both believe an ethics of authenticity adds moral depth to leadership acuity and completes its meaning as a transformational behavior. Relevancy and meaning are achieved by placing this discussion in a context apropos to the

values upheaval now defining the contemporary American political landscape. Clearly, and many are unaware, we are living in the afterglow of an ideological revolution — the

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Euro-centric Enlightenment — which has been molding our thinking for more than two centuries. Much of Taylor's work is directed at unraveling some of the inherited consequences of this mental shaping on his way to clarifying what he calls "the ethics of authenticity." Taylor believes that several of these consequences have narrowed our ethical understanding, polarized our ethics and values, and devalued any hope for an authentic ethic. And we can agree, for the 21<sup>st</sup> century has witnessed the politicization of values and ethics and the continuation of the culture war debates definitive of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. With ethics now swirling in a confusing political current, our values, as well as values-based institutions, have been duly affected making an ethics of authenticity a questionable choice as a values-based leadership construct and moving us to its reconsideration.

### Gaining Perspective about an Ethics of Authenticity

Mary Kay Copeland's review and comments about values-based leadership enrich the substance and importance of "authentic leadership" revealing its complexities when construed as a leadership construct within a business environment. Her commentary demonstrates the difficulties of framing "authenticity" within a narrow and abstract definition omitting its contextual situation. It is within a living, working context that "authenticity" attains its meaning and value. Consequently, after reviewing the prevailing literature and research on the various constructs supporting values-based leadership, Copeland turns to explicating the benefits of authentic leadership as a values-based leadership construct and within an organizational (business) setting. Her review and research demonstrate that *transformational* and *ethical behaviors* augment authentic leadership's effectiveness.

Following Copeland's explication is an explanation of Charles Taylor's ethics of authenticity. Reading Taylor is like taking a trip through the history of ideas about knowledge and ethics that arose during the Euro-centric Enlightenment and brought forward through various normative ideologies and disputes. His prolonged study identified several of these as "problems leaking into our time" — obstacles which have diminished the meaning and impact of ethics. He identifies these as narcissistic individualism, subjectivism, and relativism as correlated issues leading to the rise of utilitarianism and the casting of ethics as transactional. Significant to leadership studies, both Copeland and Taylor provide insights enabling the positioning of ethical authenticity as proto-typical of values-based leadership. Both agree that authenticity is ethical and transformational *if and only if* it (1) seeks a moral horizon stretching beyond personal

Luthans and Avolio suggest that authentic leadership occurs when self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors, on the part of both leaders and followers, are present, fostered, and nurtured which stimulates positive personal growth and self-development on the part of both the leader and follower. The authors conclude: *The authentic leader is confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, moral/ethical, future-oriented, and gives priority to developing associates to be leaders. The authentic leader is true to him/herself and the exhibited behavior positively transforms or develops associates into leaders themselves.*

Luthans, F. and Avolio, B. 2003 "Authentic leadership: A positive development approach." In K. Cameron, J. Dutton, & R. Quinn (Eds.), *Positive organizational scholarship*, pp. 241- 258. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

concerns and goals, (2) pursues moral inclusiveness, and (3) is freely entered into as a collective effort. Although they approach ethical authenticity from different perspectives and for different reasons, the discussions provided by Copeland and Taylor confirm the requirements of ethical authenticity as a practical leadership behavior and as an ethical commitment requiring openness, honesty, and accountability.

### Mary Kay Copeland: Appraisal and Insights

Mary Kay Copeland's review and analysis of values-based leadership constructs opens avenues of exploration about ethics, authenticity, and transformational leadership pointing out where research converges and diverges and where additional research is required. Her effort to compare and contrast various values-based leadership constructs allows for thorough inspection and reconsideration, including how each of these constructs are complimentary and/or supportive of authentic leadership. In this lengthy analysis, she explains the importance of continuing the development and of authentic leadership through empirical research and documentation. A focus on her examination of **ethical** and **authentic** leadership and their relationship to **transformational** behaviors reveals insights and examples demonstrating how these various constructs are able to be folded into a singular description of "authentic leadership." Although strictly empirical with reliance of statistical correlations, many of her interpretive comments reveal a connection of authenticity with the more philosophical and intrinsic views of Charles Taylor. This connection – the more narrowly focused leadership research of Copeland and the more pervasive and philosophical understandings of Taylor – helps expose the social, ethical, and intrinsic nature of "authenticity" as a transformational behavior.

When stating the purpose of her review and examination, Copeland comments:

*This paper outlines the prevalent definitions and theories of authentic leadership. Practitioners, scholars and authors seemed to concur that there is a great need for authenticity and authentic leadership in our 21st century leaders. Researchers diverge on the definition of an authentic leader and what is required to access and develop authentic leaders. It is not unusual for a new construct to have a number of different theories and conclusions initially as scholars, researchers and practitioners wrestle with the many potential theories and truths surrounding a new construct. It is necessary and critical to continue research and analysis to further clarify the construct of authentic leadership theory and to expand our understanding how authentic leaders can be developed.<sup>3</sup>*

Copeland's review demonstrates the positive and **practical** outcomes for being ethical, authentic, and transformational. These are: (1) being able to **communicate** through word and example with those in one's working environment, (2) translating ethical behaviors into workplace **actions**, and (3) having the ability to create a **vision**

*We need leaders who lead with purpose, values, and integrity; leaders who build enduring organizations, motivate their employees to provide superior customer service, and create long-term values to shareholders.*

— George, B. (2003). *Authentic leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p. 9.

for others to follow. Her documentation shows that when followers are motivated by leaders who are respectful, approachable, and model ethical and authentic behaviors, the outcomes for the workplace are transformational.

In life, as in the workplace, judgments of value are always made against a background of existing relationships, factual beliefs, and general cooperative acceptance. Often unmentioned or undetected is how shrouded assumptions influence judgments and decision-making. Consequently, it's important that Copeland identifies research showing transformational competence arising more fully within a transparent, equitable, and dialogical setting, a setting open to all in the working environment. This correlates with Taylor's idea of the **transcendent** nature of authenticity — of moving beyond selfish inclinations and seeking together (dialogically and dialectically) a more ethically inclusive working environment.

Copeland's research finds that when ethical, authentic, and transformational qualities are combined, leaders are more effective in managing their organizations and transforming what heretofore were negative organizational climates into more positive and fulfilling places to work. She says:

"Authentic, ethical, transformational leadership provides an enthusiasm and support for that which is good and moral and fosters trust and enthusiasm." [and] "In assessing the VBL component of transformational leadership, it appears to overlap significantly with other VBL constructs of authentic and ethical leadership."

Copeland also corroborates how each of these behaviors contributes incrementally to leadership efficiency. She comments,

***"When a leader is ethical and authentic, by definition, their values are morally uplifting. A transformational leader augments an ethical/authentic leader's effectiveness by creating enthusiasm around the good, noble and excellent principles that ethical/authentic leaders possess."***<sup>4</sup>

Although judging what is and what is not transformational is somewhat subjective and precarious, Copeland points to organizational results as a validation of its effects. She says the effectiveness of the leader's authenticity, along with his or her ethical commitments, is augmented by "the effectiveness that the transformational qualities produce." That is, if a leader is simply authentic and ethical, but lacks a **positive empowering capacity**, their authentic/ethical leadership effectiveness will have less of

***Briefly, we can say that authenticity involves creation and construction as well as discovery, originality, and frequently opposition to the rules of society and even potentially to what we recognize as morality. But it is also true, as we saw, that it requires openness to horizons of significance (for otherwise the creation loses the background that can save it from insignificance) and a self-definition in dialogue.***

– Charles Taylor, EA, p. 66.

an impact." Thus, Copeland centers the meaning of "transformation" in the ability of leadership to empower employees to make decisions to which they will be held accountable.

Although this conclusion relies heavily on personal interpretation and judgment, Copeland empirically documents the effectiveness of a leader who is able to communicate effectively, share and implement a vision, and translate this vision into workplace actions. The significance of “empowerment” cannot be over-estimated. It is the ability of leaders at any level to set aside their own authority allowing followers to freely participate in workplace discussions about matters of importance, collectively agree and act on group decisions, and accept accountability for the quality and efficiency of their work. Thus, accountability within the organization runs both vertically and horizontally. No one is exempt from responsibility in a transformational culture.

Copeland explains,

*Furthering ethical and authentic ideology is often an intellectual pursuit that requires leaders to challenge followers to a higher level of thinking and acting....An authentic/ethical and transformational leader uses staff development and intellectual stimulation as a way to challenge, communicate and transfer these beliefs and values to others. Leaders that are ethical and authentic, but lack transformational behaviors, may have greater difficulty conveying intellectually challenging concepts to their followers.<sup>5</sup>*

One can surmise from Copeland’s research that an ethics of authenticity provides a language of ethics that is applicable to personal as well as corporate and organizational cultures where leaders and others are able to move away from **mere** ethical and job-related compliance to a more **fluid** notion of “self” through both vertical and horizontal interactions. The authentic culture is permeated with dignity and respect, allowing of communication, and integrity. Thus, important to a transformational culture is self-identity. As these interactions are infused with dignity and respect, a more ethically transformational culture is able to rise. Consequently, an ethics of authenticity releases those within an organization (family, church, business, political body, etc.) from a more restricted concept of “self” defined by roles and duties only, to a collective notion that “we’re all in this together.” Personal identity and the ability to identify with a group, business, etc., brings with it pride and cohesion. Although everyone knows their place in the organizational hierarchy, “place” has diminished in importance being replaced with respect and responsibility. Psychologically and socially, this provides an ontological foundation for creating a pathway to ethical transformation.

### Charles Taylor’s “The Ethics of Authenticity”

With a bent toward the intrinsic, Taylor identifies the “moral ideal” – what he calls “the ethics of authenticity” – as being true to oneself, aiming toward self-fulfillment, and having a vision of what a better life would be. Being a comprehensive ideal, Taylor’s notion of ethical authenticity has personal applications as well as applications in large environments such as business and industry and politics. A clue to Taylor’s intentions is his saying that although this ideal is self-referential, it is not a singular disposition – “... its dialogical setting ... binds us to others.” This reveals two important dimensions of ethics applicable to any human environment:

- 1) First, if ethics is self-referential only it becomes personally reductive, subjective, and ethically relative lacking a dialogic dimension. This kind of ethic has the potential of being personally narcissistic. It is generally *individualistic*- and *rights*-oriented. Rights-oriented behavior nearly always focuses on personal freedoms: the “freedom to join,” “freedom to express views,” or “freedom to protest,” etc. Noticeably, all of these have roots in democracy and in morality stemming from such moral ideas as equality and nondiscrimination, fair-treatment, personal responsibility, and freedom of speech. On the negative side, morally speaking, the right to violence is prohibited. We can protest and demonstrate, but when this carries over to violence, we have perhaps lost our moral compass and connection to others. Of course, many believe that violence is sometimes justified when struggling against unfair and immoral laws and practices. They often say, “Might makes right!” but we know this is a failed inference. For this reason, dialogical civility is recommended for resolving our social, political, and workplace differences.
- 2) The second dimension expands ethics beyond self to a more “universal ethics” or to what is generally called “human rights.” The roots of this notion are found in the deistic religion of our founding fathers and conceived as “natural rights.” Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence the following: *“When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature’s god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. Thus, in the minds of many, legal rights and moral rights often become “natural rights.” Our founders considered this to be “self-evident,” requiring neither argument nor proof. The belief undergirding natural rights is that they are not dependent upon the laws, customs, or beliefs of any particular culture or government, and are therefore thought of as universal, transcendent, and unalienable (i.e., rights that cannot be repealed or restrained by human laws) and indigenous to humanity.*

*For Taylor, reconciliation embraces others who are different from us and aims to create a virtuous culture. Taylor’s critics overlook the liberal implications of his ethic and also do not recognize his commitment to the plural diversity in modern societies. Taylor’s communitarianism (post-liberalism in his mind) aims to create trust, openness and democratic accountability. The article concludes that democratic practice must also engage with others who are different from us, fostering a fusion of horizons that creates reconciliation and understanding.*

— Lehman, Glen (2006) “Perspectives on Charles Taylor’s reconciled society.” *Philosophy & social criticism*, 32(3), 347-376.

Understanding the strong pull of ethics as personal and individual and the unalienable ideas of its second dimension, America took a *utilitarian* approach and placed its most cherished values into law, its Constitution. Thus, America is thought of as a nation based on law. This has become a “sacred” dimension of American democracy. The idea of “justice” supports the moral foundation of law. “Justice” is defined as fairness, moral

rightness, or a process of law in which every person receives his or her due from the system, including all rights, both natural and legal. As a complex moral/legal term and supported by an ethic of authenticity, justice requires transparency, honesty, responsibility, dignity, and integrity to work. Easy to understand, ethical authenticity, when viewed through the eyes of the American Constitution and the seminal idea of “justice,” is a fluid idea, often politically charged and easily overlooked, but vital to democracy and what democracy stands for.

More philosophically, Charles Taylor stresses that when striving toward “ethical authenticity” we begin to loosen the chains of self-centeredness and personal narcissism, ethics first dimension. We are not striving toward a collective and unified ethic. Being a philosopher and understanding the strong pull of psychological egoism,

The collapsing of communitarian relations and the increasing isolation of individuals in relation to each other figure prominently in the studies of various authors who sought to describe contemporary ways of life. We address this issue as presented by Charles Taylor in *Sources of the Self* and in *The ethics of authenticity*. The author identifies three “malaises” that are present in modern society: individualism, the primacy of instrumental reason and the alienation of individuals from the political sphere. Proposing to avoid a restrictively negativist reading of such phenomena, Taylor presents them as *transformations* of the dynamic frameworks that constitute the modern identity.

— Gilberto, Hoffmann Marcon and Reinaldo Furlan. “The issue of identity in postmodernity: authenticity and individualism in Charles Taylor.” — <https://www.Scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sciarttext&pid=S0103-65642020000100201&lng=en&nrm=1so&lng=en>.

Taylor says the decision to be ethical is *ontologically* possible because we have the capacity for being “other-regarding and for being self-regarding” in our behavior; seldom are we just one or the other. This is a truism we all experience. Taylor is hopeful that other-regarding behaviors will dominate our lives, but there are no guarantees; this must be intentionally pursued.

In his copious writings, Taylor identifies *four ideas* which he says comprise the essence of an ethics of authenticity. These are **personal identity**, **dialogical civility**, **transcendence**, and **reconciliation**. A close examination shows their correlation with what Copeland calls “transformational behaviors.” The means for releasing these behaviors from more self-centered inclinations are unearthed, says Taylor, in **our willingness to engage** in collective dialogue as we identify values and conduct that transcend selfish desires and motives.

This is also in concert with philosopher Kurt Baier’s notion of behaviors that can be recommended to everybody because “they successfully promote the best possible life for everybody, and that the best possible life for everybody cannot be achieved in isolation but only in social contexts in which the pursuits of each impinge on the pursuits of others.”<sup>6</sup>

Consequently, an ethics of authenticity entails shared understandings, mutual obligations, and accountability. On the personal side this will be a journey of **reconciliation** involving reassessing one’s personal values and ethics while giving respectful consideration to the ethical views of others. Taylor points out that this is not

only a personal journey because it articulates something beyond self that is more morally inclusive, or, as Taylor says, “morally higher.” Consequently, that which is morally encompassing recognizes human diversity and within this diversity seeks values that are unarguably collectively (universally) important.

Practically and by implication the journey of reconciliation will involve *intentional self-marginalization*, setting aside selfish concerns and motives, seeking input from others, and respectfully placing collective values at the forefront of decision making. This does not mean removing one’s unique skills and position from the equation, only a willingness to listen and learn from others, to respect their opinions and values, and to seek avenues that connect rather than separate us from others. Taylor says this will be difficult as it will be an effort to mend old wounds and past mistakes, to communicate freely with others – many of whom we don’t like and with whom we disagree – about issues and values, disputes and beliefs, setting aside pre-judgments and negative assumptions about their beliefs, values, or cultural dispositions. This journey, if one is honest and sincere, will be transparent, exposing one’s character and that of others, and requiring reassessing the personal and collective values considered meaningful to one’s life and work. It will be an endeavor of collectively collaborating – giving equal and honest consideration to different views and understandings, and prioritizing values that are vital to personal, communal, or workplace identity.

*To classify, abstract, generalize, reduce to uniformities, deduce, calculate and summarize in rigid, timeless formulae is to mistake appearance for reality, describe the surface and leave the depths untouched, break up the living whole by artificial analysis, and misunderstand the processes both of history and of the human soul by applying to them categories which at best can be useful only in dealing with [the physical sciences] and mathematics.*

—Isaiah Berlin (2013). *The crooked timber of humanity*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Taylor comments,

“Much contemporary moral philosophy ... has given such a narrow focus to morality that some of the crucial connections I want to draw here are incomprehensible in its terms. This moral philosophy has tended to focus on what it is right to do rather than on what it is good to be, on defining the content of obligation rather than the nature of the good life; and it has no conceptual place left for a notion of the good as the object of our love or allegiance or ... as the privileged focus of attention or will. ... philosophy has accredited a cramped and truncated view of morality in a narrow sense, as well as of the whole range of issues involved in the attempts to live the best possible life, and this not only among professional philosophers, but with a wider public.”<sup>7</sup>

What Taylor seeks is an affirmation of the ordinary life, the good life, reminding us that “... our *identity* is deeper and more many-sided than any of our possible articulations of it.”<sup>8</sup> He concluded:

*The notion that the life of production and reproduction, of work and the family, is the main locus of the good life flies in the face of what were originally the dominant distinctions of our civilization. For both the warrior ethic and the Platonic, ordinary*

*life in this sense is part of the lower range, part of what contrasts with the incomparably higher. The affirmation of the ordinary life, therefore, involves a polemical stance towards these traditional views and their implied elitism.<sup>9</sup>*

## The Contextual Significance of Authentic Leadership

Considering its dialogical nature, a fitting description for an ethics of authenticity is “humanity as community.” Although self-referential, it is a moral ideal, perhaps a vision, reaching beyond the veil of personal considerations seeking collective and ethical ways to manage life with ethical commitment and purpose. For those adopting an ethical way of living, an ethics of authenticity speaks to **self-identity** as one usually discovers who they are when in relation with others.

One should note that any reference to **self-identity** involves the complexity of understanding social relationships, social interactions, religious commitments, political affiliations, and the like. In an effort to understand another person, that person’s identity cannot be construed too simply or loosely. We often underestimate others, judging them too quickly and inappropriately. People are amazingly complex and resist minimal and undemanding classifications, including overtly or covertly attempts at manipulation.

*Conversely, Taylor’s concept of identity refers to what is absent for the person who, in the throes of an identity crisis, finds himself completely without orientation before such questions. Such a person lacks the kind of thing which, for instance, our vegetarian possesses: a space in a background moral horizon contoured by strong evaluations, an identity shaped by an ideal.”*

—Smith, Nick (1994). Charles Taylor, “strong hermeneutics and the politics of difference. Radical philosophy. <https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/article/charles-taylor-strong-hermeneutics-and-the-politics-of-difference>.

There are many reasons, people trust and distrust others, commit themselves to certain values, and identify specific activities as important to their lives. Life is not lived in the black and white of clear-cut categorizations. Thus, within the diversity of our friends and associates, building solid and long-lasting relationships will take time as many are unwilling to discuss their values, even with their closest friends. Whatever “an ethics of authenticity” means, its meaning will always vary and will be interpreted through self-identity—personal values and specific environments. To some, an ethics of authenticity seems a remote idea, complex and weighted with hidden motives and undisclosed agendas. The transparency needed for ethical authenticity to take hold will take time to build and sustain. Authenticity requires an openness and willingness to engage in dialectical conversations; and we can be assured, it doesn’t arrive pre-packaged and ready to install into in a leadership organizational plan. Effort, patience, and time are required to develop the trust structures needed and these are always relationship dependent.

The difficulties of this discussion are obvious for surely meaning is lost if it remains conceptual only, abstract and divorced from a significant setting. There is no better place to begin than the realities of present-day America. Indeed, today, perhaps before, American values have been polarized and ethics compressed, casting a shadow on

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ethics and an ethic of authenticity,<sup>10</sup> making it difficult to discuss values and ethics socially or in a workplace setting. Seemingly, without rudder or anchor we live in the afterglow of Jefferson transformational words,

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these words would soon be tempered by capitalistic greed and institutionalized slavery resulting in a civil war. But even war could not wipe clean the prejudices held in the minds of many Americans against people of color. The treatment of people of color and the assumption of “white” privilege and “white supremacy” have been anchors weighing down the moral foundations of American democracy since its inception and effectively used by politicians to leverage their power and influence ever since. Within the workplace, this anchor may not be obvious, but for minorities, especially people of color, it remains a clear and present reality.

And although we can produce evidence showing ethical authenticity is important for business leadership effectiveness as did Copeland or produce philosophical arguments sustaining it as did Taylor, an ethics of authenticity remains today an **ethical ideal** tempered by racism, discrimination, and ruthless business practices. Maybe it was always a ruse to confuse the unsuspecting; an unrealistic goal held aloft, but knowingly unattainable. Maybe it’s just something to write and think about for those committed to values-based leadership? Copeland’s research assures us that an ethics of authenticity can be useful as an effective business practice, perhaps even in homes and churches. Taylor’s analysis demonstrates its pitfalls and methods leading to its sustainability, but seemingly its glow has been diminished as it expands exponentially though society touched here and there by political capitalism. This we know, and the experiences of the

*Pragmatism is a philosophical tradition that considers words and thought as tools and instruments for prediction, problem solving, and action, and rejects the idea that the function of thought is to describe, represent, or mirror reality. Pragmatism originated in the United States around 1870, and now presents a growing third alternative to both analytic and ‘Continental’ philosophical traditions worldwide. Its first generation was initiated by the so-called ‘classical pragmatists’ Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914), who first defined and defended the view, and his close friend and colleague William James (1842–1910), who further developed and ably popularized it.*

*“Pragmatism,” Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2020. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/pragmatism/>.*

last five or six years testify, an ethics of authenticity is more than an academic construct or philosophical debate; in some quarters it’s a proven business practice that, in 2021, may have lost its zest and meaning.

## The Democratic Ideal

Truly, the nation we so fondly call “America” was in part a creation of the influence of myth and fact, reason and hope, and fear and anxiety. As these cultural forces were

overlapping and bumping into one another, the ideal of American democracy was taking shape. Sadly, failing to critically examine the history and foundations of democracy, as well as personal histories, many have construed these idealized stories as “facts,” overlooking their questionable histories and less than ethical moorings. These stories appear in textbooks, advertisements, school and church pageants, holiday celebrations and the like making them seem more factual than they actually are. They have colored our thinking and continue to mold the thinking of our children in a complacent unawareness.

As we are experiencing, when our history becomes more remote it leaves an ever-widening gap to be filled in by old stories and beliefs, ideologies and myths designed to augment our most treasured ideals and manipulate our beliefs and actions. Various told, these stories color how we view the world and interpret present day issues. Covertly they fuel *both* our moral and immoral judgments with hyperbolical intentions as they enter the mainstream of our thinking. We hear them from parents and grandparents, friends and work associates, ministers, teachers, and politicians. What is left unspoken or just glossed over in amiable ignorance is sometimes puzzling and ever so often doesn’t mesh with the contextual realities in which it originated. Remembering these stories, we more often than not ignore their exaggerations and accept them as fact. These, says A. C. Grayling, “... are so much easier to understand, and provide the neat narrative structure – beginning, middle, end, and purpose – that human psychology loves.”<sup>11</sup>

As we most assuredly are aware, our myths, which include the veiled assumptions about our genealogical past, cannot be dispelled by facts alone. We have trouble thinking about them rationally because they comprise a great deal of our mental makeup; *when thinking about them, we are thinking with them.* They lie quietly within operating in the background of our logic and beliefs as a hidden

Hobbes argues that man is essentially motivated by a desire for self-preservation. Without a powerful sovereign (leviathan) to hold man in awe, we would live in a constant state of war as we each struggle to protect our persons. In essence, life would be *solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.* While absolutism may be contrary to our desire for liberty, it is the only thing that will provide us with security.

– Hobbes: <https://www.csus.edu/indiv/s/simpson/hist162/hobbes.pdf>.

moral grammar.<sup>12</sup> With emotional force – flags flying, Bibles waving, bands playing, children marching, and with a loud and numbing rhetoric – our myths are convincingly acknowledged; clichés or ordinary life. They help us gain our bearings in a world of confusing ethical message. They are active, perhaps covertly shaping our personal and collective identities, and compressing our values’ orientation – including what is meant by “ethical authenticity”— in an agreeable unawareness. The irony is palpable.

## Practicality Based on Common Sense

And so, inharmoniously, an ethics of authenticity has been stained; blemished not only by political leaders but church and corporate leaders, friends, community leaders, and

## SIDEBAR DISCUSSION

It is appropriate, if only in a sidebar to this discussion, to call attention to the notion of “pragmatic” or “utilitarian” value existing in the minds of many White-Americans as that of **white privilege**. Historically and socially instilled, **white privilege** has become a **habit of expectation**<sup>45</sup> for many, covertly shielding much of what they “see” or “don’t see,” “hear” or “don’t hear.” Many white Americans who are devoutly religious and obviously ethical will deny this. They have enjoyed the privileges of being “white” all of their lives, view the world and think through a “white” prism. This is not to say they participate in discriminatory practices; most do not. But, for others, it’s but a short step from this seeming innocuous disposition to feelings of **white supremacy**, which is underscored by racist attitudes and actions. Because many are in denial, trying to correct the long history of racial, gender, and ethnic discrimination will take a change of life that is transformational, transcending the words we use and the lifestyles we enjoy. In the minds of “the least among us,” these attitudes and complacent dispositions will always color the meaning of “an ethics of authenticity.”

Consequently, entrapped in a static mindset, deflecting change and the possibility of positive conversations with others about ethics and values, the roots of prejudice and discrimination are hardly noticed as they lie deeply embedded in many white Americans as **practicality based on common sense**. With “reason” now being portrayed as “being reasonable” or as “common sense,” this goes down much easier. And when our values are aligned with a majority of like-minded individuals, our identity is secured.

Habitually, the hope of moral reconciliation goes unnoticed — perhaps it is simply neglected — as it is often lost in the common and ordinary events of everyday life. Many believe it does not pertain to them; it’s always “the other person’s fault.” Yet, within the existential marrow of time and place, there have been and are the courageous few who, seeking social and moral equity, speak and act out. They “see” the broader picture of American history and the unethical and immoral practices requiring change, but what they think of as socially and political important is frequently ignored or just vanishes in the loud and angry voices of those with dissimilar views.

Ignorant of the past and its value correlations, and desensitized to present anomalies, many are apt to say, maybe even frustratingly, “That’s just the way things are,” or “It is what it is.” Others may unwittingly think “This is the way it ought to be.” Thus, in communities and in workplaces, socially insecure and afraid of being ostracized by friends and work associates, many have retreated into the safety of saying nothing or retreating into the light and airy environment of sports, entertainment, etc. — as Robert Frost said, “Listen, they murmur talking in the dark on what should be their daylong theme continued.” Ignorance becomes a safe haven for those who wish not to engage in mending the so-called “American philosophy.” Being dialogical in nature, an ethics of authenticity will always be a work in progress and hampered by self-denial.

A disquieting fog has moved over the American moral landscape. Coupled with fear and uncertainty, many have reacted negatively, others positively, and sadly, some not at all. All of this will probably continue for some time to come. But we should garnish our hope and remember Baier’s words, “...the best possible life for everybody cannot be achieved in isolation.”

Maybe I’m an optimist, but it seems that the currents are shifting and a fresh breeze is blowing. Yet, I am also reminded of the pain and suffering of Americans who have struggled and fought to bring the ideal of democracy forward, who have been ethically authentic and witnessed the lack of integrity and rectitude of others. Undergirding the ideal of democracy is an ethics of authenticity which can never be taken for granted. This is something our generation and those who come after us cannot let slip into the murky waters of indefinable values, one issue ethics, and be henceforth diluted by narcissistic leaders with an uncontrollable desire for self-promotion, wealth, and power at any cost.

concealing motives, or who have sequestered their ethics and go along to get along supporting the notion that ethics is a private affair.

And, as we have witnessed, many are susceptible to a herd mentality making ethics little more than an exaggerated emotional reaction to events and issues. Our ethics is thus moved forward in a noncognitive chain of reactions, each building on the other without coherent cause or reason. Consequently, variously positioned and confusing, our ethical acuity has become encrusted with mind-numbing rhetoric — and unacknowledged assumptions, some moral, some not—as it bullies its way through family and social gatherings, political meetings, and through local, state, and national halls of government. Thus, when recommendations are made to apply an ethics of authenticity to business or community leadership practices, many are suspect and unbelieving making leadership acuity difficult to sustain.

There are several clues to this dilemma and difficult to define. They're not only found in the uneasy balance of faith and reason emanating from the Euro-centric Enlightenment, but in the seemingly innocuous mantle of a pragmatic philosophy<sup>13</sup> — as Taylor says, “a problem leaking into our time”— and touted generally as “The American Philosophy” with its call to arms, “the greatest good for the greatest number.” As a “practical” philosophy, pragmatism has mass appeal and utility value and is sometimes defined as “*practicality based on common sense*.” Yet, definitively lacking any moral content, it's easily appropriated for amoral as well as moral purposes. After all, who is to say “what is the greatest good” and “who comprises that ethereal quantity, the greatest number”

Under the guise of pragmatism, what works – ethical or unethical – more often than not is given legitimacy and priority. ***Its context locates its value and its appeal lies in its flexibility.*** Business leaders and politicians must be pragmatic to make “things work,” but it's the “how” and “why” of this process that easily ignores the ethical – the honest, fair, and moral - when under pressure to succeed. Pragmatism has the potential of leaving an ethics of authenticity in the scum of politics and narcissistic business practices as an ideal having no practical value or, at best, just something ethically positive to tangle in front of an unsuspecting group with less than ethical intentions. Contextualism and history are important and to this we should give our attention as we pursue an ethics of authenticity and make an endeavor to validate its meaning.

As America became the center of scientific and industrial achievement, the *utility of reason* was promoted as common sense and pragmatic, as it was, but ***uniquely moral it was not.*** “Utility” as pragmatism or ***utilitarianism*** has a tendency to float in the corrosive air of personal and political expediency, backroom politics, and unethical business practices. As such, utility, when aligned with an ill-defined hope that whatever is deemed by the majority as important, will hopefully morph into what Dewey called “human flourishing”—the best kind of life a person can live.<sup>14</sup>

Like “authenticity,” Dewey's “human flourishing” has been appropriated by both the ethical and unethical; at best, it is a utilitarian ethic, and a ***“morality” by coincidence***, lacking the personal and collective intentionality a deep moral view demands.

Overlooked is that “the greatest good for the greatest number” has undergone a gradual transformation or redefinition and is now understood, broadly, as “the greatest good for those who control America’s wealth.” This is a reality hidden by mass rallies and sloganeering. It is also a hidden philosophy that has undergirded much of politics in American history. In broad strokes, utilitarianism and the subjective relativism it has spawned has done its job as the small percentage of Americans who control America’s politics and economy are the hidden “majority” promoted by a utilitarian logic. What is apparent, but dismissed by the powerful and influential, is that Dewey’s ideal of “human flourishing” — when looking through the eyes of ordinary people, especially minorities — takes on a different and unexpected meaning and so does an ethics of authenticity.

Robert Frost spoke about the American condition in his poem, “A Cabin in the Clearing”:

#### Smoke

They must by now have  
learned the native tongue.  
Why don’t they ask the Red Man where they are?

#### Mist

They often do, and none the wiser for it.  
So do they also ask philosophers  
Who come to look in on them from the pulpit.  
They will ask anyone there is to ask —  
In the fond faith accumulated fact  
Will of itself take fire and light the world up.  
Learning has been a part of their religion.

#### Smoke

If the day ever comes when they know who they are,  
They may know better where they are.  
But who they are is too much to believe  
Either for them or the on looking world.  
They are too sudden to be credible.<sup>16</sup>

### Values Clashes and the Development of Moral Awareness

The questionable business practices of the 19<sup>th</sup> century’s industrial barons and, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, hotbed issues such as feminism, integration, racial discrimination, same-sex marriage, homosexual inclusion, the immigration crisis, and now the emergence of white supremacy groups (in many forms), have brought American ethical beliefs into contact revealing their tensions, differences, and potential violent interactions. Native Americans were early on caught up in this transactional mentality and even today are thought of by some as merely by-products of conquest and the movement of civilization. In terms of an *ethic of utility*, they are thought of as having no practical value and pragmatically, nonhuman.

Ethically disengaged and horizontally oriented how easily it is to forget the past and redefine the present, as some have said, “In our own image.” This is an egocentric predicament infectious to our lives and ethics, but it is more: it is deeply cultural, an ethnocentric anomaly floating tenuously through the heavy air of 21<sup>st</sup> century America and effectively redefining what is meant by Dewey’s notion of “human flourishing” and

*To understand what led to the culture wars of the late 1980s and 90s, one must understand the radical shift in the American political landscape in the 1960s. The sixties gave birth to the New Left who were white Americans that were both young and affluent. There were hundreds of these American youths who voiced dissatisfaction with the promise of American life. Inspired by the civil rights movement and radicalized by the Vietnam War, they committed themselves to leftist activism of one sort or another. This form of counter culturalism was not only a response to the conservative approach that dominated much of America in the twentieth century, but it was also, as author Andrew Hartman put it, an ‘effort to discover new types of community, new family patterns, new sexual mores, new kinds of livelihood, new aesthetic forms, new personal identities, on the far side of politics, the bourgeois home, and the Protestant work ethic.’ The New Left’s emphasis towards racial and social movements such as antiwar, Black Power, feminist, and gay liberation were increasingly being incorporated into mainstream America, a fact that conservative Americans would acknowledge as a major threat.*

*The clash, the culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s.* [https://www.fgcu.edu/aquila/repository/the\\_culture\\_wars.pdf](https://www.fgcu.edu/aquila/repository/the_culture_wars.pdf).

Taylor’s “an ethics of authenticity.” The culture wars of 1980s and 1990s have not gone away but have been resurrected by political and militant forces in the 21<sup>st</sup> century clearly tainting what is meant by “ethics” and “authenticity.” Many of the present-day right-wing movements and their left-wing political adversaries can be directly linked to this unsettled time. They have polarized our thinking and standardized our response, but, as Frost said, we are “none the wiser for it.”

## Reconsiderations

Maybe “authenticity” has always been an abstract concept, an unattainable ideal lost in

*Morality is narrowly concerned with what we ought to do, and not also with what is valuable in itself, or what we should admire or love.... The idea that moral thought should concern itself with our different visions of the qualitatively higher, with strong goods, is never mooted. Awareness of their place in our moral lives has been so deeply suppressed that the thought never seems to occur to many of our contemporaries.*

—Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, p. 84.

the morass of ethical rhetoric and philosophical theory. Even so, given the tenor of our time, a fresh look is needed and should be context specific. Mary Kay

Copeland’s empirical and practical analysis and philosophers like Charles Taylor are important because they challenge us to pause, think, reconsider, and even re-commit ourselves to ethical authenticity’s vision. Recommended is searching for an inclusive ethic – listening to the moral voice within – that does justice to shared opinions and, guided by hope and introspective transparency, utilizes the power of reassessment as a catalyst for dialogical healing.

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But courage will be needed. Being morally authentic is more than following a set of ethical guidelines, either in one's business or in one's life. At its very core, being morally authentic is an activity intentionally undertaken; it is a reconciling journey of healing one's own troubled soul and reaching out and beyond self to families, friends, work associates, and into the community to uplift others, mending past mistakes, and seeking a more universal moral horizon. As Taylor says, it is not only a narrow seeking of what it is good to do, but a life-time effort of discovery—a seeking of the morally best kind of life to live, of what it's good to be. An ethics of authenticity speaks to our character, the moral depth and quality of our living with each other.

Too much we accept at face value without reassessing the **assumptions** veiling the conclusions reached or the behaviors recommended, or without a careful look at the historical context in which an idea, issue, or problem arose. With faith in dialogical civility and with moral resolve and working together in an amiable exchange of views, the often thoughtless beliefs driving our thinking can be unearthed and reassessed as we purposefully build families, organizations, and communities that are ethically sensitive and morally aware. We can begin by asking, "What is this 'greatest good' which utilitarians promote as ethical, and what about those who are left is the scum of 'the least among us?'" "How does this apply to my business or my community involvement?" "How and by what means can I help?" "What can WE do?" and "How can WE bring the powerful and influential change-makers into this process." Giving consideration to these questions – from a moral perspective – will give new meaning to the phrase "the greatest good for the greatest number" while enriching our interpretation of "ethical authenticity."

Morality seems to have moved "inside," perhaps becoming more defensive (protective of self) than overtly expressed, and also becoming not only individualistic and subjective, but dogmatic and unchanging while clinging to the safety of a group and expressing a herd mentality. Consequently, with insecurity and confusion, we hear many saying, "I have my values and you have your values and that's just the way it is; end of discussion." Many are confounded about the hyperbole surrounding the idea of "the American dream and the American way." They are confused and tired of being manipulated. Of course, many are frightened by honest dialogue about their essential values, not wanting to explore, perhaps self-reflectively, their own moral identity or to be queried about their beliefs. Maybe they just distrust what others are saying. So they retreat, seeking emotional and mental relief, into themselves or a like-minded group not wanting to be disturbed by contrary views or be pressured into inserting a wedge between themselves and others.

This everyday situation carries over into the workplace, into community meetings, and into everyday conversations. It perhaps causes a shifting of stools at a local bar or finding others with whom to associate, ignoring old friends, eating alone at lunch, and seeking out the like-minded with whom our essential values are in agreement. It is also causing families to disengage in meaningful conversations over meals and during holidays. Many, perhaps most, unwilling to disturb others or risk criticism or even violence, just leave things as they are. This also prevents leaders in organizations, who

are concerned about associates and employees as “persons,” from entering into conversation with them about values that matter, subsequently diminishing an ethic of authenticity.

Again, Robert Frost observes:

**Mist**

I don't believe the sleepers in this house know where they are.

**Smoke**

They've been here long enough to push the woods back from around the house and part them in the middle with a path.

**Mist**

And still I doubt if they know where they are and I begin to fear they never will. All they maintain the path for is the comfort of visiting with the equally bewildered. Nearer in plight their neighbors than distance.<sup>17</sup>

### Questions Will Not Go Away

Enlightenment thinkers faced criticism and worse as they made an effort to provide new insights into the nature of knowledge, the human mind, and ethics. Some were condemned by the powers of the church and the political leaders the church controlled. Some abdicated and others moved to more enlightened countries. They sought to

*Authenticity does involve a personal aspect; an individual's own created or discovered — not imposed — orientation toward life. But, says [Charles] Taylor, true authenticity also involves a recognition of and an openness to what he calls “horizons of significance — certain larger contexts within which humans move. These contexts might include respect for and benevolence toward others and toward the natural world. They provide a sense of personal connection with a larger political, social, or religious source of meaning.*

<https://www.enotes.com/topics/ethics-authenticity>

release their thinking from past dogmatism and authority, a release many are seeking today. But, as we know, dogmatic, antidemocratic, and unethical views are often wrapped in attractive packages, appealing to our base instincts and not to our “better angels.”

Consequently, seeking the security of like-minded persons we conscientiously avoid those who differ with us. Frequently ensnared by **homogenized thinking**, the echoes we hear have perhaps caused a certain numbing of our ethical sensitivity. Such thinking is highly susceptible to a mob mentality, a dangerous phenomenon and descriptive of much of political chatter in 2020-21. But it is understandable; there is safety in numbers.<sup>18</sup>

Robert Frost concludes:

**Mist**

Listen, they murmur talking in the dark on what should be their daylong theme continued. Putting the lamp out has not put their thought out. Let us pretend the dewdrops from the eaves are you and I

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eavesdropping on their unrest – a mist and smoke eavesdropping *on a haze* and see if we can tell the bass from the soprano.”<sup>19</sup>

Groupthink and standardized thinking seem a natural part of us, so unsurprisingly we hardly notice it. We were challenged by our Enlightenment forefathers, but standardized thinking would not go quietly into the night. As the 19<sup>th</sup> century drew to a close, John Dewey’s<sup>20</sup> “cultural naturalism” would morph into utilitarianism and put standardized reason at the forefront of education creating an **epistemological haze**. The conclusions of Enlightenment thinkers were now being reinterpreted, simplified, codified, and accepted as the hallmark of truth and meaning. Statistical correlation, with positive and negative values factored in and easily manipulated, would come to dominate both “truth” and “fact” leaving their “interpretation” to qualified experts who would then explain and justify their conclusions. Statistics now became the hallmark of both empirical and rational dialogue unwittingly bending to the subjective assumptions of utilitarian logic.<sup>21</sup>

Thus installed, utilitarian thinking, with its “greatest good for the greatest number” mantle and interpreted statistically, became the go to solution for educational, political, and community leaders and planners. It was not until the reactions of thinkers called “postmoderns” that the chains of authoritarianism and the widely accepted solutions to ethical and moral problems were **slightly** loosened. Making many uneasy, postmodernism may have unwittingly reinforced the single-minded views and solutions of the past, dogmatically stated, and effectively decreasing hope for a dialectical exchange of ideas. This was true in the parlors of educational decision-makers who continued to judge teaching and learning through the taxonomy of statistically-based test scores; it was especially true among the clergy who, already threatened by the secular climate of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, began to label postmodern thinkers as the coming of the “antichrist.”<sup>22</sup> Certainly, a moral haze seems to have settled over the American cultural landscape, but some continue to talk – “Putting the lamp out has not put their thought out.”

*It is not enough that I cautiously risk my life to prevent [a crime]; if it happens, and if I was there, and if I survive where the other is killed, I know from a voice within myself: I am guilty of being still alive.*

—Karl Jaspers, *The Question of German Guilt* Fordham University Press; 2nd edition (September 1, 2001).

## Conclusion

Abraham Lincoln’s first inaugural address was delivered on Monday, March 4, 1861. Desperately wishing to avoid this terrible conflict, Lincoln ended with this impassioned plea:

*I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land will yet swell the chorus of the*

*Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.*<sup>23</sup>

Avi Lifschitz reconsiders the changing meanings of the Enlightenment, both to those who created it and those historians who have since attempted to define it saying,

*Kant's essay of 1784, 'What is Enlightenment?' opens with the statement 'Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity'. This is a plea for independent thinking, as expressed in his call 'dare to know' (sapere aude). It was a plea to break the bonds of religious belief and mythology that had dominated Europe for many hundreds of years and turn to scientific and rational thinking that he believed would become the engines of progress. Kant saw his own time as a not yet enlightened age, but rather an age of enlightenment. According to this view, the Enlightenment might well still be a work in progress.*<sup>24</sup>

Consequently, achieving perspective on authentic leadership as a type of values-based leadership leaves open the question implied by Kant: "Is the Enlightenment process still moving forward or has it been high-jacked by those with dissimilar motives moving us to reconsider the nature of ethics and value, especially the idea of 'ethical authenticity' as impractical?" Our reconsiderations lead to Kant's concern and parenthetically to a concern expressed by Charles Taylor: "Do we have beliefs and values that have lured us into limited thinking, unexamined assumptions, and narcissistic behaviors about ourselves and our relationships with others?"<sup>25</sup> As our values have been politicized, capitalized, and institutionalized, authentic leadership sways in the balance.

Yet, there is hope, for, as Taylor reminds us, "We are embodied agents, living in dialogical conditions, inhabiting time in a specifically human way, that is, making sense of our lives as a story that connects the past from which we have come to our future projects."<sup>26</sup> Perhaps Taylor was being idealistic, and maybe some of us have joined with his idealism, but he understood that our ideals and visions, and especially our capacity for moral discernment, are the engineers of moral veracity. Even more so is the courage to lead families, schools and businesses, governmental and financial bodies, ethically and transformationally, and engage in value-focused dialogues. Kant challenged his contemporaries, as we ought to be challenged, *to dare to know and take the risk of discovery, exercise reflective criticism, and accept the responsibilities of freedom and autonomy*; to affirm what Taylor calls "the affirmation of ordinary life."

This affirmation acknowledges our intrinsic moral worth and that no standards, commandments, or constitutions — regardless of their origin — are able to coerce morality out of immorality or excite a narcissistic person, corporation, or nation to abandon innate self-interests. The existential reality is that our *inner haze* is not so easily brushed away. Achieving ethical authenticity, even in the broadest sense, asks that we maintain the possibility that people can change; that we, and those in our immediate environment, are able to renew the moral sensitivities lying naturally within ourselves in a reconciling journey to a moral norm that is universally participatory. Although no moral doctrine is needed to recognize the depth of human worth or need, perhaps a moral vision is required for individuals and nations to do something about it. This vision can be

labeled as “an ethics of authenticity” revealing our existential obligations to others in reconciling behaviors.

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## Optimistic Leadership for the 21st Century and Beyond



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### Abstract

*This paper proposes a future-driven leadership theory — the optimistic leadership theory — suitable for leading global organizations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. The author argues that a new leadership approach is needed for these organizations due to the complexities that come with globalization, including the high need for knowledge and experience, distance decay, and cultural amalgamation. Five leadership approaches (Visionary Leadership, Differentiated Leadership, Servant Leadership, Flexible Leadership, and Reflective Leadership) are identified as the components of optimistic leadership. Following a review of the rare literature on these five leadership approaches, they are found to constitute the best determinants of successful future-driven leadership. There is an overlap of some approaches and some are within other leadership theories such as transformational leadership. A model of optimistic leadership is suggested, and a test based on the variables is proposed.*

### Introduction

The need for effective leadership is more critical in today's organizations than ever before as globalization and technology have made 21st-century organizations more intricate. Most people in their adult lives are concerned about the type of leadership present. Accordingly, leadership has become a too complex function due to the tremendous wealth of variables in this age of globalization. A countless number of leadership theories exist in the literature, and new leadership theories are proposed each passing day. Yet, only a few leadership theories have gained substantial prominence in the leadership literature (Banks et al., 2018).

With the overwhelming amount of leadership theories and with an increasingly complex leadership arena, it becomes extremely difficult for practicing leaders to fully understand and apply the right type of leadership their organization needs. This difficulty in organizational leadership is far from over as we look forward to an even more complex

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leadership terrain of virtual leadership with the growing virtuality of global organizations (Schmidt, 2019). The current paper seeks to minimize the challenge of leading complex future organizations by proposing an ultimate leadership theory that is more suited to the nature of today's — and future — global organizations. The proposed leadership theory, *the optimistic leadership theory*, will be less of a theory and more of a theoretical guide for leading global 21<sup>st</sup>-century organizations and is composed of other leadership models.

### The Optimistic Leader

As the number of leadership theories multiply, practicing leaders find it increasingly difficult to study profoundly and utilize a particular leadership theory in their leadership function. There is, therefore, a need to condense and make simple the body of relevant knowledge of leadership theories in a manner that makes it easy to effectively apply them to real organizations. The optimistic leadership theory is a future-driven leadership theory that fills the gap of the overwhelming multiplicity of novel leadership theories in the literature by taking from previous theories the best aspects that are suitable for the current age of information and experience overload.

Leadership continues to evolve, and the leadership styles suited for yesteryear organizations would not be suitable for inspiring the current and future generations (Anderson et al., 2016; Rudolph et al., 2018). Additionally, a particular leadership approach's success in one organizational setting does not guarantee success in another. Therefore, leaders must apply varied techniques to the same situation and maintain a psychological state of confidence towards goal achievement — leaders need to be optimistic. It has been found that optimism generates hope, leading to better productivity and greater vivacity in the workplace (Abid et al., 2021).

There are five components of optimistic leadership: Visionary leadership, Differentiated leadership, Servant leadership, Flexible leadership, and Reflective leadership. The totality of these components would envelop all other leadership theories. For instance, differentiated leadership, as will be discussed later, constitutes components of situational and contingency theories of leadership while visionary leadership is a characteristic of transformational and charismatic leadership (Kasanah, 2019).

### Visionary Leadership (VL)

Visionary leadership is the first variable built into the optimistic leadership theory and is the most important contributor to optimistic leadership. The optimistic leader must first be visionary. Visionary leadership is the type of leadership in which the future image of the group or organization is envisioned and regularly communicated to followers in order to effectively mobilize and motivate the followers (Van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). It is a commonly known fact in organization theory that leadership without a vision would amount to little or no results. Visionary leaders are usually perceived as transformational and charismatic because such leaders “inspire others to move beyond their self-interests to [seek] what is best for the group or organization” (Taylor et al., 2014, p. 566). Having a vision has been the sine qua non of effective leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but even more so would it be for the success of future leaders. Therefore, it is imperative for a

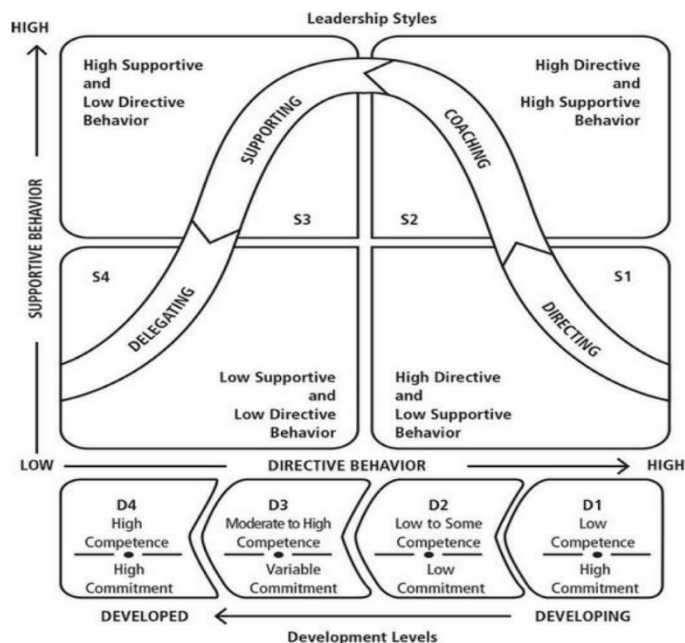
future-driven leadership theory – such as the optimistic leadership theory – to have visionary leadership as one of its components.

Multiple studies have found that visionary leadership results in 21<sup>st</sup> century organizational effectiveness in all kinds of organizations. In a study of nonprofit organizations, Taylor et al. (2014) found a significant relationship between visionary leadership and the perception of effectiveness in the organizations. Nwachukwu et al. (2017) conducted similar studies in the leadership of micro financial institutions and found that visionary leadership positively mediated different facets (organizational atmosphere, corporate social performance, employee satisfaction, and community and customer satisfaction) of the organizations, though at an insignificant level. In no other sector is visionary leadership more imperative than it is in the education sector of all global economies. To meet up with the current efforts to improve the quality of education worldwide, visionary leadership researchers such as Prestiadi et al. (2019) argue that visionary leadership should be integrated into total quality management (TQM) of education in order to improve the quality of education in the current era.

### Differentiated Leadership (DL)

Differentiated leadership constitutes the second most important component of optimistic leadership. Differentiated leadership constitutes leadership in which the leader treats subordinates differently depending on their individual situations as well as their developmental levels. This conception falls in line with the situational leadership theory where leadership styles are changed to match the developmental levels of followers (Northouse, 2019). *Figure 1* provides a schematic illustration of the Situational leadership model. As the figure shows, a leader uses different leadership approaches (Directing, Coaching, Supporting, and Delegating) depending on the follower's developmental stages (D1, D2, D3, and D4, respectively). As a follower moves from D1 through D4, the leader must also change from Directing through Delegating leadership styles. Followers would not move through the developmental stages simultaneously. Therefore, the leader cannot use the same leadership style on all followers at the same time. Thus, the Situational leadership approach depicted in *Figure 1* is a representation of one

**Figure 1: The Situational Leadership Model as Differentiated Leadership**



Source: Northouse, P. G. (2019). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th ed), Sage

form of differentiated leadership.

Differentiated leadership is a conception brought into the leadership arena from the field of education. As commonsense dictates, the global education sector is currently undergoing the fastest evolution compared to all other sectors as education has been deemed to be the key to global development. Only through knowledge and understanding by education and information can any advancement be possible now and in the future. It therefore makes sense for an education theory to be applied to leadership. Differentiation in education is an instructional method in which different instructional approaches are utilized in the teaching of students with different abilities, likes, dislikes, personalities, etc., in the same classroom, but which ultimately leads to all students meeting the same learning standards (Tomlinson, 2001).

In the area of leadership, differentiation can similarly be achieved by employing different leadership approaches to lead followers with different characteristics. These characteristics could include task developmental level, educational level, age, gender, cultural background, beliefs and norms, etc.

There appears to be mixed outcomes to the practice of differentiated leadership. Two studies in the Chinese organizational context have found positive effects of differentiated leadership on organizational performance. A study by Tung et al. (2019) found a positive association between differentiated leadership and group social bonding, leading to high performance of groups. Li et al. (2017) found a similar relationship on follower trust. When differentiated leadership is not properly practiced, however, it could result in the perception of a lack of organizational justice. In groups, this could lead to decreased group effectiveness when group members' morale decreases due to the perception of divergent treatment from the leader (Wu et al., 2010).

### **Servant Leadership (SL)**

The third facet of the optimistic leadership model is Servant leadership. Whichever leadership approach a leader uses, the new age of leadership demands that leaders be like servants; the leader is there to serve and not to be served. Servant leadership, as defined by Eva et al. (2019), is a "holistic leadership approach that engages followers in multiple dimensions (e.g., relational, ethical, emotional, spiritual), such that they are empowered to grow into what they are capable of becoming" (p. 111). With the servant leadership approach, the leader prioritizes the growth and wellbeing of followers, thereby increasing their engagement and effectiveness. Gandolfi and Stone (2018) argue that servant leadership meets all the criteria necessary for effective leadership.

It has been argued that servant leadership was the key to the success of many renown historic leaders. Mahatma Gandhi and Jesus Christ are two best examples of admirable leaders whose admiration was a result of their servant leadership approach. While they were religious leaders, many lessons can be learned from their leadership and applied in the business and political contexts. A key element that attracts admiration of servant leaders like Jesus and Gandhi is their adherence to ethics and values (Russell, 2001). Thus, servant leadership is the value-based ethical leadership style most required to

save organizations in this age of globalization. Any corporate leader in a socially responsible corporation must incorporate these values and ethics into their leadership.

### **Reflective Leadership (RL)**

The optimistic leader needs to be reflective. Being reflective would permit the leader to evaluate and adjust their behaviors to meet organizational objectives. Only when a leader identifies their weaknesses and strengths, and their past mistakes, would they be able to fine-tune their leadership towards the desired direction of the company's vision. In this light, the optimistic leader becomes the leader with a high degree of emotional intelligence. Although the leader may not initially be emotionally intelligent, through reflection, they can increase their emotional intelligence and create high performing organizations. Therefore, reflective leadership requires that the leader engages in the practices that are associated with emotional intelligence, to wit: self-awareness, self-reflection or mindfulness, and personal wisdom (Castelli, 2016).

Castelli (2016) conducted a thorough review of the literature on reflective leadership as one of the leadership behaviors being increasingly prevalent in the leadership literature recently. The researcher's survey indicated that a reflective leader is the leader who is always thinking about their own thoughts and deeds. Most leadership theories attribute external characteristics, such as charisma, to the leadership function. This is usually not the case with the reflective leader. The reflective leader would listen to their inner self, and by so doing would base their leadership on "internal characteristics such as critical thinking, long-term planning and finding innovative ways to solve problems with an equal focus on people and profit" (p. 218).

The literature indicates substantial outcomes for reflective leadership. When a leader practices reflective leadership, it would result in increased employee motivation, improved interest and effort, and enhanced performance of employees (Castelli, 2016). These are all results that would make a leader be regarded as a highly effective leader. Any leader would be satisfied when their organization has a highly motivated workforce where people are enthusiastic and work at optimal performance level since such a work environment would imply that followers trust and perceive their leader as a person of integrity; thus, the leader is perceived as a role model by followers (Schwartz & Castelli, 2014).

Practical implications of reflective leadership also abound. First, by practicing reflective leadership, the leader creates an environment that is safe and trusted, thus resulting in the high motivation that has been identified as a critical skill for effective leadership (Sarros et al., 2014). Second, being reflective results in open communication being valued in the organization. People communicate more carefully when the communication is open, and the leader empathizes better with subordinates. According to Cameron (2012), the performance of employees would be better in a work environment where communication is open and emotionally supported. Third, through reflective leadership, the level of confidence and subordinates' self-esteem will grow, which motivates employees to act towards expected results (Schoel et al., 2011). Lastly, reflective

leadership respects the different global cultures and norms and gives avenue for organization members to challenge beliefs and assumptions.

### **Flexible Leadership (FL)**

The fifth component of optimistic leadership is flexibility. Flexibility ensures that the leader easily changes their approach when and where appropriate. By being flexible, the leader can find different approaches to solve the same problem – thus, the leader acts in a transformational manner. A flexible leader would understand when a behavior or an action deviates from the path towards the organizational goals and would quickly take corrective action to get things back on track. It is by being flexible that the leader would be able to employ a differentiated approach to leadership. Because of the many characteristics, flexible leadership may also be referred to as adaptive leadership, agile leadership, or versatile leadership (Yukl, 2008; Yukl & Mahsud, 2010).

According to Yukl (2008), flexible leadership applies to flexibility in the leader's behaviors, yet the use of flexible leadership does not limit itself to behavioral flexibility. The researcher opined that flexible leaders can use “tough love” (p. 4) skills to balance between relationship and task attainment values, thus flexible leadership can solve the Blake and Mouton's relationship-orientation versus production-orientation conundrum of the Michigan Studies. The researcher also indicated that flexibility in leadership could be a way to balance between stability and change through a process called “practical vision” (p. 4). Through behavioral flexibility, the leader can be able to effectively resolve conflicts of interest that oftentimes exist in the managerial position. Thus, flexible leadership is essential for all leadership levels but is more so in the current global technological age of organizations.

Recent studies have found an association between flexible leadership and organizational success. Hantoosh (2021) tested this hypothesis on education leaders and found that education leaders who practice flexible leadership mostly succeed. This result is a breakthrough given that education leadership is one of the most difficult in the current age and time (Techo, 2016). In the political leadership arena, a study by Lees-Marshment and Smolović (2018) explored the leadership of ministers and suggested flexibility as an added component that could improve on their effectiveness. Baron et al. (2018) conducted a similar study on leaders from varied sectors, including student leadership, and concluded that effective leaders today need to acquire skills that can enhance their flexibility.

### **Measuring Optimistic Leadership**

Measurement of optimistic leadership would entail measuring each of its individual components. There are already tests for each of the variables that constitute optimistic leadership. A thorough and complete test for each component will ultimately result to a test for the optimistic leadership theory. A test should commence by testing for visionary leadership. A leader without a vision will by no means fit in the category of an optimistic leader. Therefore, only after a leader passes the visionary leadership test should a test of other variables be conducted. An empirical test of the theory could be quantitative or

qualitative. In measuring optimistic leadership, an instrument could be designed that seeks to answer questions about each category, such as the following 12 questions:

***Visionary leadership***

1. Do all organization members of the collective (e.g., team, organization, nation) know the collective's vision?
2. Does the leader communicate their leadership vision to followers?

***Differentiated leadership***

3. Does the leader use a variety of approaches in the same situation?
4. Does the leader change their approach to match the situation and the evolution of followers?
5. Are followers treated differently (in line with status, qualifications, personality, age, etc.) by the leader?

***Servant leadership***

6. Does the leader take charge in solving every problem that followers encounter?
7. Does the leader empower followers?

***Flexible leadership***

8. Is the leader approachable?
9. Does the leader engage in continuous communication through which they exchange knowledge, ideas, and trends in order to achieve set goals?

***Reflective leadership***

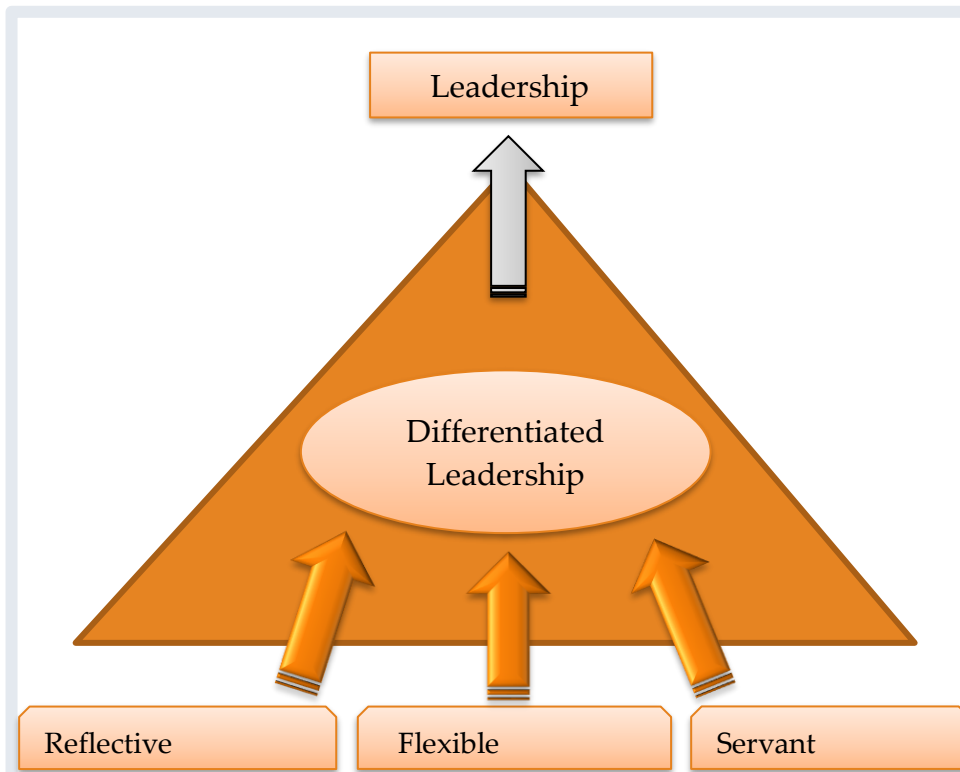
10. Does the leader value open communications?
11. Does the leader build self-esteem and confidence in followers?
12. Does the leader respect the different cultures and customs of the collective?

The above questions cover the dimensions to be measured in a test and they may be rephrased and expanded on by the researcher. The leader and their subordinates must answer all the questions in the affirmative for the leader to be classified as optimistic. The categories above are arranged in order of the importance each contributes to optimistic leadership — visionary leadership being the most important contributor. Thus, the order of the questions is important in administering the test.

## Discussion

The proposed optimistic leadership model, drawing from its components, is a global theory of leadership for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. Although there is a multiplicity of leadership theories in the literature, each theory has been conceptualized to work well in a particular cultural setting but not necessarily in other cultures or contexts (Dickson et al., 2012). The optimistic leadership theory envisions a future where cultures come together to constitute a global culture as distance decay dictates.

Whatever the society and the cultural background of an individual, they would be satisfied and motivated by a leader who is visionary, reflective, flexible, and modifies their leadership approach to suit the situation, and the group and individual characteristics. Every organization and individual would find interest in a group where success is evident.



*Figure 2: A Model for Optimistic Leadership*

A model for the optimistic leadership theory is presented graphically in *Figure 2*. The graphical representation shows the composition of optimistic leadership with each node made up of the five variables describing optimistic leadership. The figure shows that optimistic leadership begins with – and is centered around – a leadership vision. The leader’s vision for the group and organization drives their leadership approaches. The foundation of optimistic leadership is composed of three leadership styles (Servant leadership, Flexible leadership, and Reflective leadership) while leadership is differentiated to reach the vision.

### Conclusion

The degree to which globalization is affecting our communities and organizations has made the need for effective leadership more critical today and in the future. While earlier leadership theories remain relevant, there is a need for a universal theory of leadership that is better suited for leading global teams in the age of information and experience. The current paper proposed the optimistic leadership theory that is an approach for successfully leading the interconnected global society we live in today and in the future. It has been argued that leadership optimism can only be realized when the leader leads in a manner where success is guaranteed. Therefore, five variables determine optimistic leadership: Visionary leadership, Differentiated leadership, Servant leadership, Flexible leadership, and Reflective leadership. Optimistic leadership is rooted on these five variables; however, visionary leadership constitutes the cornerstone for

optimistic leadership. In this light, optimistic leadership may be regarded as a subset of charismatic leadership though they are completely two distinct constructs.

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## Can Infusing Servant Leadership into Supervision Mitigate Against Employee Burnout?

### Abstract

**Purpose:** The present conceptual paper sets out to answer the question, can a model of servant leadership be infused within supervision in order to mitigate employee burnout and negative stressful experiences in the health and social care sector?

**Design/Approach:** A brief targeted review of the literature was undertaken to assess the extent of burnout in the health and social care sectors. The supervision literature was also explored for possible gaps in effectiveness. The outcomes associated with servant leadership were distilled, focusing on employee wellbeing and how these are linked to burnout.

**Findings:** The literature suggests that burnout and related concepts such as secondary trauma and compassion fatigue impact these professions disproportionately. At the same time, servant leadership is suggested to mitigate some of these factors. The author presents a conceptual model of servant leadership supervision consisting of an ideographic model of servant leadership, Servant Leadership Scale-28 (SLS-28), using the most recent meta-analysis defining this construct, and previously validated measures in the extant literature to inform its design. A Servant Leadership Supervision Scale (SLSS) is also presented aligning its use to several of the core characteristics of servant leadership practice.

**Research Implications/Limitations:** This conceptual model may help reduce burnout of health and social care sector employees. It is the first articulated servant leadership supervision model specifically put forward to reduce burnout in this population. Limitations are considered in light of the conceptual paper having no primary data.

**Practical Implications:** A model of servant leadership supervision that can be infused into health and social care supervision.

## Introduction

As many as 70% of individuals have experienced at least one traumatic event and 30.5% of individuals have been exposed to four or more such incidence (Benjet et al., 2016). Thus, we can extrapolate that a significant percent of people in the general workforce have emotional support needs. However, the health and social care sectors are characterised by additional high levels of employee burnout globally, with as many as 43% of the healthcare work force experiencing these phenomena (Medscape, 2020; Schaufeli, 2018). Infusing Servant Leadership into the supervisory process may be one way to mitigate against some of the negative impacts associated with burnout. Thus, the present paper offers a trans-theoretical model of supervision based on servant leadership, that can be infused into the supervisory approach of those working within clinical and psychosocial roles in health and social care settings. As such, it is considered a professional supervisory approach linked to professional practice across systems of care.

Health and social care professions represent a broad and diverse group of practitioners working with those presenting with medical and psychosocial issues. Thus, while professional training is domain specific, there is little consistency in the type of supervision provided within or between each profession. In some instances, a supervisory qualification is required, however, in many cases seniority and practice-based experiences are enough. One method to help prepare supervisors for supervisory roles could be servant leadership, which has been demonstrated as an evidence-based leadership approach (Eva et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019). However, until very recently there has been inconsistency in its definition, and no supervisory framework currently exists. Thus, the purpose of the present paper is twofold:

- *Firstly, to articulate a conceptual model of servant leadership based on the latest definitions of this approach and some of the core characteristics within the literature.*
- *Secondly, to offer up a supervisory model of servant leadership that infuses the core characteristics of this approach into its practice in order to potentially mitigate against employee burnout.*

## Supervision in Health and Social Care

While the roles and tasks of health and social care employees can vary significantly, supervisory processes can be considered more generic in nature. Although numerous definitions exist of supervision in the health and social care literature, with differential priorities, most will share similar themes and functions. Namely, supervision is a learning and development environment, provided by a more senior person of the same or similar profession. Supervision is reflective and developmental, relationship-based, and focuses on the acquisition of skills, knowledge, and competencies in order to provide ethically-sound client work, the achievement of organisational goals, and that the supervisees' wellbeing and needs are being considered (Hawkins & Shohet, 2012; Morrison, 2005;

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Watkins, 2020). Consistent with the above summary of supervision, Proctor (2001), outlined one of the most popular models of supervision, the three functions of supervision: normative (managerial), formative (educational), and restorative (supportive).

Watkins (2020) considers supervision the key signature pedagogies of psychiatry and other related mental health professions. In a Scottish study, Allbutt et al. (2017) argued that there are inconsistencies across the broader health and social care sectors when related to supervision and supervisory practices. Specifically, they suggest that a “lack of professional, organisational or local commitment to implement robust supervisory structures and processes was seen as a major barrier to supervision” (p.1).

In an American context, Evans et al. (2016) make the case that due to a general lack of requirements for counselling supervisors to have specific training in supervisory practices, leadership models should be considered and integrated into supervisory competencies. The benefits of infusing leadership models into counselling supervision are numerous because this is “a cost-effective solution to addressing the lack of formalized training to supervisors in the field” (p.5). Considering that much of the clinical supervision provided to therapists would be reflective of that within the health and social care sector in general, it would seem conceptually sound to extend this call to these professions also. Thus, the present paper seeks to do just that.

### Defining Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is a leadership approach articulated by Robert Greenleaf...a paradoxical approach, serving to lead. Greenleaf (1970) posits that:

*The Servant-Leader is servant first. ...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. ...The best test, and difficult to administer is this: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit, or at least not further be harmed? (p.7).*

Although there has been a proliferation of servant leadership theories in the literature, they all converge and share similar ideas, behaviours, and characteristics. Servant leadership has service as a first priority, focuses on listening to employees, self-awareness in the leader, and considers how to think about others, situations, and organisations. It is this moral (Lemoine, et al., 2019) and ethical (Hartnell et al., 2020) position, that is focused on others, and characterised by trust, fairness, and high-quality relationships (Lee et al., 2019), that is at the heart of servant leadership. Two meta-analyses demonstrate servant leadership as an evidence-based leadership approach, with predictive validity above and beyond transformational leadership (Hoch et al., 2019) and authentic and ethical leadership, (Lemoine et al., 2019).

At the same time, the Greenleaf definition is a fairly abstract description of what this approach entails. Yet, it is also one of the best available definitions. Perhaps for this reason, researchers set about distilling the pertinent characteristics of servant

leadership. Thus, there has been a proliferation of theoretical models added to the literature (e.g., Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Keith, 2008; Liden et al., 2008; Page & Wong, 2000; Reed et al., 2011; Spears, 1995; Sendjaya et al., 2008; van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011).

The defining philosophy of servant leadership concerns itself with putting the needs of employees before that of the leader and organisational objectives, and developing employees to and grow personally and professionally (Liden et al., 2008; Spears, 1995). It is this primary focus of servant leadership that differentiates it from other leadership approaches (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2001; Sendjaya et al., 2008). Servant leadership is a social model of leadership founded on strong ethical and moral principles. Servant leaders deconstruct traditional power structures and hierarchical systems in an organisation by inverting the traditional pyramid structure. This changes the direction of organisational energy, which is now flowing upwards in the direction of employees and clients (Blanchard, 2001). By focusing on serving as a first priority, servant leaders ignite a cycle that leads to employees reciprocating this behaviour to the leader, colleagues and stakeholders, leading to employee wellbeing, and organisational effectiveness.

This leadership philosophy is certainly congruent with the work of those in the health and social care sectors. Indeed, it may operationalise many organisations' missions and values. That is, these organisations are designed to work with important social issues such as health, poverty alleviation, and psychosocial problems. Therefore, the personal values of the leader should embody these issues. As Buckingham et al. (2014, p.10) note:

*Being clear what your values are, adhering to them, being passionate about them, being transparent about them, and having alignment between personal and organisational/sectoral values. Values based leadership, it was suggested, requires emotional investment. This was seen as particularly important for third sector leadership.*

Harvey (2001, p.38) suggests that for servant leaders: "chasing profits is peripheral; the real point of business is to serve as one of the institutions through which society develops and exercises the capacity for constructive action." Moreover, servant leaders have as their primary concern, the growth of employees, the consumer stakeholders, and then the organisation and the bottom line. Hartnell et al. (2020) suggest that servant leaders do have task achievement as an ethical and moral obligation to all stakeholders. But it is the care and involvement of employees that takes precedence, many organisational outcomes are indirectly impacted by this type of leadership approach (Eva et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019; Parris & Peachy, 2012). Several of these outcomes are directly related to employee wellbeing, and thus, when used in supervision, they can possibly mitigate against issues of burnout and stress in the workplace.

### **Burnout in Health and Social Care**

Burn out, compassion fatigue, and secondary traumatic stress are significant issues for health and social care employees (Benfante et al., 2020; Benjet et al., 2016; Medscape,

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2020; Schaufeli, 2018). While often used as interchangeable terms each construct is defined differently with different and overlapping characteristics. For the purpose of clarity, the following definitions and descriptions are provided. Secondary trauma or vicarious trauma as it is also called, involves negative changes in the practitioners view of self, others, and the world as a result of prolonged empathic engagement with individuals' trauma-related thoughts, memories, and emotions. Indeed, it can also manifest as intrusive thoughts as well as behavioural and emotional manifestations in practitioners (McCann & Perlman, 1990). Secondary trauma can be differentiated from compassion fatigue and burnout because it is a construct specific to those working with trauma survivors. As such, it may be more prevalent in counsellors, psychologists, social workers and psychiatrists in the health and social care sectors.

Compassion fatigue is defined as empathic strain and exhaustion resulting from caring for people in some type of distress. While the abovementioned practitioners suffer from compassion fatigue, other helping practitioners such as nurses, doctors, and first responders also do. Symptoms can manifest much like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. However, unlike secondary trauma exposure, compassion fatigue is not thought to impact cognitive distortions in the same way. In their systematic review, Cocker and Joss (2016), suggest that compassion fatigue can be described as the convergence of secondary traumatic stress and cumulative burnout.

Burnout is defined as a persistent state of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy as a result of work-related stress (Maslach et al., 2001). The central tenant of burnout is emotional exhaustion due to high work demands and often presents as frequent absenteeism, chronic irresponsibility, in addition to underperformance on clinical and administrative functions. Williamson et al. (2020, p.1) suggest that *“burnout is more usually related to the demands of work (including caregiving and studying) and its contextual components, such as long hours, insufficient support or control, and heavy workload, than the specific nature of work involved.”* As such, burnout is a general construct to which all members of the health and social care sectors are susceptible. While each construct is defined differently, there is much overlap in the symptoms and impact each construct will have on an employee's wellbeing, and work life. At the same time, the type of supports that supervision can put in place will be similar, and having a Servant Leadership supervisory approach is one way organisations can support employees experiencing these stressful events.

It is somewhat ironic that those who look after our health are those who are most at risk of psychological distress. Maslach and Jackson (1996), inform us that burnout is characterized by a sense of diminished personal accomplishment. Moreover, lack of decision-making ability, poor training, high caseloads, and low support are antecedents to burnout (Morse et al., 2012). Servant leadership, and servant leadership supervision with its developmental focus, high support, and promotion of autonomy, may be one way to mitigate against some of these issues. As Greenleaf (1970, p.5) articulates;

*A servant-leader focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong. While traditional leadership generally involves the accumulation and exercise of power by one at the 'top of the pyramid,' servant*

*leadership is different. The servant-leader shares power, puts the needs of others first, and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible.*

During research with 600 social workers, Acker (2010) found a positive association with burnout and physical health morbidities. Burnout has also been associated with addiction issues in health and social care professionals (Pedersen, et al., 2016). Landrum et al. (2010) concluded that employee feelings of burnout significantly predicted lack of service user involvement and participation in their treatment. Holmqvist and Jeanneau (2006) demonstrated that burnout is also significantly associated with negative and rejecting feelings by nurses towards service users. This is concerning when prevalence rates from international literature suggest that burnout is estimated at 40% in nurses (Brand et al., 2010).

Robinson-Keilig (2014) found that secondary traumatic stress has been associated with withdrawal from work in stressful situations and the avoidance of interactions with service users. At the same time, Bride et al. (2009) found 36% of participants in their study avoided traumatized clients to different extents. This represents a serious issue across professional practice with implications for health outcomes for clients, and ethical issues for practitioners.

Compassion fatigue has been linked to avoidance behaviours, including increased sick leave (Toppinen-Tanner et al., 2005) and absence and turnover (Morse et al., 2012). Also, secondary trauma is associated with lower levels of commitment (Asag-Gau & Van Dierdendock, 2011; Bride & Kintzle, 2011), burnout is correlated with dissatisfaction in the workplace (Scanlan & Still, 2013). Research analysing turnover in 42 mental health facilities in American cities, (Buckack et al., 2017) found that agencies lost as much as 26% of their employees annually to turnover. A British work-related stress and wellbeing report (*Health and Safety Executive*, 2020) may help us understand possible implications of these statistics by informing us that rates of stress, anxiety, and depression within health and social care professions is 2,350 per 100,000, amounting to 104,000 cases during 2019-2020.

The research suggests that work-related burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary trauma are key predictors of morbidity in employees, negative outcomes for service users, and impact upon organisational outcomes differentially. Thus, exploring methods to mitigate against these issues is extremely important. Effective leadership and supervision may be two methods that can be utilised to limit such issues, and servant leadership with its focus on others may specifically assist with limiting some of the antecedents of burn out as cited previously, (Morse et al., 2012). The general servant leadership outcome literature points to several ways in which this approach can help improve wellbeing in employees.

### **Servant Leadership Outcomes**

The following discusses some of the outcomes associated with servant leadership. Especially, this leadership approach is correlated with more trusting and open supervision relationships (Chatbury et al., 2011; Senjaya & Pekerti, 2010; Zhao et al.,

2016). Sokoll (2014) demonstrated that employees exhibited a strong commitment to their supervisor when the supervisor had a servant leader's approach. Other outcomes include reduced employee turnover (Babakus et al., 2011; Zhao et al., 2016; Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2016); increased employee job satisfaction (Mayer et al., 2008; Schneider & George, 2011; Chan & Mak, 2014); psychological safety (Chughtai, 2016; Schaubroeck et al., 2011; Yan & Xaio, 2016); and employee wellbeing (Jaramillo et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2019; Rieke et al., 2008). As an added incentive, servant leadership is viewed as being very important for effective leadership across cultures, with a large study (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012) consisting of 12,681 cases spread across 59 societies illustrating its endorsement. Given the ever-increasing multicultural demographics in health and social care sectors, servant leadership and servant leadership supervision may act as a "universal leadership language."

### **Servant Leadership and Burnout**

Employees who perceive characteristics of servant leadership in their supervisors are significantly less likely to experience feelings of burnout (Babakus et al., 2011; Rude, 2003, 2004; Upadaya et al., 2016). Upadaya et al. (2016) demonstrated that servant leadership predicted a lack of burnout, improved work engagement, and better life satisfaction. Bobbio and Manganelli (2015) also demonstrated the mediating impact of servant leadership on burnout in nurses. While there is still a paucity of direct studies exploring burnout specifically, the general outcomes studies cited previously cover many of the domains also considered to impact and be impacted by burnout.

### ***The Present Model***

There has been a proliferation of servant leadership models within the literature, although welcome additions to the extant literature. Mahon (2020) argues that no value has been added to the average practitioners understanding and practice of servant leadership. Therefore, the present conceptual framework is put forward to fill this gap using the latest understanding and definition of servant leadership from meta-analysis (Eva et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019). Thus, the starting point for the present model is based on Eva's (et al., p.114) servant leadership definition:

*(1) other-oriented approach to leadership (2) manifested through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs and interests, (3) and outward reorienting of their concern for self towards concern for others within the organization and the larger community.*

Additionally, Lee's (et al., 2019) meta-analysis suggests that the following three ideas need to be practiced in order for servant leadership to be transmitted to followers; trust, fairness, and high-quality relationships. Taken together, both research findings inform the current model in conjunction with seven core characteristics distilled from the literature.

In essence, these characteristics are utilised to operationalise the definition and three ideas outlined by both meta-analyses. While other characteristics can be, and are used, the present model is the first to take into consideration this latest research definition

and ideas and incorporate it into a model that would seem to be consistent with the core values and practices in health and social care work. Anderson and Sun (2015, p.6) that “studies that have developed measures for servant leadership have elicited 43 overlapping dimensions.” Sendjaya (2003) identified 100 characteristics in the extant literature. Parris and Peachy (2012) suggest that previous definitions of this leadership approach has been vague, and thus, servant leadership has been kept open to a wider population of people. It is the author’s position that once the key definition as set out by Eva et al. (2020) and the three ideas of trust, fairness, and high-quality relationships (Lee et al., 2019) are operationalised, the characteristics used do not have to be prescriptive. In this way, previous models are not dismantled, thereby keeping servant leadership open to a wide audience.

For these reasons, the author puts forward the Servant Leadership Scale-28 (SLS-28) which incorporates the definition, ideas, and use characteristics that would be most familiar to those in the health and social care sector. Using previously psychometrically-validated items from several measures in the literature (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Dierendonck, 2011; Ehrhart, 2004; Liden, 2008), and a conceptual paper, the author has constructed the SLS-28.

While not considered a psychometrically-reliably sound instrument, it does serve an ideographic purpose for developing and tracking these characteristics in Servant Leaders. The characteristics are: listening, professional development, empowerment, accountability, serving others, emotional healing, and self-awareness. The author contends that these seven characteristics operationalise the definition and key ideas as set out in meta-analyses (Eva et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019). The following outlines these characteristics as a general servant leadership model (*Figure 1*) and discusses how they can be incorporated into health and social care supervisory processes supported by the use of the Servant Leadership Supervisor Scale SLSS (*Figure 2*).

*Figure 1*

**Servant Leadership Scale-28 (SLS-28)**

Characteristic	Scale Items	Questions
<b>Listening</b>	Adapted Thomas Hajduk, Ph.D. (2009) listening scale	1, 8, 15, 22
<b>Empowering</b>	Liden (2008) measure	2, 9, 16, 23
<b>Professional Development</b>	Adapted from Ehrhart (2004) and Liden (2008) measures	3, 10, 17, 24
<b>Serving Others</b>	Barbuto & Wheeler (2006) and Liden (2008) measures	4, 11, 18, 25
<b>Accountability</b>	<i>van Dierendonck (2011)</i>	5, 12, 19, 26
<b>Self-Awareness</b>	Self-developed	7, 14, 21, 28
<b>Emotional Healing</b>	Liden (2008); Barbuto (2006)	6, 13, 20, 27

### **Listening**

Servant leadership has as a characteristic: listening to employees (Keith, 2008; Spears, 1995). Greenleaf articulated listening in his early writing on servant leadership; this was then distilled into Spears' (1995) model.

According to Keith (2008, p.1);

*By listening, servant-leaders are able to identify the needs of their colleagues and customers. That puts them in a good position to meet those needs. When they do, their organizations are successful – their colleagues are able to perform at a high level, and they have happy customers, clients, patients, members, students, or citizens.*

Listening does not only help leaders to gather important information about the development of others and the organisation, it also mediates another important organisational concept, Psychological Safety (Yan & Xaio, 2016; Chughtai, 2016). It is the author's position that when employees feel accepted and safe, they feel comfortable to engage in interpersonal risk-taking, such as becoming more involved in organisational discussions with leaders as they pertain to important work and role objectives, and bringing more creative and innovative ideas in for consideration. Psychological safety is also essential for employees to feel safe and secure in their interpersonal relationships. The servant leader will seek out and use as many opportunities as they can find to listen to employees, they embody a deep respect for employees and demonstrate this by listening respectively to opinions, ideas, feelings, and worries, all key issues for those experiencing burnout. Many health and social care professionals are trained in active listening skills, therefore, bringing these into the supervisory process should not pose much difficulty to supervisors. Listening is captured on the SLSS in the relationship item:

**Figure 2**

#### **Servant Leadership Supervisor Scale (SLSS)**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Corresponding SLS-28 Item</b>
<b>Approach to Supervision</b>	Professional development, self-awareness
<b>Relationship</b>	Listening, empowering
<b>Meeting my Needs</b>	Serve others, emotional healing, professional development
<b>Organisation Meeting my Needs</b>	Accountability, serve others, professional development

### **Servant Leadership Supervisor Scale (SLSS)**

The SLSS is a four-item measure assessing the supervisory relationship from a servant leadership approach. It is completed at the end of every supervision session by the supervisee and seeks to assess the supervisees' satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 10 on four key areas that are aligned to their developmental needs, with a total score of 40. The resulting information is then discussed by both parties, resulting in a culture of feedback that can be used in real time to meet the needs of the supervisee. The scale

loosely captures the items on the SLS-28. The SLSS has been adopted from the Leeds Alliance in Supervision Scale (Wainwright, 2010) and the author added an organizational item in order to more accurately reflect a servant leadership organization and supervisory process from the perspective of supervisees. Of course, this does mean the psychometric reliability is impacted, however, we see this scale as an ideographic measure to be used to generate discussion between supervisor and supervisee based on a servant leadership philosophy, and is thus, subjective. Critically, the SLSS builds on the work of the SLS-28 by offering a supervisory approach that uses characteristics from the servant leadership model, and provides supervisees with a mechanism to assess how their supervisor and organisation are meeting their needs, including needs related to burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary traumatic stress. If a supervisor is providing supervision consistent with a servant leadership philosophy, then some of the antecedents of burnout such as low support, poor training, and feelings of a lack of personal accomplishment, and emotional stress can be prevented, identified, or minimised. Importantly, the SLSS is not a reactionary tool, but can work as a preventative measure by its routine use to develop supervisees on an ongoing basis.

### ***Empowerment***

Servant leadership also has a core value of empowerment; indeed, it has been discussed in terms of it being a distinctive focus (Liden et al., 2008; Parris & Peachey, 2012; van Dierendonck, 2008). Miller et al. (2001, p.1881) suggest that work environments that are designed to empower allow for employee access to “information, support, and resources necessary to accomplish work, as well as those that provide opportunities for growth and development of knowledge and skills.” Buchen (1998) explains that empowerment happens when leaders embrace the idea of *primus inter pares*, first among equals; employees become collaborators and fully involved in organisational life. As articulated previously, a lack of involvement in decision-making seems to be one of the antecedents of burnout among employees. Hence, an empowering approach to supervision may help mitigate against this. Again, this characteristic would seem to be consistent with many of the professions, especially those more aligned to the social work and therapy type professions, although not exclusively so.

### ***Serving Others***

Servant leaders invert the traditional organizational pyramid, and place other key stakeholders such as employees at the top (Keith, 2008). Blanchard (2001) and Cortez et al. (2017) inform us that servant leaders, after setting the mission and vision, remove all barriers and serve their employees through prioritising their needs. The author sees this as the energy within a servant leadership organisation as moving upwards from the bottom, instead of downwards from the top. This one, what seems a simple act but actually a difficult task, ignites a new energy within an organization where the focus is on employees and services users instead of on the whims and wishes of the leader. Vince and Pedler (2018) suggest that it is of paramount importance to consider how power relationships can impact on leadership outcomes. For the author, the responsible use of power can be considered a core tenant of servant leadership.

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Thus, in the SLS-28, serving others is assessed, which in turn is aligned to the definition set out by Eva et al. (2020), that is, the outward reorientation of self-interest and the prioritising of others interests and needs. Serving others can be considered to be consistent with all health and social care professions. Using both the SLS-28 with its serving others item, and the SLSS measure in supervision can assist with tracking the progress of servant leader supervisors in meeting supervisees' needs in general, and those related to burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary trauma specifically.

### Professional Development

Servant leaders show interest in and encourage employees in their career plans, and further delegate important work responsibilities to employees (Liden et al., 2008). This is one method used by servant leaders to develop organisational capacity and servant leadership capacity in employees. Servant leaders use coaching to develop those in the organisation. Servant leadership requires leaders to build strong relationships and communication in order to evaluate and gain insight into the abilities, needs, desires, and goals, of their employees (Chinomona & Poole, 2013). As Greenleaf (1970, p.3) suggests, "the work exists for the person as much as the person exists for the work." Kent (2008, p.2) unpacks this quote further and provides the following analysis:

*Work should provide people with opportunities to learn and grow and fulfil their potential. When your colleagues grow, the capacity of your organization grows. Developing colleagues includes a commitment to extensive on-the-job training, as well as formal education, new assignments, and internal promotions.*

While organizational policies and systems are put in place to promote good governances and organisational effectiveness, the relationship between individual supervisor-supervisee can follow different paths. The servant supervisor takes time to get to know each of the supervisees and as such, the boundary between professional and personal lives is more fluid and dynamic (Eva et al., 2020).

This individuation of the supervisory relationship shows appreciation, care, and is linked to many of the key servant leadership characteristics and ideas, including Eva et al.'s (2020) definition of servant leadership. Maslach and Jackson (1996) suggest that burnout is characterized by feelings that one is lacking in personal accomplishment. Therefore, helping supervisees develop, not just in task-related matters, but their personal accomplishments may help mitigate against feelings of burnout through continuous development. Thus, servant leadership supervision should go beyond organizational task-related role, and incorporate employees' general professional interests where possible. We propose that this will further generate a sense of fairness, thus transmitting servant leadership. The SLSS can be utilized by employees to track their satisfaction with the extent to which supervisors and the organization are meeting these needs.

### Accountability

Employing accountability as a leadership behavior is one method of developing congruence between organizational and employees' goal attainment. Others include

setting clear expectations, having confidence in others, and holding others accountable for controllable behaviour and outcomes. Accountability is outlined in the literature as being responsible for, ensuring transparent practices, holding others accountable, monitoring performance, and setting clear expectations congruent with an individual's current capability. It is also used to hold the leadership and organization ethically accountable for its mission, finances, and impact on society. Of course, supervisors must also be able to take feedback on their practices as part of accountability structures.

While the SLS-28 has an accountability item, the Servant Leadership Supervision Scale (SLSS) is another method that employees can use in supervision to provide feedback on how the supervisor and organization are meeting their developmental needs. After all, the core tenant of servant leadership is service to others; employees should therefore be able to speak to how supervisors and the organizations embody this approach. Like the previous characteristic, this will demonstrate fairness, but also trust.

Moreover, as lack of involvement in decision making, and poor training and development opportunities have been identified as antecedents of burnout, it is proposed that including these issues in a developmental supervisory relationship may limit the potential impact of burnout on employees. The Servant Leadership Supervision Scale SLSS has been designed by the author for supervisees to provide feedback to their supervisors on important developmental and emotional needs congruent with a servant leadership approach.

### ***Self-awareness***

Self-awareness strengthens the servant leader's ability to work with others. Awareness also helps the leader in understanding issues involving ethics and values and their application. Keith (2008) suggests that self-awareness is a key practice of servant leaders and that servant leaders should be aware of their strengths, limitations, and the impact of their words and behaviour on others. Self-awareness comes from reflective practices. Supervisors should role model this self-awareness characteristic both by engaging in supervision with their own supervisors, but also in challenging supervisees to see beyond their current skills, abilities, and limitations. The self-awareness characteristic is aligned to the approach to supervision in the SLSS — that is, the structure and focus of the session.

Many of the health and social care professions are geared towards building awareness in their services users, thus, it is a congruent practice that should assimilate into the supervisory relationship. Servant leaders utilize many methods of building awareness, including measures of personality and general reflective opportunities. They should be open to both using these methods and any other that can help build awareness in their employees, especially as it relates to managing burnout and related stressful events. At the same time, servant leaders should be accountable for the supervision they offer to supervisees and taking feedback from supervisees is one way they can build their self-awareness of the supervisory process. Thus, the SLSS can be used to help build this self-awareness as it relates to their servant leader supervision practices.

### ***Emotional Healing***

A disposition towards emotional healing is suggested as a unique characteristic of servant leadership. Many people experience emotional difficulties and have suffered from emotional difficulties; of course, these are then brought into the workplace. Barbuto and Wheeler (2006, p.107) define emotional healing as the “leaders’ ability to facilitate sufferers’ spiritual recovery from hardship and trauma.” Dacher (1999) and Sturnick (1998) suggested that emotional healing is a skill needed and lacking by many leaders. Many supervisors may view emotional healing as a soft skill and not part of their supervisory role, however, it may be one of the most important characteristics in the context of employee burnout and other stressful work-related experiences.

Consequently, those operating within a servant leadership approach in general, and specifically a servant leadership supervisory role, must attend to the emotional needs of supervisees as they relate to this issue. A worrying trend is occurring specifically within health and social care, due to COVID-19. Benfante et al. (2020) suggest that as many as 35% of healthcare workers have experienced trauma. It may be especially important at the present time for those in both leadership and supervisory roles to consider how they can support the emotional healing that is needed by employees due to the added morbidity burden of COVID-19.

### **Discussion**

The present conceptual paper seeks to address the question of how can servant leadership be infused into the supervisory process within health and social care settings in order to possibly mitigate against burnout in the workplace. A model of servant leadership aligned to the most recent definition of this leadership approach has been presented (SLS-28), using characteristics of previous psychometrically-validated scales. A servant leadership supervision scale (SLSS) has also been presented as a supervisory tool congruent with the servant leadership approach which can be used to support supervisees developmentally, and prevent burnout experiences.

This paper contributes to the research literature in several ways. Firstly, it extends servant leadership theory and practice by assimilating findings from meta-analysis into the design of a characteristic model. Secondly, this paper answers the call by Evans et al. (2016) to infuse a leadership approach into clinical supervision competencies in order to address some of the inconsistencies in practitioner supervisory training. While the initial request was for clinical supervision within counselling, we see no reason why this should not be extended to the wider health and social care sectors considering their similar supervisory aims. It will also go some way to addressing Allbutt et al. (2017) concerns regarding the inconsistencies in supervisory practices and lack of implementation across health and social care services by offering a standardised approach with measures to help implementation.

Limitations to this conceptual paper are considered from the perspective that both the SLS-28 and the SLSS have been designed by the author without primary research attesting to their reliability and validity. While the construction of both measures was informed by previous reliable measures within the literature, this represents limitations

in their use. For these reasons, the scales should only be utilised as ideographic measures within the supervisory relationship. At the same time, another limitation is the lack of primary data to suggest that these individual scales and approaches will reduce burnout within employees of supervisors using them. Thus, future research may wish to empirically examine both these measures using primary data as they relate to servant leadership in general, and the role of the supervisor using the SLSS for reducing burnout in employees.

## Conclusion

The prevalence of burnout within the health and social care sectors is a worrying issue for practitioners, supervisors and policy makers as it impacts on morbidity, wellbeing, work life, and organisational effectiveness. The literature demonstrates the need for methods to reduce the impact burnout has on employees, but also the impact this has on service user care, as well as organisational outcomes. A model of Servant Leadership based on meta-analysis findings and using characteristics that are congruent with the work of health and social care professionals have been put forward and discussed as a means to achieve this. The author conceptually addressed how burnout can be reduced within this sector by infusing a model of servant leadership into the supervisory process.

Servant leadership and servant leadership supervision can be utilised within the health and social care sectors in order to provide employees with a supportive supervisory experience thus reducing and preventing the impact burnout can have on employee wellbeing. By attending to supervisees' emotional and developmental needs, a servant leadership approach to supervision may act as a protective factor to some of the antecedents of burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary traumatic stress. Thus, the author calls on those in the health and social care sectors to consider integrating this conceptual model into existing structures, procedures, and policy in order to have a more psychologically satisfied workforce and effective organisation.

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## Do community citizenship behaviors by leaders enhance team performance? *Evidence from the “field”*

### Abstract

*Due to minimal available findings, Rodell (2016) put out a call for more research on the performance outcomes of community-focused behaviors such as volunteering while acknowledging the challenge of connecting “social movements to hard data” (p.79). This study answers that call by evaluating the community citizenship behaviors (CCBs) of leaders and the potential influence on team performance. Based on existing theory and findings, this study argues that leaders who engage in CCB are likely to enhance their leadership skills, inspire their followers and produce prosocial contagion and as a result we hypothesize they will increase their team performance. Using a sample of National Football League teams and players, the findings presented here support the hypothesis suggesting that investments in local communities produce a positive outcome for the community, the leader, and even the leader’s team performance.*

### Introduction

Individual investment in local communities may include volunteering for a charity, donating personal funds to local food drives, and even helping strangers. These types of community-minded endeavors are often enacted from a sense of civic duty and prosocial motivation (Liu, Zahn, & Hu, 2015). But while the target of these initiatives (i.e., local community members) may be the focus, research has found additional beneficiaries to community citizenship behavior (CCB). For example, volunteering produces benefits for the individual who engages in such behavior through an enhanced sense of purpose, well-being, and belonging (Mojza et al., 2011; Mojza & Sonnentag, 2010), skill development (Booth et al., 2009; Caligiuri et al., 2013) and even job performance (de Gilder et al., 2005; Jones, 2010; Rodell, 2013). In addition, athlete citizenship (i.e., community stakeholder engagement) has been connected to reputation, brand enhancement, and even revenue-generating ventures (Agyemang, 2014). Finally, some research even finds that when employees engage in CCB, their organization benefits through positive reputation (Jones et al., 2014) and financial performance (Lewin & Sabater, 1996).

While the connection between CCB and performance is an interesting result, this vein of research is quite limited. In fact, as a result of minimal available findings, Rodell (2016)

puts out a call for more research on the performance outcomes of community-focused behaviors while acknowledging the challenge of connecting “social movements to hard data” (Rodell, 2016; p. 79; Koschmann, Kuhn, & Pfarrer, 2012). While a limited number of studies have evaluated performance outcomes of CCB (Jones *et al.*, 2014; Lewin & Sabater, 1996), none have evaluated the outcomes for the CCB of leadership. This stands as a significant gap in our understanding as prior research demonstrates that leadership characteristics and behaviors have significant impacts on performance (Hambrick & Mason, 1984; Slater & Dixon-Fowler, 2009; Soane *et al.*, 2015). As such, this study will answer Rodell’s call by examining the team performance implications for the CCB of leaders.

The theory and findings presented here will contribute to existing knowledge in several ways. First, the findings will expand understanding of CCB and its implications for performance. However, where previous studies have evaluated outcomes for CCBs of employees, this study will specially look at the CCB of leaders. Second, an expanded understanding of the antecedents to enhanced performance may provide additional insights for managers and scholars of performance outcomes. Third, this study will contribute to our understanding of leadership resulting in implications for leadership selection and development as organizations may want to include CCB in their selection criteria and training programs.

## Background & Theory

### *Community Citizenship Behaviors*

CCB “captures an individual’s positive behaviors directed toward the wider groups in the community” (Eva *et al.*, 2020; p. 637). These positive behaviors include respect for the local processes and laws, adopting community values and serving their interests through volunteering and/or philanthropy for the common good, and active involvement in community self-governance (Van Dyn *et al.*, 1994). CCB is driven by prosocial motivation which refers to the desire to benefits others (Grant & Berg, 2011). Those high on prosocial motivation place value on promoting the common good and well-being of others and thus are more likely to engage in CCB (Eva *et al.*, 2020). These sentiments are also echoed in research on government employees and their Public Service Motivation referring to the motivation of government employees to serve their community and country (Liu *et al.*, 2015). In fact, scholars have noted that private employees with high public service motivation will look for ways to invest in their communities beyond the workplace in order to bring their motivation and employment status in a private firm into congruence (Steen, 2008). In other words, “private employees adapt their altruism and sense of civic duty by finding ways to pursue other-focused behaviors outside their work environment” (Liu *et al.*, 2015; p. 268). Thus, our understanding of CCB is connected with public service motivation through prosocial motivation and community-focused behaviors.

The prosocial motivation of CCB is also found within other domains of related research such as volunteering, organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB), and servant leadership. However, CCB is also distinct from each of these literature streams in different ways.

Compared with volunteering, CCBs are a larger domain including philanthropy, adopting community values, respect for local processes and laws, and involvement in community self-governance (Van Dyn *et al.*, 1994). Similarly, OCBs and CCBs are prosocial behaviors for the benefit of others but it's the target recipient that differs. OCBs focus on citizenship toward co-workers and the employing organization (Organ, 1988) where CCBs are directed towards communities outside the employing organization. Finally, where servant leadership is primarily focused on the leader's subordinates (Eva *et al.*, 2019), CCB is exclusively focused on members of the local community.

Finally, CCB also has some roots in corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR "involves the conduct of a business so that it is economically profitable, law abiding, ethical and socially supportive... Thus, CSR is composed of four parts: economic, legal, ethical and voluntary or philanthropic" (Carroll, 1983, p. 604). Both CCB and CSR are focused on investment in others beyond self-gain. CSR is often studied by evaluating the many stakeholders influenced by a firm's operation. In fact, in multidimensional studies, one of the primary stakeholder groups considered are local communities (Roach & Slater, 2016). Thus, CCB and CSR both look to benefit local communities. However, they differ in that CSR is formally sanctioned and implemented by the organization often with employees as participants or donors. Contrastingly, CCB may or may not be a part of the organizations CSR efforts. This distinction has been noted as internal (activities supported by the organization) vs external (voluntary activities outside the employing organization) CCB (Eva *et al.*, 2020). In the case of external CCB, they would not be considered CSR. In addition, CCBs are focused exclusively on the community whereas CSR is much more broad encompassing additional stakeholders such as customers, employees, buyers, and suppliers. Finally, CSR is also a corporate aggregate of a company's societal actions and impacts whereas CCB is an individual behavior.

### **Leadership CCB & Team Performance**

Existing research has consistently demonstrated the effects that leadership characteristics and behaviors have on organizational performance outcomes (Wang *et al.*, 2016). Upper echelons theory (Hambrick & Mason, 1984) provides a particularly relevant and established framework for these findings. Based on bounded rationality (March & Simon, 1958), upper echelons theory suggests that leaders are unable to make perfectly rational decisions due to their own limitations in cognitive capacity and personal bias. As a result, leaders often make decisions which reflect their own personal values, background, training, etc. These decisions in turn impact those they lead and ultimately the performance of their subordinates and organizations (Soane *et al.*, 2015; Wang *et al.*, 2016). In the same vein, this research will focus on leaders who exhibit CCB and how that behavior may influence team performance. As will be argued below, existing research suggests three potential ways in which team performance may be impacted by leadership CCB: skill development; inspired followers; and prosocial contagion.

Leaders who engage in CCB may enhance their leadership skill sets. For example, by engaging in volunteer work in the community, leaders develop and hone skills which are

transferable to their leadership roles such as communication, interpersonal skills, and active listening (Booth *et al.*, 2009; Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013; Mojza *et al.*, 2011; Tuffrey, 1997). Beyond a side benefit, Caudron (1994) even suggests that volunteering could be viewed as a “low cost training option” (p. 38) for leadership development. Thus, leaders who engage in CCB may enhance their leadership skillset making them more effective leaders and enhancing their team performance as a result.

Leaders engaging in CCB are also likely to inspire a greater response and effort from their followers through enhanced credibility and trust as evidenced by servant leadership research. Follower trust is built through servant leadership “as a result of the subordinate finding the leader’s judgments and actions to be thoughtful, dependable, and moral” (Liden *et al.*, 2008 p.163). Furthermore, evidence suggests that servant leadership results in increased performance across levels within the organization (Liden *et al.*, 2008, Sousa & Van Dierendonck, 2016 & Choudhary, Akhtar, & Zaheer, 2013) including team effectiveness (Irving & Longbotham, 2007). Leaders who engage in CCB may find that their role model behaviors provide enhanced trust and credibility with their followers which inspires greater follower performance.

Credible leaders may also enhance their followers’ prosocial motivation, suggesting that CCBs may produce a contagious prosocial effect. Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) suggests that when subordinates believe their leaders to be credible role models, they will seek to emulate their attitudes, values, and behaviors. Rather than solely being concerned with their own roles, followers may begin to place focus on each other (Grant & Berg, 2011). In fact, evidence indicates that servant leadership increases OCBs (Hu & Liden, 2011; Hunter *et al.*, 2013) suggesting that prosocial leadership produces prosocial behaviors. Thus, if prosocial motivation is contagious then a leader engaged in CCB may produce followers who also engage in prosocial behaviors such as OCB, which ultimately increase group and organization performance (Mohamed & Anisa, 2014).

Drawing on literature from servant leadership, volunteering, social learning theory, and upper echelons theory, we have argued that leaders who engage in CCBs are likely to have a positive impact on team performance through skill development, inspired followers, and prosocial contagion. Based on these arguments, the following hypothesis is offered.

***H1: Leaders engaged in community citizenship behaviors will be positively associated with team performance.***

## **Methods**

### ***Sample***

The National Football League (NFL) in the United States was the source for data collection in this study. NFL players and teams from 2015-2019 were utilized as the sample for this research with most of the data collection coming directly from the NFL database accessed through its website, nfl.com (team captain data was accessed through other sources which will be discussed below). 32 teams in the league spanning

5 years of data collection yielded a gross sample size of 160 but after accounting for missing and unusable data, the final sample was 133.

## Measures

### **Leadership CCB**

“The Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award” recognizes an NFL player for his excellence on and off the field. The award was established in 1970. It was renamed in 1999 after the late Hall of Fame Chicago Bears’ running back, Walter Payton. Each team nominates one player who has had a significant positive impact on his community” (nfl.com<sup>1</sup>). For example, the 2019 winner, Calais Campbell, established the CRC foundation and donated thousands based on his on-field performance (e.g., \$1000 for a team win; \$10,000 for a turnover). In addition to distributing funds to multiple community charities, Calais and the CRC foundation also help young people to develop creative, financial, and vocational skills through camps and various programs. Calais also hosts an annual shopping spree for local kids who have completed lessons in financial literacy. He volunteers at the local Ronald McDonald House, donates meals during Thanksgiving to local families in need, hosts football and STEM camps for the local community including a Microsoft-equipped coding camp for kids of Northeast Florida, and regularly visits local schools and colleges to encourage reading and discussions on social justice (nfl.com<sup>2</sup>). The combination of volunteering and philanthropy is consistent amongst the nominees which is in keeping with the components of CCB (Eva *et al.*, 2020).

Each team also selects up to 6 players of its 53-man roster to serve as Team Captains each year. Some teams appoint their captains by the coach and others allow the players to vote (Farmer, 2018). The Team Captain designation comes with a “C” patch to be worn on the jersey and those players are viewed as leaders and ambassadors for the team (Farmer, 2018). The Team Captains represent the team at the coin toss at the beginning of the game and serve as a significant source of leadership for the players. Team Captains are often the connection point between coaches and other players serving to bring player concerns to coaches, providing verbal encouragement and motivational speeches and even addressing “locker-room drama” (Darlington, 2012). Being a good player is not enough for a team captain role. Quarterback Chad Pennington put it this way, “Just because you’re a good player, it doesn’t mean you’re a captain. Some guys just don’t handle that role well. They’re the type of people that have to be so focused on themselves that they can’t take focus off of that and put it on the team” (Darlington, 2012). Pennington goes on to say that team captains must “win their (players) trust” in order for players to follow their leadership. Noting the significant role that team captains play, Darlington credits New Orleans 2012 success largely to the long-time Captain Drew Brees’s leadership while its coach was suspended for the entire season. He states that Brees’s leadership “might be the biggest reason that coach Sean Payton’s season-long suspension hasn’t crippled the team” (Darlington, 2018). Darlington sums up the role of team captains like this: “Whether a captain must carry an entire organization on his back or simply quell the occasional locker-room drama, some players would argue there’s no one more important to a team’s ultimate success.” While

decades ago, it might have been more challenging to identify leaders on a team but today to identify a leader “just look for the patch” (Darlington, 2018).

Team captain data was gathered through internet searches for announcements on team websites and local and national sports news outlets reporting on team captain selections. 11 cases were eliminated from this study as a result of being unable to obtain team captain data through internet searches. An additional 19 cases were eliminated due to their team captain selections rotating on a weekly basis throughout the season. The nature of these weekly rotations was not in keeping with the majority which selected team captains on a season-long basis and thus did not make for sound comparison to the majority of the sample.

The measure for leadership CCB was coded as a dummy variable indicating whether one of the team captains was also their team’s Walter Payton nominee (1) or not (0). Of the 133 observations in this sample, there were 74 cases (55.6%) where the Walter Payton nominee was a team captain and 59 cases (44.4%) where he was not a team captain. Thus, 55.6% of teams have a leader (i.e., team captain) who is formally recognized as a significant contributor to local communities (i.e., Walter Payton Man of the Year nominee) and 44.4% of teams do not.

### ***Team Performance***

Team performance was measured as regular season win/loss percentage and data was gathered from the NFL website. Each team plays 16 games per season allowing for even comparisons between teams. Playoff wins or win percentage could also be a relevant reflection of team performance but does not allow for equal comparison as the majority of teams do not advance to the playoffs (only the top 12 of 32 teams advance each year).

### ***Prior Team Performance***

Each team’s performance for the prior year was used as a control variable. Prior performance was measured as each team’s win percentage from the previous year.

### ***Team Tenure***

Each Walter Payton Nominee’s tenure on the team was also included as a control variable. Tenure was measured as the number of years the player was on his current team roster. In several cases, the nominee had played for the same team at two separate periods of time (usually playing for a different team in between periods). In these cases, only the players’ current stint with the team was counted toward their team tenure.

## **Analysis & Results**

Means, standard deviations, and correlations for each variable are presented in *Table I*.

**Table I: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations**

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Leadership CCB	.56	.50			

<b>2. Team Tenure</b>	5.25	2.96	.26		
<b>3. Prior Team Performance</b>	.50	.19	.00	.23	
<b>4. Team Performance</b>	.50	.19	.22	.25	.34

$n = 133$

As a preliminary evaluation of  $H1$ , leadership CCB and team performance are positively correlated ( $.22$ ;  $p = .012$ ) providing initial support for a positive association. ANCOVA was chosen as the formal hypothesis test due to the categorical nature of the independent variable (Leadership CCB) and the necessity to include control variables (Team Tenure and Prior Team Performance). The results of the ANCOVA found in *Table II* demonstrate that Leadership CCB was significantly associated with Team Performance ( $F = 4.882$ ;  $p = .029$ ) after controlling for the player's Team Tenure ( $F = 2.352$ ;  $p = .128$ ) and Prior Team Performance ( $F = 16.045$ ;  $p = .000$ ). Thus,  $H1$  is supported.

**Table II: ANCOVA Results for Team Performance ( $H1$ )**

Variable	$F$	$p$	$\eta^2$
Team Tenure	2.352	.128	.018
Prior Team Performance	16.045	.000	.111
Leadership CCB	4.882	.029	.036

$R^2 = .189$

Adjusted  $R^2 = .170$

## Discussion

### *Contributions and Implications*

Drawing from multiple streams of literature, this study has argued that leaders who engage in CCB will enhance their teams' performance. The findings support that hypothesis even after accounting for prior team performance and the leader's tenure. Where prior research has primarily focused on the antecedents or individual level outcomes of CCB, this study provided some clarity on higher level performance outcomes. In addition, this study stands as unique by specifically examining the CCBs of leadership. As such, the findings here help to respond to Rodell's (2016) challenge to examine CCB outcomes in spite of the challenges in connecting "social movements to hard data" (Rodell, 2016; 79; Koschmann, Kuhn, & Pfarrer 2012). By using a sample of NFL teams and players, the presented findings indeed produce a connection between the hard data of team performance (win percentage) and the social initiatives of the players.

The results of this study provide several contributions and implications. The team level outcome for CCB is unique implying the strong nature of multi-level affects for CCB. Prior research has evaluated individual level outcomes and a few organization level outcomes but now we can also add team level outcomes to mix. The findings could also have implications for servant leadership and volunteering literature. While we did not measure either explicitly, the CCB construct does have overlap with both. Thus, the findings here

would at least provide some additional support to servant leadership and volunteering outcomes within organizations. The findings here also correspond to research in the CSR literature on the association between societal initiatives and organizational performance (Dixon-Fowler *et al.*, 2013; Orlitzky, Schmidt, & Rynes, 2003). This literature largely supports the notion that all parties can win—the employees, the shareholders, and society. Similarly, the findings here suggest that the leader, the team and the local community all benefit when leaders engage in CCBs. Finally, this study also supports the notion that athlete citizenship (Agyemang, 2014) provides benefits to the athlete themselves but also extends to the team level.

The findings also have implications for management practice, especially for leadership selection, training, and development. If the findings here generalize to other leaders and teams, then CCBs could be an important selection criterion. Hiring managers could evaluate a candidate's history of engagement in their local community as a legitimate performance enhancing factor. Preference may be given to candidates who have a greater history investing in their community which would create incentive for aspiring managers to do the same, thus spurring even more community enrichment. Beyond selection, organizations may also use this finding in their training and development of leaders. As leaders are groomed and developed, organizations may include requirements around community service hours or charitable activity as a means of developing their skills (Booth *et al.*, 2009; Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013; Mojza *et al.*, 2011; Tuffrey, 1997), building trust with their followers (Liden *et al.*, 2008), and fueling follower prosocial activity (Bandura, 1977; Grant & Berg, 2011).

### **Limitations and Future Research**

The nature of the sample here is unique. While the results support the principle, the question could be asked as to whether the same result would be found with other leaders in more traditional work teams. Perhaps the public nature of these leaders skews their CCBs in a positive direction due to social pressure that may not be found with less public figures. It could also be that the emotional nature of athletic competition allows for the effects of inspired followers to a greater degree. These and other differences could be found in future research using different samples to evaluate the generalizability of the result presented here.

The measure of CCB is also unique. Previous research has primarily used survey measures of CCB (Eva *et al.*, 2020) which have the benefit of psychometric validity but also some drawbacks. Where survey measures may suffer from social desirability bias on the part of the survey taker, the measure used here is assessed by an external third party (which may have its own bias but not by the recipient). Thus, future research may want to confirm the findings here using other, more traditional measures of CCB.

This study also makes several arguments and assumptions which are not examined. For example, it was argued that the causal mechanisms for the association between leadership CCB and team performance are skill development, inspired followers, and prosocial contagion. However, these explanatory mechanisms are not measured and perhaps future scholars may explore that terrain. In addition, CCB is founded on the idea

of prosocial motivation (Grant & Berg, 2011) but there are other possibilities. For example, perhaps these leaders engaged in CCB for image reasons (Podsakoff et al., 2011) or for other external rewards (Hui, Lam, & Law, 2000). Perhaps future research can explore various outcomes depending on the motivation for engaging in CCB.

As discussed above, the findings of this study support and fill some gaps in existing knowledge across multiple streams of research but also provoke additional questions which could be explored. For example, is the effect on team performance different for internal vs external CCBs (Eva et al., 2020)? Internal CCBs may be more visible to followers so perhaps the magnitude of affect is larger. In addition, can we measure the assumed benefit of CCB to the community? If so, we could explore the nuances of the effects on the community when followers versus leaders (or both) engage in CCB. The findings here could also be explored on organizational culture. Does a leader's enhanced effectiveness through CCB encourage the same in other organizational leaders resulting in a community-minded culture? Indeed, the field of research in this domain is ripe for harvest with implications and beneficiaries across all spectrums of society.

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## Corporate Ethical Training *An Answer to White-Collar Crimes*

### **Abstract**

*The modern business corporation is a culturally significant component of American Society. It is facing a cultural invasion of the highest order. The categorical imperative, an unconditional principle that rational individuals must follow despite natural desires or inclinations to do otherwise, is today being called into question. This is most likely the result of grounding moral values upon information that is transient and unstable rather than upon established data. The social contract, which governs the formation and maintenance of individual morals, is a requirement in organizations that demands collective agency – employees acting together to set forth moral rules of behavior and eschew pernicious leanings and tendencies. From that perspective, ethical training becomes a key leveraging point in the disconnect between cultural expectations and individual behaviors in corporate America.*

### **Introduction**

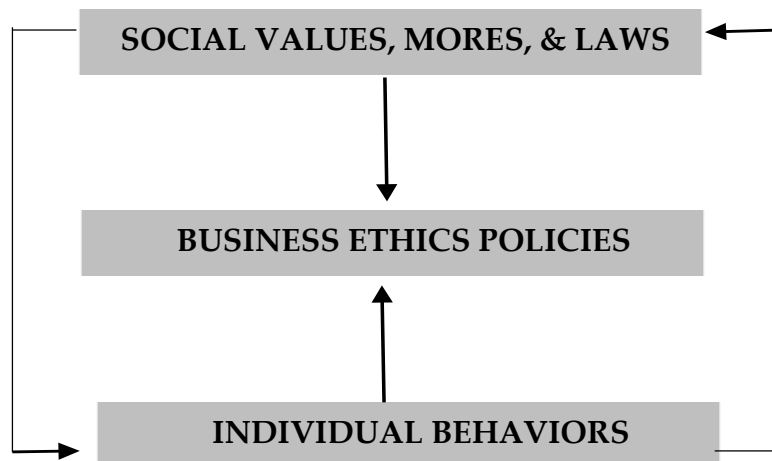
Ethics is a choice as to how we behave. White-collar crime is a product of those choices. White-collar crime is not new; it is culturally invasive, representing a major threat to organizational integrity. One of the earliest cases of white-collar crime dates back to 15<sup>th</sup> century England. It concerned an act of embezzlement committed by an agent entrusted to transport wool, who had attempted to keep a portion for personal use without authorization (McGarth, 2008). Since then, the 21<sup>st</sup> century has witnessed a dramatic increase in fiduciary breaches and unethical behavior. For example, in fiscal year 2020, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) “brought a diverse mix of enforcement actions. These actions addressed a broad range of significant issues such as accounting violations, foreign bribery, market manipulation, insider trading, and broker-dealer misconduct. Through these actions, the SEC obtained judgments and orders totaling over \$4.5 billion for the Commission” (SEC, 2020). Why does such deleterious conduct continue to occur and how can it be resolved? Is it because of our need to be the best versus being the best that we can be? This need to be the best often leads to compromising or outright violating ethical norms. The desire to be the best is selfish and lacks compassion. It is generally a result of the failure to internalize a world

beyond one's sole consideration of self. This presents us with the research question: can a formal corporate ethical training program be designed that will reduce white-collar crime? The training should be based on a modified definition of the firm's objectives by focusing on "the process of making ethical choices (doing the right thing) to achieve wealth maximization." Ostensibly, the foundation of the training program must be rooted in ethical philosophy and scientific evidence.

### Philosophical History Informs Today's Struggle with Ethics

Much of philosophy addresses individual beliefs about what is good, right, and true. In many cases, these beliefs are settled in terms of broader societal mores. Kant (1724–1804) argued that the supreme principle of morality is a standard of rationality, the *categorical imperative*, which he characterized as an objective, rationally necessary and unconditional principle that individuals must always follow despite any natural desires or inclinations to the contrary. The context of his questioning is remarkably similar to the present day. Are today's corporations better positioned, in the current environment, to tie together the societal values denoting reasoning or knowledge proceeding from theoretical deduction than when Kant so advocated? If we imagine a social ontology comprised of three levels (see *Figure 1*), the business or organization is situated between individual behavior and societal values. When a business articulates and demands certain ethical behaviors based on its translation of societal values, the resulting individual behaviors reinforce those values, accomplished in a way that makes the latent societal values stronger. This theory was first articulated by McCracken (1988) in terms of how meaning is transferred in a marketing system by advertisers and other promoters. Similarly, this latent knowledge that is acquired independently of any particular experience trickles down vis-à-vis institutional ethics policies that set individual behavioral norms. Those behaviors provide feedback and become or reinforce original societal values. Furthermore, In the *social contract*, Rousseau (1762) proposes that an individual has a responsibility to give back to the common good vis-à-vis his (or her) personal will or action. In the ethical corporation, this commitment is well understood.

*Figure 1*



**Grant McCracken  
Adoption (1988)  
*The Movement of  
Meaning and Ethics in  
a Society***

Ethical training, given this context, becomes a mechanism to operationalize a social ontological system that goes beyond a mere articulation of normative values. Today, as in the 1960s and 1970s, traditional values are being questioned. Today, moral reasoning and values clarification are more important than ever (Kirschenbaum, 1992). As our society becomes more diverse, multicultural, and pluralistic, a major question arises as to whose values are the “right” values. In this, the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the concern for values and morality is as prevalent as it was in the 1960s. With the advent of social media and the massive injection of misinformation, what is true, right, or good is no longer simply a question of espousing and enforcing a norm. An underlying “me” or “mine” asserts a right to prosper by any means. Despite societal norms, cognitive schemas allow the perpetrators of crimes like embezzlement or insider trading to frame their acts as “a small thing,” or “brilliant.” An understanding of today’s social schemas is relevant in addressing differing social values. To this end, this paper serves to highlight several major corporate scandals and attempts to understand the mindset of those who propagated the underlying crimes.

### White-Collar Crimes

Reportedly coined in 1939, the term “white-collar crime” is now synonymous with the full range of frauds committed by business and government professionals (FBI, 2020). These crimes include acts of deceit, concealment, and violation of trust. They are not dependent on the use of threats or violence. They are motivated by the desire to obtain or avoid losing money, property, or services and to secure personal and/or business advantage. Often these acts are political or business scandals of financial misdeeds committed by trusted executives of corporations or governments which, in many instances, illustrate the failure of “Leadership at the Top.” Those misdeeds involve complex methods of gross financial mismanagement at several levels of the organization. They unequivocally constitute fraud, waste, and abuse and are usually the catalyst for investigations launched by government oversight agencies such as the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Department of Justice (DOJ).

The Fraud Section of the Department of Justice plays a unique and essential role in the fight against sophisticated economic crimes in America. Examples of the historical problem are set forth in *Appendix 1*, while the following case synopses (augmented by others in *Appendix 2*) represent instances of recent criminal activities involving the DOJ’s investigation of white-collar crime.

1. In September of 2019, one South Florida health care facility owner was sentenced to 20 years in prison for its role in the largest health care fraud scheme ever charged by the DOJ. The case involved a decades’ long scheme of kickbacks and money laundering in connection with fraudulent claims presented to Medicare and Medicaid for services deemed medically unnecessary. Since its inception in March of 2007, this anti-fraud division has led the Medicare Fraud Strike Force, which is part of a joint initiative between the DOJ and Health and Human Services (HHS) to focus their efforts to prevent and deter fraud and enforce current anti-fraud laws throughout the U.S. Before this particular

- investigation, the Strike Force, which maintains 15 teams operating in 24 districts, had already charged nearly 4,000 defendants who had collectively billed the **Medicare** program for more than \$14 billion (DOJ, 2020).
2. On January 31, 2020, **Airbus SE** (“Airbus” or “the Company”), a global provider of civilian and military aircraft based in France, agreed to pay combined penalties of more than \$3.9 billion to resolve foreign bribery charges with authorities in the United States, France, and the United Kingdom arising out of the Company’s scheme to use third-party business partners to bribe government officials, as well as non-governmental airline executives, around the world and to resolve the Company’s violation of the *Arms Export Control Act* (AECA) and its implementing regulations, the *International Traffic in Arms Regulations* (ITAR), in the United States. This settlement is currently the largest global foreign bribery resolution to date (DOJ, 2020).
  3. In September, 2020, the DOJ charged 345 people – including doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals – involved in fraudulent billings across 51 federal districts. The charges were in connection to cases representing approximately \$6 billion in losses, including more than \$4.5 billion connected to **telehealth claims**. According to court documents, 86 defendant telehealth executives allegedly paid doctors and nurse practitioners to order unnecessary durable medical equipment, genetic, and other diagnostic testing, and pain medications, either without any patient interaction or with only a brief phone conversation with patients they had never met or seen (DOJ, 2020).
  4. On October 22, 2020, the **Goldman Sachs Group Inc.** (“Goldman Sachs” or “the Company”), a global financial institution headquartered in New York, New York, and Goldman Sachs (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd. (GS Malaysia), its Malaysian subsidiary, admitted to conspiring to violate the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) in connection with a scheme to pay over \$1 billion in bribes to Malaysian and Abu Dhabi officials to obtain lucrative business for Goldman Sachs, including its role in underwriting approximately \$6.5 billion in three bond deals for 1Malaysia Development Bhd. (1MDB), for which the bank earned hundreds of millions in fees. Goldman Sachs agreed to pay more than \$2.9 billion as part of a coordinated resolution with criminal and civil authorities in the U.S., the United Kingdom, Singapore, and elsewhere (DOJ, 2020).

### Behavioral Ethical Training Based on Philosophy and Science

The fundamental basis for the development of an efficient and effective training program requires some basic understanding as to why white-collar criminals behave the way they do. Harvard business professor Eugene Soltes, in a year’s long quest to discover why topflight executives become white-collar criminals, interviewed close to fifty convicted defendants (Carozza, 2017). He says, “he realized that they failed to see the personal and professional consequences of their choices because they never deeply felt that their decisions were harmful to themselves or others.”

This paper proposes a cultural change through education. A cultural environment focused on changing leadership's thinking from motive to motive and results, such that the breaches listed above are minimized. This can be done through an applied ethics training program based on philosophy and science. Prior to attempting to develop such a program, it is necessary to answer a dominant question: **Can We Teach Ethics?** According to the research, the answer is emphatically, yes. Science provides the first proof. The science of neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to change over time, with education. According to Pascale (2008), for a long time it was believed that as we aged, the connections in the brain became fixed and then simply faded. However, research has shown that, in fact, the brain never stops changing with continual educational stimulation.

Brain plasticity, also known as neuroplasticity, refers to the brain's ability to change and adapt as a result of experience. It is the ability of neural networks in the brain to change through growth and reorganization. Recent capability to visually "see" into the brain, allowed by functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) science, has conclusively confirmed the ability to change brain processing (Hampton, 2016). The concept of a changing brain has replaced the formerly-held belief that the adult brain was pretty much a physiologically static organ or hard-wired after critical developmental periods in childhood. The studies conclude that while the brain is much more plastic during the early years with its capacity declining with age, plasticity happens throughout life (Hampton, 2019).

William T. O'Connor, foundation professor of physiology at the University of Limerick Graduate Entry Medical School and author of the blog "Inside the Brain," thinks neuroscience has a particularly useful role in advancing ethics. O'Connor believes that: "The responsible application of neuroscience should be represented in the teaching and learning of ethics in the classroom" (Humphreys, 2015). The study of perception, learning, memory, and recall are converging into what is known as Neuroethics which focuses on ethical issues raised by a continually improved understanding of the brain, and by consequent improvements in the ability to monitor and influence brain functions to unite ethical and social thought with neuroscience (Roskies, 2021).

The second level of support is philosophy which is based on Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development. According to Kohlberg, the process occurs in three stages (Sanders, 2006):

1. ***Pre-conventional (childhood) stage:*** defines right and wrong in terms of what authority figures say is right or wrong or in terms of what results in rewards and punishment;
2. ***Conventional (adolescent) stage:*** the individual internalizes the norms of the groups among whom he or she lives; right and wrong are based on group loyalties; and
3. ***Post-conventional level (adult) stage:*** moral principles are defined, right and wrong determined from a universal point of view. The moral principles of the post-conventional person are principles that would appeal to any reasonable person because they take everyone's interest into account.

Many factors can stimulate a person's growth through the three levels of moral development. One of the most crucial factors, Kohlberg found, is **education**. Kohlberg discovered that when his subjects took courses in ethics and these courses challenged them to examine issues from a universal point of view, they tended to move upward through the levels.

Lawrence Kohlberg was a developmental theorist of the mid-twentieth century who is best known for his specific and detailed theory of children's moral development. His work continues to be influential and is supported by recognized scholars (including Colby, et al., 1983; Rest, 1986; Walker, 1989, and Walker & Taylor, 1991b). Kohlberg's stages of moral development constitute an adaptation of a psychological theory originally conceived by the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget. Piaget placed great importance on the education of children. Piaget created the International Center for Genetic Epistemology in Geneva while on the faculty of the University of Geneva. The number of collaborations that its founding made possible, and their impact, ultimately led to the Center being referred to in the scholarly literature as "Piaget's factory" (Burman, 2012).

In two studies, Cheryl L. Carmichael et al. demonstrate an engaging classroom activity that facilitates student learning about Kohlberg's theory of moral development by using digital resources to foster active, experiential learning. In addition to hearing a standard lecture about moral development, students watched a video of a morally provocative incident, then worked in small groups to classify user comments posted in response to the video according to Kohlberg's six stages. Students in both studies found the activity enjoyable and useful. Moreover, students' scores on a moral development quiz improved after completing the activity (Study 1), and students who completed the activity in addition to receiving a lecture performed better on the quiz than students who received the lecture alone (Study 2) (Carmichael, et al., 2018).

Kohlberg's work is further validated by the results of a 20-year longitudinal study of moral judgement development. The study was an effort to document the basic assumptions of Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental theory of moral judgment. Moral judgment was found to be positively correlated with age, socio-economic status, IQ, and education. The results of this study were interpreted as being consistent with a cognitive-developmental stage model. Subjects seemed to use a coherent structural orientation in thinking about a variety of moral dilemmas. Their thinking developed in a regular sequence of stages, neither skipping a stage nor reverting to use of a prior stage. The Standard Issue Scoring System used in the study was found to be reliable, and it was concluded that it provides a valid measure of Kohlberg's moral judgment stages (Colby, et al., 1983).

### **Behavioral Ethical Training: An Applied Approach**

The training proposed integrates several approaches that attempt to change individual and corporate behavior by reprogramming tacit understanding and behavioral outcomes. It is designed to take place in an organizational setting, which can elucidate concepts and relationships. The training clarifies what is expected of employees, how the

organization will deliver those expectations, and feedback about performance. The training is accomplished through four modules.

## Module I: Philosophies and Beliefs of Good, Right, and True

### *Social Ontology*

This unit is focused on the impact of social interaction on ethical behavior. It is a process of analyzing the various entities in the world that emanate from social interaction. In this module, special emphasis is placed on similarities and differences of employees, specifically in the design of the rules of the workplace. Additionally, this section examines ethics and societal norms and traditions including ethnicity, nationality, gender, and wealth as well as their impact on organizational values.

### *Emotional Intelligence*

Emotional intelligence training focuses on one's consciousness of the impact of their behavior on others within the organization. This module focuses on managing emotions of self and others. Special emphasis is placed on the role of "Leadership at the Top" and its ability to manage this process. Leadership needs a unique perspective of the natural instinctive state of mind that results from employees' circumstances and relationships with their co-workers.

### *Conscious and Sub-Conscious Mind Awareness*

This unit is focused on logic and reasoning and how the mind controls intentional actions, as well as how involuntary actions are controlled. Training will create knowledge of how the conscious and sub-conscious mind impact organizational behavior.

### *Shared Agency*

This component focuses on what makes us better when we act together. Earlier in this

**Figure 2: Shared Agency Personified**



Reconfigured by Richard Pitre (2021).

*This figure is an example of our shared humanity.*

paper, Eugene Soltes was quoted as saying that those who commit white-collar crimes “failed to see the personal and professional consequences of their choices because they never deeply felt the impact of their decisions on others.” *Figure 2* (above) gives a visual of the depth and breadth of societal interconnections. The visualization of the various groups in society clearly illustrates how deeply interconnected we are.

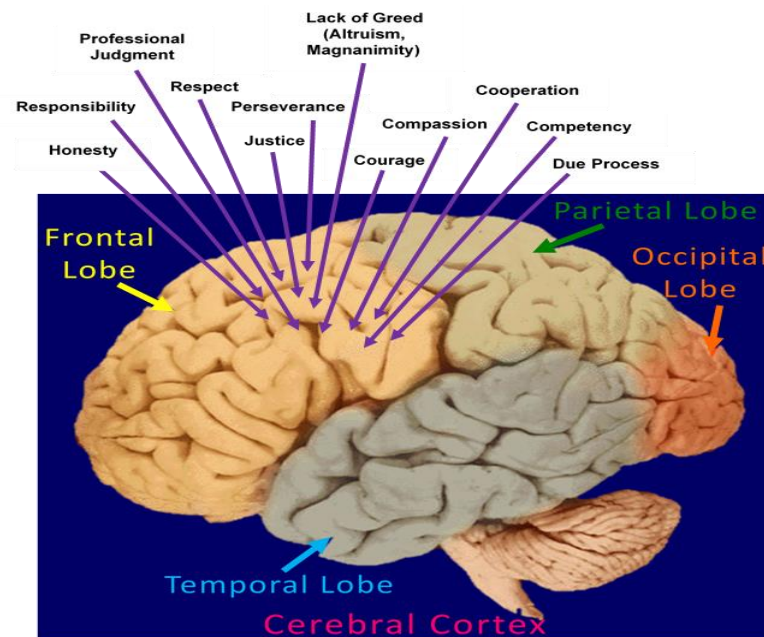
### Module II: *Ethical Values*

One needs to know one’s unique perspective from which one chooses. This can be accomplished by knowing one’s values. The training here will focus on the impact of a value system as a deterrent to wrongdoing. It is difficult to embrace these values and be unethical.

#### *Training Values*

- |                   |                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Honesty        | g) Competence            |
| b) Responsibility | h) Professional Judgment |
| c) Respect        | i) Greed (lack of)       |
| d) Cooperation    | j) Perseverance          |
| e) Due Process    | k) Courage               |
| f) Justice        | l) Compassion            |

The ethical values presented here reside in the frontal lobe of the cerebral cortex (see *Figure 3*). Sensitivity to these values is the foundation of an ethical way of life. Leaders are often consumed with the maximization of shareholder wealth exclusive of the ethical consequences. *Figure 3* is an illustration of the relationship between the values and the brain as supported by the concept of neuroplasticity.



*Figure 3: Kinser, Patricia Anne. Brain Structures and their Functions  
(Insertion of ethical values are of the author)*

This connection is part of the default action stimulated by the brain. This default process has its genesis of ethical brain stimulation long before one becomes a leader. Your thinking, controlled by your brain, ultimately impacts how you lead, and the benefits of ethical training are a great reinforcement of brain thoughts and behavior. Effective ethical training is achieved through the actual application or use of ethical ideas, beliefs, and realistic expectations as opposed to theories and philosophical discussions lacking in sincerity and practical content. Ultimately, choices have consequences and proper training enhances the positive and minimizes the negative. It is very difficult to adhere to these values and be unethical.

The phenomenon of plasticity is of significance to this research because it is widely accepted that it provides the underlying processes for learning and memory. “The Brain,” with David Eagleman, which aired on Public Broadcasting Service (PBS.org) on March 2021, explored the foundational principles of the phenomenon of neuroplasticity. The major focus was on how the brain can change throughout an individual’s lifespan. With the latest scientific research and illuminating stories about neuroplasticity, “The Brain Revolution” shows how the brain works. Of significance to this research is *structural* plasticity: the brain’s ability to actually change its physical structure as a result of learning (Ethical Training). The frontal lobe in conjunction with the other lobes of the brain plays a vital role in controlling inhibitions (Lieff, 2014). The frontal lobe is important for voluntary movement, expressive language, and managing higher level executive functions. Executive functions refer to a collection of cognitive skills including the capacity to plan, organize, initiate, self-monitor, and control one’s responses in order to achieve a goal (Brain Map Frontal Lobes, 2021).

### **Module III: *Modern Technology***

Modern technology has revolutionized the way the world operates, especially in the ethics space. It is a powerful tool that supports the dynamics of modern business operations. However, it is not without unethical consequences. The focus in this module is on the ethical implications of constantly emerging technology and the consequences of knowledge insufficiency in this area. Employees need technological agility (Fogarty, 2001) – the ability to adapt to and integrate current technologies quickly and smoothly with newer, different, disruptive, expansive, or convergent technologies. This module involves data analytics as accountants analyze raw data in order to guide decision-making.

### **Module IV: *Ethical Leadership***

The success of any ethics training program starts with the Board of Directors or the otherwise highest level of organizational leadership. This level, “Leadership at the Top,” must embrace ethics training by committing to be the first to engage directly in the training themselves. Leadership defines the culture of the organization. It is essential that leadership is cognizant of the impact of culture on the integration of values as it impacts operations. Leadership is the filter that is essential to an effective and efficient environment conducive for success.

In a speech titled *Why Does Fraud Occur and What Can Deter or Prevent it?*, Lori Richards of the SEC stated:

“For us as regulators, our three-fold efforts should be seen as a common attack on fraud.

1. We seek to **educate** investors to protect themselves against fraud;
2. We conduct regulatory examinations to ensure that firms have robust compliance systems to prevent and detect fraud and other violations; and
3. We aggressively prosecute securities fraud, collaborating with criminal prosecutors.”

The training program proposed by this research has the potential to be transformative, assuming active involvement of “Leadership at the Top.”

## Summary and Conclusion

We study ethics because we are constantly striving for perfection. This requires an earnest attempt to alter the mental obsession with absolute perfection; being the absolute best versus being the best that one can be. Altering the need for absolute perfection will redirect leadership thinking from motive to motive and results. This will give the organization the ability to deal with the challenges and issues encountered in leading the modern corporation. Based on the findings related to the science of neuroplasticity and Kohlberg’s theory of education, it can be concluded that ethical training is an effective means of contributing to the reduction of white-collar crimes. The concept of neuroplasticity, the brain’s ability to reorganize itself throughout life by forming new neural connections, reinforces the importance of training. Training promotes development of an ethical awareness that the organizational focus should be on creating a culture that is based on being the best that one can be instead of being “the absolute best.” The need to be the absolute best is a threat to an ethical culture and a significant contributor to white-collar crimes.

Ethical training can help to remove ambiguity and clarify what is acceptable based on organizational culture. The values presented in this research help individuals to know wisdom and heed instruction, perceive the words of justice, judgment, and equity, and give prudence to the simple. They allow the young to gain knowledge and learn discernment and the wise to increase learning and understanding. Ethical training reinforces the need for “Leadership at the Top” to be the linchpin that solves the disconnect between collective cultural expectations and individual behaviors in the organization. Ethics is a choice as to how we behave. Choices have consequences and our thinking, controlled by our brain, ultimately impacts those choices. Efficient and effective ethical training creates an environment of leaders who are visionaries and live the values, managers who operationalize the vision, and employees who are productive. When these three are so coordinated, the organization is capable of realizing the objective of the firm, that is, “the process of making ethical choices (doing the right thing) to achieve wealth maximization.”

This is how we become “The Best We Can Be.”

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## Appendix 1

### *Infamous Accounting Scandals*

#### **Waste Management**

In 2002, Waste Management was found to have been involved in the largest financial statement restatement in history. The company had admitted that its profits had been overstated by \$1.7 billion (\$1,700,000,000). This defendant's scheme was simple: it improperly eliminated or deferred current period expenses in order to inflate earnings. For example, it avoided depreciation expenses by extending the estimated useful lives of the company's garbage trucks while simultaneously making unsupported increases to the trucks' salvage values. In other words, the more the trucks were used and the older they became, the more the defendants said they were worth. Defendant also:

- made other unsupported changes in depreciation estimates;
- failed to record expenses for decreases in the value of landfills as they were filled with waste;
- failed to record expenses necessary to write off the costs of impaired and abandoned landfill development projects;
- established inflated environmental reserves (liabilities) in connection with acquisitions so that the excess reserves could be used to avoid recording unrelated environmental and other expenses;
- improperly capitalized a variety of expenses and failed to establish sufficient reserves (liabilities) to pay for income taxes and other expenses (*Complaint: SEC v. Dean L. Buntrock, Phillip B. Rooney, James E. Koenig, Thomas C. Hau, Herbert A. Getz, and Bruce D. Tobecksen*, retrieved from <https://www.sec.gov/litigation/complaints/compl r17435.htm>).

#### **Tyco**

From 1996 through 2002, Tyco International Ltd. (Tyco) violated federal securities laws by overstating its reported financial results, recalibrating those reported earnings, and hiding vast amounts of senior executive compensation and a large number of related party transactions from investors. To achieve those ends, the company utilized a number of improper practices conceived, guided, or encouraged by the individuals who managed the company at that time. As a result, the company overstated its operating income by an aggregate amount of at least one billion dollars. During this period of time, Tyco acquired hundreds of companies. At least \$500 million of Tyco's inflated operating income resulted from improper accounting practices related to some of its acquisitions. In addition, apart from its acquisition activities, Tyco used a variety of reserve accounts to enhance and smooth its reported financial results and to meet earnings projections from its fiscal year ending June 30, 1997, through its fiscal quarter ending June 30, 2002.

Another area of Tyco's misconduct involved a scheme designed to overstate operating income in connection with transactions between Tyco's ADT Security Services, Inc. (ADT)

subsidiary and the security alarm dealers from whom it purchased residential and commercial security alarm monitoring contracts. As a result, from its fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, through its fiscal quarter ending December 31, 2002, Tyco inflated its operating income by approximately \$567 million and inflated its cash flow from operations by approximately \$719 million (*SEC Complaint: Tyco International Ltd.*, retrieved from <https://www.sec.gov/litigation/complaints/2006/comp19657.pdf>).

### **Health South**

HealthSouth Corporation (HRC), the nation's largest provider of outpatient surgery, diagnostic, and rehabilitative healthcare services, as well as its Chief Executive Officer and Chairman Richard M. Scrushy, systematically overstated its earnings by at least \$1.4 billion in order to meet or exceed Wall Street earnings expectations (*SEC Complaint: HealthSouth Corporation and Richard M. Scrushy: Lit. Rel. No. 18044 / March 20, 2003*, retrieved from: <https://www.sec.gov/litigation/litreleases/lr18044.htm>).

### **Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac**

Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac entered into a Non-Prosecution Agreement with the Commission in which each company agreed to accept responsibility for its conduct and not dispute, contest, or contradict the contents of an agreed-upon Statement of Facts without admitting nor denying liability. Each also agreed to cooperate with the Commission's litigation against the former executives.

While Freddie Mac disclosed during the relevant period that the exposure of its Single Family Guarantee business to subprime loans was between \$2 billion and \$6 billion, or between 0.1 percent and 0.2 percent, of Freddie Mac's Single Family Guarantee portfolio - its exposure to subprime was materially greater. As of December 31, 2006, Freddie Mac's Single Family Guarantee business was exposed to approximately \$141 billion (or 10 percent of the portfolio) in loans the company internally referred to as "subprime," "otherwise subprime," or "subprime-like" and its exposure grew to approximately \$244 billion (or 14 percent of the portfolio) by June 30, 2008, as the company sought to win back lost market share by increasing its acquisition of such loans ("SEC Charges Former Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac Executives with Securities Fraud"; Release No. 2011-267; December 16, 2011; retrieved from <https://www.sec.gov/news/press/2011/2011-267.htm>).

### **Bernie Madoff (April 29, 1938 – April 14, 2021)**

The SEC charged Bernie Madoff with violations of the anti-fraud provisions of the *Securities Act of 1933*, the *Securities Exchange Act of 1934*, and the *Investment Advisers Act of 1940*. He was charged committing securities fraud through a multi-billion-dollar Ponzi scheme perpetrated on advisory and brokerage customers of his firm. The size of the Madoff fraud was estimated to be \$64.8 billion. On March 12, 2009, Madoff pleaded guilty to 11 federal crimes and admitted to operating the largest private Ponzi scheme in history. On June 29, 2009, he was sentenced to 150 years in prison with restitution of \$170 billion. He died in federal prison on April 14, 2021 (retrieved from Press Release: SEC Charges Bernard L. Madoff for Multi-Billion Dollar Ponzi Scheme; 2008-293; Dec. 11, 2008).

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## Enron

Kenneth L. Lay, Jeffrey K. Skilling, and Richard A. Causey, all former senior executives of Enron, engaged in a multi-faceted scheme to defraud in violation of the federal securities laws. From at least 1999 through late 2001, Lay, Skilling, Causey, and others manipulated Enron's publicly reported financial results and made false and misleading public statements about Enron's financial condition and its actual performance. As an objective and result of their scheme to defraud, Lay, Skilling, Causey, and others made millions of dollars in the form of salary, bonuses, and the sale of Enron stock at prices they had inflated by fraudulent means. Skilling and Causey made at least \$103 million and \$23 million, respectively, in illicit gains (retrieved from [comp18776.pdf \(sec.gov\)](#)).

## WorldCom

From as early as 1999 through the first quarter of 2002, defendant WorldCom Inc. (WorldCom) misled investors. This corporate defendant acknowledged that during this period, and as a result of undisclosed and improper accounting, it materially overstated the income it reported in its financial statements by approximately \$9 billion. In general, WorldCom manipulated its financial results in two ways. First, the company reduced its operating expenses by improperly releasing certain reserves held against operating expenses. Second, it improperly reduced its operating expenses by re-characterizing certain expenses as capital assets. Neither practice was in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) (*Complaint: SEC v. WorldCom, Inc.*, retrieved from <https://www.sec.gov/litigation/complaints/comp17829.htm>).

## Appendix 2

### *The SEC Continues to Investigate*

The following examples of continuing cases of white-collar crimes reinforce the need for ethics training. The SEC continues to investigate and recommend actions addressing conduct that spanned the securities markets, including conduct involving financial fraud, insider trading, offering fraud, *Foreign Corrupt Practices Act* violations, misconduct by broker-dealers, investment advisers, and more. Based on this work, the Commission brought hundreds of enforcement actions and secured meaningful remedies to protect investors and U.S. markets against wrongdoing.

A cornerstone of the SEC's enforcement program is ensuring that entities are held accountable for their misconduct.

In Fiscal Year 2020, the Commission brought actions against financial institutions, automobile and engine manufacturers, and technology, telecommunications, and pharmaceutical companies, among others. The following subset of cases is illustrative:

***Wells Fargo & Co.:*** In a settled action, the Commission found that Wells Fargo misled investors about the success of its core business strategy at a time when it was opening unauthorized or fraudulent accounts for unknowing customers and selling unnecessary products that went unused. Wells Fargo was ordered to pay the SEC a \$500 million civil

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penalty as part of a combined \$3 billion settlement with the SEC and the Department of Justice.

**Telegram Group Inc.:** The Commission filed an emergency action and obtained a temporary restraining order against Telegram and its wholly-owned subsidiary TON Issuer Inc. for allegedly operating an unregistered offering of digital tokens called “Grams” in violation of federal securities laws. On the Commission’s motion, the court issued a preliminary injunction barring the delivery of Grams and finding that the Commission had shown a substantial likelihood of proving that Telegram’s sales were part of a larger scheme to unlawfully distribute the Grams to the secondary public market. Following this decision, the defendants agreed to settle the action and were ordered to return more than \$1.2 billion to investors and to pay an \$18.5 million civil penalty.

**BMW AG.:** In a settled action, the Commission found that BMW and two of its U.S. subsidiaries disclosed inaccurate and misleading information about BMW’s retail sales volume in the U.S. while raising approximately \$18 billion from investors in several corporate bond offerings. The three companies were ordered to pay a joint penalty of \$18 million.

**Telefonaktiebolaget LM Ericsson:** In a settled action, the Commission alleged that Ericsson engaged in a large-scale bribery scheme involving the use of sham consultants to secretly funnel money to government officials in multiple countries. In resolving this matter, Ericsson was ordered to pay more than \$1 billion to the SEC and the Department of Justice and to install an independent compliance monitor.

FinCEN files further show massive money-laundering cases, including the following: In September 2020, leaked documents provided to *BuzzFeed News*, and passed along to the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), implicated major international banks — including Deutsche Bank, JPMorgan Chase, HSBC, Standard Chartered, and Bank of New York Mellon — in the laundering of more than \$2 trillion linked to oligarchs, criminals, and terrorists from 1999 to 2017 (see Leopold, Jason (20 September 2020). Dirty money pours into the world’s most powerful banks: The FinCEN files, *BuzzFeed*. Retrieved from <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/jasonleopold/fincen-files-financial-scandal-criminal-networks>).

For the complete SEC report, see <https://www.sec.gov/files/enforcement-annual-report-2020.pdf>

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Pitre is the author of a Financial Accounting Textbook. His research is multi-disciplined covering such topics as Ethical Leadership, Ethics of Privacy, Ethics and Information Systems Controls, Fraud, Curriculum Development, Environmental Cost Liability, Managed Care, Deferred Taxes, Hospital Effectiveness and MIS, Small CPA Practitioner and Information System Liability, and Organizational Behavior and Citizenship. He has served in leadership positions for several professional accounting organizations. He is also the recipient of several awards from Accounting and community organizations.

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Claudius “CB” Claiborne is an experienced marketing educator with a strong foundation in undergraduate and graduate education in both face-to-face and online environments. He has an acknowledged capacity for providing effective leadership and management for academic programs, which includes student mentoring, and academic staff and faculty development. He repeatedly demonstrated success building dynamic teams that work together to ensure programs, policies, and practices align to overarching mission and vision. He has a keen aptitude for coordinating systematic and ongoing evaluation of strategies and identifying ways to enhance the student experience and boost academic performance.

Dr. Claiborne’s teaching competencies include: New Product Development, Marketing Innovation, Marketing Management, Consumer Culture, Qualitative Methods, Marketing, Communications, Marketing and Art, and Digital Marketing. He has published in the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *Social Indicators Research*, *Applied Research in Quality-of-Life Studies* and the *International Journal of Business Research*. He has chaired regional conferences (the Southwestern Business Administration Teaching Conference) and edited special editions of journals (the *International Journal of Business Research* (IJBR)). He led a team that worked with the business community to completely revamp the junior year business school experience. The four foundation courses; finance, marketing, management and information systems were combined into one twelve-hour, case-based cross disciplinary course, co-taught by executives from the business community. The course followed the life cycle of the business from start-up to going international. He received multiple teaching innovation awards for this and other efforts. He oversaw development and delivery of engaging curriculum regarding marketing innovation, culture and innovation, and qualitative methods as a Fulbright Scholar in Japan.

Dr. Claiborne is an Apple Distinguished Educator, Fulbright Scholar, Sasakawa Fellow, Coors Eminent Scholar, and Presidential Scholar. With respect to his educational background, Dr. Claiborne received a Doctor of Philosophy in Marketing from Virginia Polytechnic Institute, a Master of Business Administration in Marketing & Management from Washington University, a Master of Engineering in Biomedical Engineering from Dartmouth College, and a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Duke University. His professional experience includes working within the Product Development Group at Ford Motor Company, the Design and Development Group at Booze Allen Hamilton, and the Systems Design Group at Duke Energy Corporation.

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# The Return of Mussolini

— EMILIO IODICE, ROME, ITALY



Benito Mussolini, 1919. Courtesy, Biografiaonline and Istituto Luce

*We have buried the putrid corpse of liberty.*

*It is the State which educates its citizens in civic virtue, gives them a consciousness of their mission and welds them into unity.*

*The truth is that men are tired of liberty.*

*All within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state.*

— Benito Mussolini

*Power is not a means; it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution to establish the dictatorship.*

*Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing.*

*War Is Peace. Freedom Is Slavery. Ignorance Is Strength. — George Orwell, 1984*

*The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.*

— Edmund Burke

## For King and Country



*Mussolini as the Image of "Il Duce" (The Leader) and his followers. Courtesy, photo credit, all posters.co.uk*

*I love America more than any other country in the world and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually. — James Baldwin*

*I never considered myself a patriot. I like to think I recognize only humanity as my nation. — Isaac Asimov*

*Patriotism is voluntary. It is a feeling of loyalty and allegiance that is the result of knowledge and*

*belief. A patriot shows their patriotism through their actions, by their choice. — Jesse Ventura*

"In 1933 the Oxford Union, the university undergraduate debating society, passed a famous motion that *This House would not in any circumstances fight for King and Country*. It made headline news at the time: Churchill called the vote 'abject, squalid, shameless' and 'nauseating,' and it is even said to have misled *Hitler* into thinking the British had lost the will to fight."<sup>1</sup>

Obviously, the debate in one of the United Kingdom's most elite institutions did not represent the thinking of all the people. Oxford University undergraduates came from the wealthy upper class of English society and were hardly examples of the entire British

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/education/churchill-era/exercises/appeasement/king-country-debate/>

population of that era. Yet they were highly educated, well-read, and well-informed and felt they had the ability to debate philosophical issues as profound as loyalty and patriotism and war and peace.

The students, of course, were young and, at times, youth tend to take extreme positions, which in this case, they knew would invoke a strong political and social reaction. Even so, Oxford was an influential institution, and their students were a group with a voice heard across the British Isles and into the Continent.

These same undergraduates would govern the nation someday.

Obviously, with hindsight, we know that little was known of Hitler's plans and intentions in 1933 and some of the same young men who participated in the debate, fought for "King and Country" when Britain went to war in 1939.

In effect, the Oxford debate sent mixed signals to the government as to what was *the will of the people* as happened in another celebrated test of democracy one year later.

## The Peace Ballot

*To conquer a nation, first disarm its citizens. — Adolf Hitler*

The League of Nations was created at the end of World War I to be an organization of international cooperation and to pursue the peaceful resolution of conflicts. In addition to the League's headquarters in Geneva, there was a European network of the local chapter's part of the *League of Nations Union*. Members debated local issues and current events, passed resolutions, and sent them to political officials and leaders in League headquarters.

"In 1934 a branch of the *League of Nations Union* in Ilford in Essex got together with the local newspaper and organized a local referendum asking people's views about the League, about the *Locarno treaties*, about disarmament and about the arms trade. The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of the League; moreover, many more people voted than turned out in local elections. The leaders of the League of Nations Union, along with several church and women's groups also campaigning for peace, thought it would be worth holding a national ballot along similar lines to the Ilford one, to gauge public opinion across the whole country. The ballot was held in the autumn of 1934 and the results announced in the early summer of 1935."<sup>2</sup>

Over eleven and half million people voted. It was almost half of the voting age population of the United Kingdom. They voted overwhelmingly in favor of the League. The results sent shock waves through the British political system, especially when the questions on the ballot were revealed along with the specific votes cast:

*What did the ballot actually ask? There were five questions:*

1. Should Britain remain a member of the League of Nations? (Over 90% answered "Yes")

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/education/churchill-era/exercises/appeasement/peace-ballot-1934-35/>

2. Are you in favor of an all-round reduction of armaments by international agreement? (Over 90% answered "Yes")
3. Are you in favor of the all-round abolition of national military and naval aircraft by international agreement? (Over 80% answered "Yes")
4. Should the manufacture and sale of armaments for private profit be prohibited by international agreement? (Over 90% answered "Yes")
5. Do you consider that, if a nation insists on attacking another, the other nations should combine to compel it to stop, by:
  - a) economic and non-military measures? (Over 90% answered "Yes")
  - b) if necessary, military measures? (Over 70% answered "Yes")<sup>3</sup>

The British ruling class could not ignore the voice of nearly twelve million voters. It influenced the thinking of Prime Minister Baldwin who supported a cautious foreign policy even as Hitler used violence to consolidate his power and Mussolini invaded Abyssinia.

British and European leaders in the 1930s indirectly promoted the expansion of totalitarianism and the deterioration of democracy through appeasement and weak governments. The Great Depression and growing social economic turmoil also strengthened the hand of despots.

*The best way to take control over a people and control them utterly is to take a little of their freedom at a time, to erode rights by a thousand tiny and almost imperceptible reductions. In this way, the people will not see those rights and freedoms being removed until past the point at which these changes cannot be reversed. — Adolf Hitler*

*Fascism draws energy from men and women who are upset because of a lost war, a lost job, a memory of humiliation, or a sense that their country is in steep decline. The more painful the grounds for resentment, the easier it is for a Fascist leader to gain followers by dangling the prospect of renewal or by vowing to take back what has been stolen. It is easier to remove tyrants and destroy concentration camps than to kill the ideas that gave them birth.*

*— Madeleine K. Albright*

## The Return of Il Duce

"It's me," roars a bombastic Benito Mussolini as he returns to the land, he governed for twenty years with an iron hand.

Shortly after falling from the sky and passing through the doors that separate life and death, Il Duce finds himself in the Eternal City where a distraught movie director discovers him and begins a media spectacle around the founder of the Fascist Party who the director thinks he is a talented but eccentric comedian dressed up as the great dictator.

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



*Courtesy, Sono Tornado, Luca Miniero*

The movie maker uses him to create a new television program that gains popularity for its amusement and false sense of reality. In the end, he discovers that it is not an impersonator but *Il Duce* himself who, through some miracle, has come back and is now on the eve of returning to power.

Of course, its fiction. The 2018 Italian movie, *Sono Tornado (I'm Back)*, is a satire directed by Luca Miniero. It is filled with vignettes and impressions of life as it is today, according to Mussolini, who uses his charisma to seduce people to his philosophy so they will, once more, entrust their lives and sacred fortunes to him. While the film is a spoof about populism and tyranny, the underlying vision is provocative.

The fascination with dictatorial rule still exists.

The thought is frightening.

It is a nightmare that does not disappear even with the terrifying visions of history filled with violence, cruelty, and war waged by right and left-wing tyrants.

The garden in which the first modern seeds of Fascism were planted was Italy. According to many, the country still has not come to grips with Mussolini and his regime.

Francesco Filippi has written about the deep Fascist roots ingrained in Italian society that still bear fruit. His most recent book, *Ma Perché Siamo Ancora Fascisti (Why Are We Still Fascists)* asserts that Italians have never come to grips with their tyrannical past. He questions as to how an intelligent and cultured people can forget the disastrous wars, millions of deaths, and untold suffering, the enduring shame of Mussolini's racial laws, the suppression of freedom and a bloody civil war. Swastikas, Fascist symbols and anti-Semitism are growing in Italy and other parts of Europe.

What we are seeing may not be a return to Fascism as it appeared in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Instead, it may be the thinking that laid the foundation for totalitarianism to rise and take control.

After World War I, Europe was in turmoil, dealing with the aftermath of the disastrous conflict. Governments were weakened by deficits and the inability to resolve problems and get things done. Italy was a case in point. One government after another fell from power up from 1919 to 1922, until Benito Mussolini's Black Shirts marched on Rome, in October 1922 and the King offered him the task of Prime Minister.

From his election to Parliament to become the nation's leader took only seventeen months.

*Nobody has ever denied that I am possessed of these three qualities: a discreet intelligence, a lot of courage and an utter contempt for the lure of money.*

JOURNAL OF VALUES-BASED LEADERSHIP

— Benito Mussolini

## Fascism: A Warning

Two US Secretaries of State who lived under Fascism were Henry Kissinger and Madeline Albright. He fled Nazi Germany in 1938 to settle in New York. She was born in Czechoslovakia. Her family escaped the Nazis at the beginning of World War II and then the Communists in 1948 to finally reach America. Later in life, she discovered 26 members of her family were victims of the Holocaust.



Courtesy, US Department of State

From a personal and professional point of view Albright developed a clear understanding of Fascism and wrote about it in her 2018 book, *Fascism, A Warning*.

Albright analyzes the rise of Fascism from the start of the twentieth century in Europe. From this study, she discovers patterns which emerge that are common denominators of present-day totalitarian regimes.

In 2021, for example, according to Freedom House, there were 50 dictatorships in the world: twelve in the Middle East and North Africa, eight in Asia-Pacific, seven in Eurasia, nineteen in Sub-Saharan Africa, three in the Americas, and one in Europe.<sup>4</sup>

Each of these rose from political and economic turmoil, which is the fertile ground for Fascism, according to Albright.

*Fascism flourishes alongside economic, social and political chaos. Take the classic cases of interwar Germany and Italy. The Weimar Republic was buffeted by the Great Inflation and the Great Depression, violent left- and right-wing uprisings and the humiliation of a lost war, together with a punitive peace. Interwar Italy was battered by high inflation and unemployment and paralyzed for almost two years by strikes and lockouts as left- and right-wing gangs battled in the streets. These conditions resulted in citizens who were fearful and desperate.*<sup>5</sup>

Democracies in the 1930s, like in the United Kingdom, most of Europe, and the United States, preferred isolationism, appeasement, and “peace at any price” and gave into the bullying tactics of Hitler and Mussolini to avoid conflict which allowed tyrannical regimes to flourish without serious international condemnation.

Albright explains similar dynamics are happening today. The dictatorship of Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela, the strong-arm rule of Viktor Orban in Hungary, Vladimir Putin in

<sup>4</sup> <https://planetrulers.com/current-dictators/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/madeleine-albright-warns-of-a-new-fascism-and-trump>

Russia, and Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey are contemporary cases. These leaders emerged following serious economic decline. Problems of mass unemployment and social unrest are the soil for Fascists as are weak democracies and divided oppositions.

*In interwar Italy liberal governments dithered while the country slid into chaos and the two largest parties, the Socialists and Christian Democrats, were more interested in defending the interests of their particular constituencies than democracy. In the Weimar Republic, the country's largest party, the Social Democrats, was more committed to democracy than its Italian counterpart, but it too faltered during the Great Depression and was continually attacked by antidemocratic left- and right-wing forces. While their opponents fought among themselves and let their country's troubles deepen, Fascists offered voters simple explanations of their problems in the form of enemies like nefarious foreign powers or Jews, and simple solutions to them, namely replacing weak and unresponsive democracies with strong dictatorships truly responsive to "the people." Adolf Hitler once explained: "I will tell you what has carried me to the position I have reached. Our political problems appeared complicated. The German people could make nothing of them. ... I, on the other hand ... reduced them to the simplest terms. The masses realized this and followed me."*<sup>6</sup>

Once Mussolini was given ultimate power, according to Albright, he set about creating good government. Italians were exhausted from bureaucracy, political corruption, inefficiency, lack of jobs and opportunities to use their talents. Il Duce attacked the public sector and set about controlling and transforming it.

*He insisted on daily roll calls in ministry offices and berated employees for arriving late to work or taking long lunches. He initiated a campaign to drenare la palude ("drain the swamp") by firing more than 35,000 civil servants. He repurposed Fascist gangs to safeguard rail cargo from thieves. He allocated money to build bridges, roads, telephone exchanges, and giant aqueducts that brought water to arid regions. He gave Italy an eight-hour workday, codified insurance benefits for the elderly and disabled, funded prenatal health care clinics, established seventeen hundred summer camps for children, and dealt the Mafia a blow by suspending the jury system and short-circuiting due process. With no jury members to threaten and judges answerable directly to the state, the courts were as incorruptible as they were docile.*<sup>7</sup>

*Most often, the signposts that should alert us are disguised: the altered constitution that passes for reform, the attacks on a free press justified by security, the dehumanization of others masked as a defense of virtue, or the hollowing out of a democratic system so that all is erased but the label.*<sup>8</sup>

The elements of a new Fascist era are upon us once again and no democracy is immune from it. According to Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times*, "America's democracy

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> [Fascism Quotes by Madeleine K. Albright \(goodreads.com\)](https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/1000000/fascism-quotes-by-madeleine-k-albright)

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

is... in real danger. In fact, we are closer to a political civil war — more than at any other time in our modern history. Today's seeming political calm is actually resting on a false bottom that we're at risk of crashing through at any moment."<sup>9</sup>

When mainstream politicians are discredited; leaders talk of division versus unity; the promotion of extreme patriotism and nationalism; claims of chronic voter fraud; and aspiring to win no matter what the cost, then we begin seeing the shadow of Fascism rising in the horizon.

*The real question is: who has the responsibility to uphold human rights? The answer to that is: everyone. — Madeleine K. Albright*

### America: The Shining City on the Hill

Shortly before being sworn in, President-elect John F. Kennedy addressed the Massachusetts Legislature. He said:

*During the last 60 days I have been engaged in the task of constructing an administration.... I have been guided by the standard John Winthrop set before his shipmates on the flagship Arabella 331 years ago, as they, too, faced the task of building a government on a new and perilous frontier. Winthrop said, "We must always consider we shall be as a city upon a hill — the eyes of all people are upon us." Today the eyes of all people are truly upon us—and our governments, in every branch, at every level, national, State, and local, must be as a city upon a hill—constructed and inhabited by men aware of their grave trust and their great responsibilities.<sup>10</sup>*



Courtesy, Library of Congress

The words of President Joe Biden should give us hope for those of us who love freedom as we look to new leadership to fortify the bonds of liberty that we hold more precious than our lives.



Courtesy of the White House

*Can our democracy overcome the lies, anger, hate and fears that have pulled us apart? America's adversaries — the autocrats of the world — are betting it can't. They believe we are too full of anger and division and rage. They look at the images of the mob that assaulted this Capitol as proof that the sun is setting on American democracy. They are wrong. And we have to prove them wrong.<sup>11</sup>*

Before his election, Mr. Biden gave a speech at my alma mater, The Graduate Center of the City University of New York where he expressed the philosophy that will be the essence of his administration and will carry us through the

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/04/opinion/gop-trump-2020-election.html?action=click&module=Opinion&pgtype=Homepage>

<sup>10</sup> 1611. John Winthrop (1588-1649). Respectfully Quoted: A Dictionary of Quotations. 1989 (bartleby.com)

<sup>11</sup> <https://apnews.com/article/biden-joint-address-congress-a157a7355bfc5c189fdc1040722fb652>

hardships and challenges of this century:

*Democracy is the root of our society, the wellspring of our power, and the source of our renewal. It strengthens and amplifies our leadership to keep us safe in the world. It is the engine of our ingenuity that drives our economic prosperity. It is the heart of who we are and how we see the world—and how the world sees us. That is why America’s ability to be a force for progress in the world and to mobilize collective action starts at home. The United States must lead not just with the example of power, but the power of our example.<sup>12</sup>*

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## The Commander in Chief

### *The Fateful Decision of an American President*



*Harry Truman, Courtesy of National Archives*

— EMILIO IODICE, ROME, ITALY



*To be president of the United States is to be lonely, very lonely at times of great decisions.*

*I'd rather have lasting peace in the world than be president. I wish for peace, I work for peace, and I pray for peace continually.*

*We can well afford to pay the price of peace.*

*Our only alternative is to pay the terrible cost of war.*

— Harry Truman

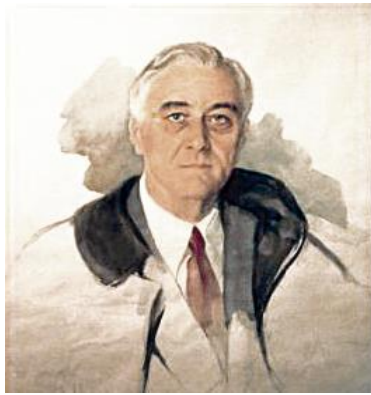
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<sup>12</sup> <https://joebiden.com/americanleadership/>

Writing to his mother and sister back in Grandview, Missouri, on April 12, 1945, Vice President Harry S. Truman passed along some exciting news: His coming radio address for Jefferson Day, which Franklin D. Roosevelt created to mark the third president's birthday, would be broadcast nationwide the following evening.

It was a Thursday morning, and Truman was presiding over the Senate, listening to a "windy senator" make "a speech on a subject with which he is in no way familiar." The senator's verbosity provided a break in the action for the vice president, which gave him a few minutes to dash a quick note home. "Turn on your radio tomorrow night and you'll hear Harry make a Jefferson Day address to the nation," he wrote. "It will be followed by the president, whom I'll introduce."

Some 700 miles to the south, at his retreat in Warm Springs, Georgia, President Roosevelt had put the finishing touches on his own Jefferson Day speech. He had been working on it all week, and at one point proudly announced to his guests that he had completed the draft largely in his own hand.



*Unfinished Portrait of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Courtesy, National Archives*

That morning, he sat for a portraitist, who diligently painted while Roosevelt chatted with his friends. Just as their table was being set for lunch, he complained of a sudden and piercing pain in his head. He slumped forward in his chair and never regained consciousness. The two Jefferson Day addresses were never delivered. Truman had intended to conclude his remarks by saying, "The next voice you will hear will be that of the President of the United States." But the American public never heard that introduction, and they never heard Franklin Roosevelt's familiar voice again."<sup>13</sup>

The former Senator from Missouri was Vice President for 82 days when Franklin Roosevelt died.

After his swearing in, he was briefed by the Secretary of War about a new weapon. Truman wrote in his diary, "We have discovered the most terrible bomb in the history of the world."

The war cost millions of lives and endless suffering. He was determined to stop the bloodshed.

The atomic bomb was his last resort.

The President insisted the weapon be used on a military target. "I have told the Secretary of War, Mr. Stimson," Truman



*The swearing in of Harry Truman on the death of Franklin Roosevelt, Courtesy National Archives*

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/12/opinion/roosevelt-truman-jefferson.html>

wrote, “to use it so that military objectives and soldiers and sailors are the target and not women and children. Even if the Japs are savages, ruthless, merciless, and fanatic, we as the leader of the world for the common welfare cannot drop that terrible bomb on the old capital or the new.”<sup>14</sup>

Three months into his presidency, Truman went to Germany to meet with Churchill and Stalin to decide the future of the postwar world and to establish peace and order and deal with the devastation and suffering. The conference went from July 17 to August 2.



*Winston Churchill, Harry Truman and Joseph Stalin at Potsdam, August 2, 1945, Courtesy National Archives*

war, and homeless wandering through the continent.

During the conference, Truman became suspicious of Stalin and his intentions. The lack of trust effected the outcome.

At Potsdam, “The Big Three” of the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and the United States agreed to acknowledge Russian dominance of Eastern Europe; the transfer of millions of refugees to Polish and Soviet administered territories; creation of a Council of Foreign Ministers to deal with peace treaties; promises to introduce representative government in Germany; outlaw of the Nazi Party; accords on reparations and land boundaries; the trial of war criminals and the

“How I hate this trip,” Truman wrote in his diary on the way to Potsdam. “But I have to make it, win, lose or draw. I am not working for any interest by the Republic of the United States. I am giving nothing away except to save starving people and even then, I hope we can help them to help themselves.”<sup>15</sup>

Truman argued for human rights, free elections, industrial reconstruction, efforts to prevent famine, and work to save the millions of refugees, prisoners of



*US Flag raised over the island of Okinawa, June, 1945, Courtesy. National Archives*

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.shoppbs.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/truman/psources/ps\\_diary.html](http://www.shoppbs.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/truman/psources/ps_diary.html)

<sup>15</sup> [https://artsandculture.google.com/asset//WQHh450I\\_rlajw](https://artsandculture.google.com/asset//WQHh450I_rlajw)

unconditional surrender of Japan, or face “total destruction.”

Truman informed Stalin of the atom bomb. The Soviet dictator did not seem surprised.

The President departed the conference with concerns and misgivings.

The seeds of the Cold War were planted.

Nazi Germany had been defeated. The Empire of Japan continued to fight in one bloody contest after another.

The island of Okinawa fell on June 21<sup>st</sup>, after three months of vicious combat. 12,000 American lives were lost. Over 100,000 Japanese soldiers perished in the fighting and nearly 100,000 civilians died. For military leaders, it was the shape of things to come.

The war with Japan could last years.

The Commander in Chief faced a frightening choice. To invade Japan the Allies estimated a million casualties. As many Japanese might die or be wounded in house-to-house combat. 63 million leaflets were dropped across Japan for several months to warn civilians of air raids. 67 Japanese cities were firebombed. Horrible destruction occurred. Yet the enemy resisted.



*Kamikaze attack on a US Naval Vessel, Courtesy National Archives*

Kamikaze attacks had a powerful psychological impact on US military decision making. 3,800 Japanese pilots died in the suicide attacks, sinking 34 navy ships, and killing 4,900 sailors. It was believed the Japanese would kill themselves before admitting defeat.



*Kamikaze Pilots, Courtesy Japanese National Archives*



*U.S. & British flags on USS Augusta, 1945. Courtesy, National Archives*

Anti-surrender sentiment was strong in the Japanese military.



*U.S. Navy heavy cruiser USS Augusta, 1945, Courtesy US Navy*

to fight to the end rather than accept capitulation.

After the Potsdam conference, Truman flew to England and boarded the *USS Augusta* which had taken him to Europe. King George VI visited him on board as the British and US flags flew over the vessel.

The founder of the Kamikazes, Vice Admiral Onishi insisted 20 million lives would be sacrificed in a special attack effort against an invasion of Japan.

Evidence pointed to the determination of the enemy not to lay down their arms. Truman was told the Japanese were ready



*President Truman aboard the Augusta, 1945, Courtesy, US Navy*

It was August 2, 1945.

He made a decision that day that would thunder across the planet and set in motion the end of the war in the Pacific.

Three days into the voyage, the chaplain held a prayer vigil. Harry Truman was in the forward mess hall of the *Augusta*.

The President prayed his judgement would stop the bloodshed.

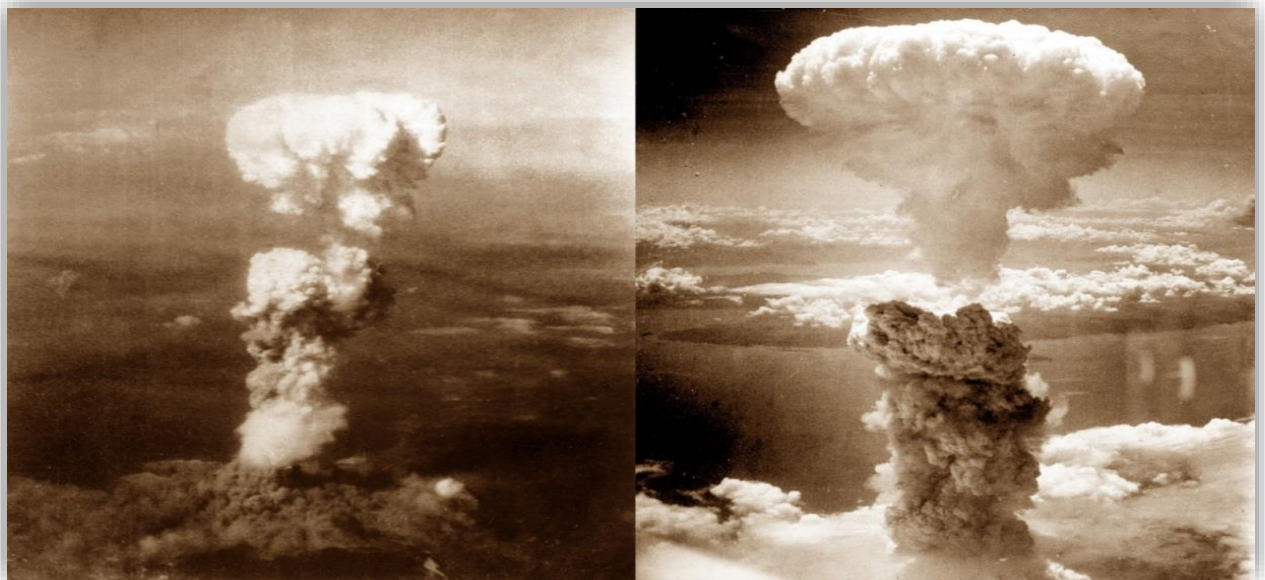
Father Curtis Tiernan of the *Augusta* led the sailors and the President in a hymn, "Faith of Our Fathers."

As Truman prayed on the deck of the ship, thousands of miles away, a plane named the Enola Gay flew off the island of Tinian toward the Japanese mainland.



*The plane that dropped the first atomic bombs, The Enola Gay, August 1945.  
Courtesy, National Archives*

It was 2:45 AM.



*Atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, August 1945, Courtesy of National Archives*

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The city of Hiroshima slept.

It was an industrial center filled with factories and storage facilities for the Japanese war effort. It was also a bustling city with 318,000 men, women, and children.

Early in the morning of August 6, the Enola Gay reached Hiroshima. The sky was clear. There was no anti-aircraft fire. The plane flew placidly across the sky of the city.

At 8:15 AM it dropped the bomb.

Thousands of lives evaporated in seconds.

The tail gunner Bob Caron recalled what happened next:<sup>16</sup>

*It was an awesome sight... the mushroom cloud...was white on the outside and it was sort of a purplish black towards the interior, and it had a fiery red core, and it just kept boiling up.*

*As we got further away, I could see the city...it was being covered with this low, bubbling mass. It looked like... molasses, let's say, spreading out and running up into the foothills... covering the city. Flames in different spots (were) springing up.*

The copilot, Capt. Robert Lewis wrote:

*If I live a hundred years, I'll never quite get these few minutes out of my mind. Everyone on the ship is actually dumbstruck even though we had expected something fierce. I honestly have the feeling of groping for words to explain this or I might say, my God, what have we done?*



*Ruins left after the explosion of the atomic bomb over Hiroshima, August 6, 1945 Courtesy. AP*

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.businessinsider.com/heres-how-the-crew-of-the-enola-gay-crew-recalled-the-first-atomic-weapons-attack-in-history-2015-8?IR=T>

The crew members would later say they did not regret the dropping of the bomb. They believed it hastened the culmination of the war and saved thousands of lives on both sides.

“Capt. Theodore ‘Dutch’ Van Kirk, of Northumberland, Pennsylvania, said that ‘I honestly believe the use of the atomic bomb saved lives in the long run, but I pray no man will have to witness that sight again. Such a terrible waste, such a loss of life.’”<sup>17</sup>



*Emperor Hirohito. Courtesy, Japanese National Archives*

Sixteen hours after the attack on Hiroshima, President Truman called upon the Japanese to stop fighting.

No response.

Two days after the bombing of Hiroshima, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan and raided Japanese territory.

The next day, a second nuclear device was unleashed on the city of Nagasaki. 80,000 people died instantly.<sup>18</sup>

The nuclear age was born, along with the possibility of atomic war.

To end the hostilities, the final decision lay in the hands of the Emperor of Japan.

The Emperor wielded more power than originally believed. Historic examples showed Hirohito acting decisively like putting down a coup of military leaders in 1936; approval of the use of chemical weapons after the invasion

of China; and tacit approval of the mistreatment of prisoners of war and the mass murder of civilians in Nanking. He endorsed the alliance with Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany and approved the attack on Pearl Harbor, over the objections of some of his advisors. “According to an aide, he showed visible joy at the news of the success of the surprise attacks.”<sup>19</sup>

The Emperor had a chance to end the war earlier when it was clear Japan could not win. In February, 1945, the Prime Minister implored Hirohito to begin negotiations for an end to the fighting. He refused on the hope the Soviet Union would mediate a negotiated peace. Preserving the emperor’s office was a key concern of many Japanese officials, which led them to refuse demands for unconditional surrender.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. <https://www.businessinsider.com/heres-how-the-crew-of-the-enola-gay-crew-recalled-the-first-atomic-weapons-attack-in-history-2015-8?IR=T>

<sup>18</sup> USHistory.org, “The Decision to Drop the Atom Bomb” (<http://www.ushistory.org/us/51g.asp>)

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.atomicheritage.org/profile/emperor-hirohito>

“Hirohito learned of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima about 12 hours after the fact, at 7:50 pm, Japan time, on August 6, 1945. Two days later, the Emperor admitted that the war could not continue. But neither the Emperor nor the Japanese Cabinet accepted unconditional surrender, at that time. On August 9, the second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki and the Soviet Union began its invasion of Japanese territory. That night, at a meeting with other leaders, Hirohito declared his intention to accept the Potsdam Declaration.”<sup>20</sup>

It was still not the culmination of the war. Japanese officials continued to debate how imperial power could be maintained. An unsuccessful coup was put down during the discussions by those wanting to continue the struggle.

“Hirohito’s decision proved decisive: his loss of faith in the war effort corralled both politicians and military men who might have prolonged the war. He announced the surrender to the nation in an historic **radio broadcast**, the first time an Emperor had ever addressed the nation in such a manner. The ‘Jewel Voice Broadcast,’ delivered in formal, florid Japanese, was notable both for what Hirohito did not say—he never used the word ‘surrender’—and what he did say. He both continued to justify Japan’s earlier aggression, and put forth a new national mission that was very different than the ideology of *kodo*. (Subordination of the individual to the state.) ‘To strive for the common prosperity and happiness of all nations as well as the security and well-being of our subjects.’ The Jewel Voice Broadcast also made reference to ‘a new and most cruel bomb, the power of which to damage is indeed incalculable.’”<sup>21</sup>



*Vice Admiral Onishi. Courtesy, Japanese National Archives*

Japanese leaders and the Emperor also feared a popular uprising if the conflict did not cease.

Emperor Hirohito ordered the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War to accept the Allied terms of surrender.

The war with Japan ended on August 15, 1945, 95 days after Harry Truman became Commander in Chief.

The day after the Emperor’s decision, Vice Admiral Onishi took his own life rather than give up. “I wish to express my deep appreciation to the souls of the brave special attackers,” he wrote in his suicide note. “They fought and died valiantly with faith in our

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* <https://www.atomicheritage.org/profile/emperor-hirohito>

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* <https://www.atomicheritage.org/profile/emperor-hirohito>

ultimate victory. In death I wish to atone for my part in the failure to achieve that victory and I apologize to the souls of those dead fliers and their bereaved families.

I wish the young people of Japan to find a moral in my death. To be reckless is only to aid the enemy. You must abide by the spirit of the Emperor's decision with utmost perseverance. Do not forget your rightful pride in being Japanese.

You are the treasure of the nation. With all the fervor of spirit of the special attackers, strive for the welfare of Japan and for peace throughout the world."<sup>22</sup>



*Japanese Sign Surrender Accord on the Battleship Missouri, September 2, 1945, Courtesy US Navy*

President Truman went on to make other historic decisions like the Marshall Plan to reconstruct Europe, the beginning of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to protect the free nations of the continent from Soviet aggression.

One year after the tragedy of Hiroshima, Truman created the Atomic Energy Commission for the peaceful use of nuclear power.

Historians, philosophers, and writers still debate the morality and need of such a weapon of mass destruction to end the conflict. Perhaps another President would have taken a different approach.

We will never know.

<sup>22</sup> [https://ww2db.com/person\\_bio.php?person\\_id=170](https://ww2db.com/person_bio.php?person_id=170)

What we do know is that Truman showed character, courage, decisiveness, and responsibility as well as humility; the marks of a true Commander in Chief.



### **Thoughts over the Use of the Atomic Bomb to End the War with Japan**

“Some Americans recall the event with shame and express their fervent hope that nuclear weapons never be used again. Others firmly believe that the use of atomic bombs saved American lives by ending the war prior to a bloody American invasion of Japan. More challenging to consider is whether it was an unjustifiable act in a fully justified war.”<sup>23</sup>

Reflection on the morality of the event is expressed in the following thoughts.

*The atomic bomb made the prospect of future war unendurable. It has led us up those last few steps to the mountain pass; and beyond there is a different country.*

— J. Robert Oppenheimer

*As human beings, our greatness lies not so much in being able to remake the world — that is the myth of the atomic age — as in being able to remake ourselves.*

— Mahatma Gandhi

*There are voices which assert that the bomb should never have been used at all. I cannot associate myself with such ideas. ... I am surprised that very worthy people—but people who in most cases had no intention of proceeding to the Japanese front themselves—should adopt the position that rather than throw this bomb, we should have sacrificed a million American and a quarter of a million British lives. — Winston Churchill*

*But they (the Japanese) also showed a meanness and viciousness towards their enemies equal to the Huns. Genghis Khan and his hordes could not have been more merciless. I have no doubts about whether the two atom bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were necessary. Without them, hundreds of thousands of civilians in Malaya and Singapore, and millions in Japan itself, would have perished.*

— Lee Kuan Yew, the Former Prime Minister of Singapore

*The intercepts of Japanese Imperial Army and Navy messages disclosed without exception that Japan's armed forces were determined to fight a final Armageddon battle in the homeland against an Allied invasion. The Japanese called this strategy Ketsu Go (Operation Decisive). It was founded on the premise that American morale was brittle and could be shattered by heavy losses in the initial invasion. American politicians would then gladly negotiate an end to the war far more generous than unconditional surrender.*

— Richard B. Frank, Historian

*The Japanese code of Bushido — ‘the way of the warrior’ — was deeply ingrained. The concept of Yamato-damashii equipped each soldier with a strict code: Never be*

<sup>23</sup> <http://origins.osu.edu/history-news/time-confront-ethics-hiroshima>

*captured, never break down, and never surrender. Surrender was dishonorable. Each soldier was trained to fight to the death and was expected to die before suffering dishonor. Defeated Japanese leaders preferred to take their own lives in the painful samurai ritual of seppuku (called hara kiri in the West). Warriors who surrendered were deemed not worthy of regard or respect. — John T. Correll*

*Much of the confusion involves the definition of terms like 'surrender.' The Japanese did indeed float various schemes to end the war, but on terms that were totally unacceptable to any Allied power. Among other things, these schemes involved no occupation, no dismantling of militarism or imperialism, and no punishment of war criminals. No retaliation for the savage crimes in China, the East Indies, and elsewhere. Then, after a hiatus of a couple years, Japan would launch the next wave of aggression. They were clearly not talking 'surrender' in any sense of the term we might recognize. ... When we consider the toll of not dropping the bombs, always remember the many thousands of civilians who were dying under Japanese occupation in China and Indonesia throughout 1945, and we should continue counting the deaths that would have occurred at that rate through 1946. Nothing was going to stop that short of the total destruction of Japanese war-making capacity. Add to this the murder of all Allied POWs in Japanese hands, as the Japanese had ordered in the event of a direct attack on the mainland. Put those figures together, together with likely Japanese fatalities, you get about ten million dead — and that is a conservative figure. Most of those additional deaths would have been East and Southeast Asians, mainly Japanese and Chinese. — Philip Jenkins*

*In 1945, Secretary of War Stimson, visiting my headquarters in Germany, informed me that our government was preparing to drop an atomic bomb on Japan. I was one of those who felt that there were a number of cogent reasons to question the wisdom of such an act. During his recitation of the relevant facts, I had been conscious of a feeling of depression, and so I voiced to him my grave misgivings, first on the basis of my belief that Japan was already defeated and that dropping the bomb was completely unnecessary, and secondly because I thought that our country should avoid shocking world opinion by the use of a weapon whose employment was, I thought, no longer mandatory as a measure to save American lives. — Dwight David Eisenhower*

*The Japanese had, in fact, already sued for peace. The atomic bomb played no decisive part, from a purely military point of view, in the defeat of Japan. — Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander in Chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet*

*The use of [the atomic bombs] at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender because of the effective sea blockade and the successful bombing with conventional weapons. ... The lethal possibilities of atomic warfare in the future are frightening. My own feeling was that in being the first to use it, we had adopted an ethical standard common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages. I was not taught to make war in that fashion, and wars cannot be won by destroying women and children. — Fleet Admiral William D. Leahy, Chief of Staff to President Truman, 1950*

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*The atomic bomb had nothing to do with the end of the war at all.*

— Major General Curtis Lemay, XXI Bomber Command, September 1945

*The first atomic bomb was an unnecessary experiment. ... It was a mistake to ever drop it . . . [the scientists] had this toy and they wanted to try it out, so they dropped it.*

— Fleet Admiral William Halsey Jr., 1946

*On the basis of available evidence, however, it is clear that the two atomic bombs . . . alone were not decisive in inducing Japan to surrender. Despite their destructive power, the atomic bombs were not sufficient to change the direction of Japanese diplomacy. The Soviet invasion was. Without the Soviet entry in the war, the Japanese would have continued to fight until numerous atomic bombs, a successful allied invasion of the home islands, or continued aerial bombardments, combined with a naval blockade, rendered them incapable of doing so.*

— Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, Japanese Historian

*Military vulnerability, not civilian vulnerability, accounts for Japan's decision to surrender. Japan's military position was so poor that its leaders would likely have surrendered before invasion, and at roughly the same time in August 1945, even if the United States had not employed strategic bombing or the atomic bomb. Rather than concern for the costs and risks to the population, or even Japan's overall military weakness vis-a-vis the United States, the decisive factor was Japanese leaders' recognition that their strategy for holding the most important territory at issue—the home islands—could not succeed.*

— Robert Pape

*Let me say only this much to the moral issue involved: Suppose Germany had developed two bombs before we had any bombs. And suppose Germany had dropped one bomb, say, on Rochester and the other on Buffalo, and then having run out of bombs she would have lost the war. Can anyone doubt that we would then have defined the dropping of atomic bombs on cities as a war crime, and that we would have sentenced the Germans who were guilty of this crime to death at Nuremberg and hanged them?*

— Leó Szilárd, physicist who played a role in the Manhattan Project



## About the Author

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and is available, as well as other books, at both Amazon.com and <http://www.iodicebooks.com/>.

The first of this two-part essay is part of his new book, *The Return of Mussolini, The Rise of Modern Day Tyranny*, and is now available on Amazon at [https://smile.amazon.](https://smile.amazon.com/dp/B098FW4C3F/ref=sr11?dchild=1&keywords=The+Return+of+Mussolini%3A+The+Rise+of+Modern+Day+Tyranny&qid=1625218242&s=books&sr=1-1)

[com/dp/B098FW4C3F/ref=sr11?dchild=1&keywords=The+Return+of+Mussolini%3A+The+Rise+of+Modern+Day+Tyranny&qid=1625218242&s=books&sr=1-1](https://smile.amazon.com/dp/B098FW4C3F/ref=sr11?dchild=1&keywords=The+Return+of+Mussolini%3A+The+Rise+of+Modern+Day+Tyranny&qid=1625218242&s=books&sr=1-1)

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## Becoming a Thai National Female Leader on a Successful Path



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### *A Case Study of Major General Lady Asanee Saovapap*



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#### **Abstract**

*This study was configured to examine one Thai leader's life history and work, namely Major General Lady Asanee Saovapap. At a time when female leadership throughout the world in key governmental and business levels of leadership has begun to show potential for steady growth, studies of individual female heads are particularly*

*noteworthy, especially in countries with ever-changing government types – be it a parliamentary system, a military junta, a nascent democracy, or a constitutional monarchy. The method selected for this study largely involved autobiographical and biographical research. The data was derived from the subject's self-recorded history and accountings of her closest associates. In all, 29 key informants were interviewed during 2019-2020 for this study, employing different question sets. The empirical data's trustworthiness was thoroughly cross-checked for reliability. The outcomes of this research overwhelmingly portray the subject as an exemplary figure who converted formidable challenges into life and career-building opportunities, bettering society overall in the process.*

## **Introduction**

The 21st century was predicted to launch an era marked by female leaders' rise as many of the world's societies had defined human rights as inclusive of women's rights (Akanda, 2020). However, the shortage of female leaders has been noted at all levels of government. The lack of gender parity in Thai society adversely affects the image of a people's democracy attempting to persevere in a country marked by continued vestiges of inequality. The United Nations declared gender equality an essential organizational cultural trait, embodied as Sustainable Development Goal 5 (United Nations, 2015). Leadership theories have led to a paradigm shift from viewing leadership as an innate trait towards the adoption of models that recognize leadership as a social construction. Alongside this theorization, gender and leadership remain of considerable interest, particularly given women's underrepresentation in leadership positions (Storberg-Walker & Haber-Curran, 2017).

Major General Lady Asanee Saovapap (Khunying) served as Advisor to the President of the Council of Social Work of Thailand from 2018 to 2020. She was a two-time senator. Her public service was exemplary, as evidenced by the many prestigious awards she received along the way. As a leader with a life path as complicated as a labyrinth, she overcame historically marginalizing obstacles until ultimately attaining career success (Eagly & Carli, 2007). A study of the female lead's role in Thai society, which is imbued with authentic decision-making powers, could produce a model for future emulation, presenting the female leader's worldview as the core of a burgeoning, democratic society. To create gender equality in positions of leadership of a more lasting nature, especially during a global pandemic – broader social conditions and goals must be realized. One endeavor is to reshape daily living conditions consistent with Thai culture and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2015).

## **Research Question and Objectives**

Suppose Major General Lady Asanee Saovapap's life and career can truly serve as a present-day leadership model. If so, then would it not be critical to examine the most significant aspects of her life story, her family environment, and her work record during different periods of her life – from a young girl to ultimately ascending to the position of a formidable Thai national leader? This study was designed to do just that: to explore, ascertain, and describe the milestones of her personal life, including the impact of

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family, education, and work, as well as her societal contributions — all of which led to burnishing her place on the world stage.

### Theoretical, Conceptual Framework

One challenge of academically deconstructing an autobiography and biography (Wagner-Egelhaaf, M. 2019) is how to best focus on the work and life, profession and person, occupation, and preoccupations of the individual be examined. The examination of her life describes and reflects upon past phenomena through a complex network of perspectives. In this case, a long record of leadership has often shown despondency and defeat, primarily resulting from the harsh realities of gender inequality in Thai society. A particular Thai idiom says, “The husband is the foreleg of the elephant, the wife is the hind leg,” which indicates the central position that the female occupies (Authentic Leader) in this configuration (Mantler, 2020). Regardless of its positioning, obstacles to female success are significant. It takes tremendous courage and perseverance to break through the *glass ceiling* to overcome these challenges in carrying out leadership duties and responsibilities (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Strong support from personal and professional networks helps maintain the necessary fortitude for individuals to instill fairness in society. Dedication to equity requires empathy – something covered under Buddhist teachings. Deriving happiness from providing opportunities to others involves harmonizing core values and norms of Thai culture, which essentially originate from infusing Buddhism dhamma faith, love, and hope into daily practices (Khwanmuang, 2014). Theories predicated upon women’s experiences – often referred to as “women-normed” (Storberg-Walker & Haber-Curran, 2017) – take into account women’s multiple roles and identities in Easternized culture socialization. These theories also include multiple paradigms (Kapasi & Sang, 2016), such as the self-cultivation of virtues (Wang & Hackett, 2020), and how they are reflected in different points or ways of examining contributions to society.

### Method

This study involves qualitative biographic research: a collection and interpretation of personal interviews and documents (Goodwin, 2012) and the semiotic theory (Irvine, 1998) of applying life narratives as they occur. The metrics used consisted of conducting and interpreting semi-structured interviews. In all, 29 individuals were designated as key informants, including historians and those claiming to have a close relationship at different times during the subject’s life. These individuals were divided into five groups. The instrument used to produce the empirical data was comprised of five different sets of questionnaires. After gaining institutional permission to conduct the research project, data were collected from February 2019 to February 2020.

### Data Analysis

Inductive content analysis methods were employed to derive meaning and social norm values from identified groups. Culture-based beliefs and traditions of contemporary lifestyle were used in formulating narratives and focused on the symbolic interaction theory (Linder, 2015). They were based on significant contributors’ perspectives and

ability to attain credible information (trustworthiness) (Nunning, 2015). The authors used a triangulation technique to analyze data. The research project was approved by the Research Project Subcommittee, Royal Thai Army Medical Department Book: No. N013q / 61\_Exp on January 26, 2019.

### **Research Findings: *Life Milestones***

Major General Lady Asanee Saovapap (Khunying) was born on July 27, 1933, shortly after a coup in Thailand, and before World War II. During this period, confusion and economic turmoil prevailed, and the Thai people greatly suffered. Khunying grew up under the patriarchy of Khun Prasitara (grandfather) – former director-general of the Royal Irrigation Department – in a house located at the edge of the Bangkok-Yai Canal, a tributary of Bangkok's Chao Phraya River. She was raised in a tightly-knit, multi-generational family, which included both her parents and grandparents. Her father worked as a postmaster. Her mother had received an 8th grade education from an all-girls' high school at a time when most Thai people had not received a primary education or even completed a government-mandated early elementary education (since 1921, the government announced that Thais had to read and write in order to complete this required early elementary school education).

During her childhood years, her family split up; to this day, neither Khunying nor her other family members are able to pinpoint the exact reasons for the family's demise. In Thai culture, grandparents and other relatives are no longer acknowledged when a couple is unable to reconcile their differences as spouses are expected to love each other unconditionally and stay together for life. In this family, however, Khunying's parents had routinely aired their grievances and expressed their unhappiness openly before other members of the household, forever generating instability in the children's upbringing.

Khunying ran away from home during a period of national political turbulence. At that time, Khunying was only 15 years of age and was in her fifth year of secondary school in the NakhonSiThammarat Province. She received a letter from her grandmother that her father was diagnosed with epilepsy and was displaying symptoms of paralysis, making self-care an impossibility. Khunying was anxious about her father's condition, but did not dare seek her mother's permission to visit him. She snuck onto a train along her young sister to see their father, with the assistance of a family friend who was a railway officer. After their initial visit with him, the sisters returned to live with their mother.

At the age of 18, Khunying's mother wanted her to remain at home to help raise her young sister and brother. However, she was determined to continue her education. She decided to leave home again, doing so with the assistance of the same railway worker who ensured her safe voyage to Bangkok. She moved in with her grandfather and father. From there, she began her studies at the Thai Red Cross Nursing School at the same time of the Rebellion of June 29, 1951 – an uprising that was deemed a failed coup attempt by officers of the Royal Thai Navy against the government of Prime Minister Plaek Pibulsonggram (Phibun). Chaos enveloped Bangkok and unsafe conditions were evident throughout the Thai Red Cross Nursing School as well.

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*Major General Lady Asanee Saovapap (Khunying)  
after promotion*

Although that period in her life was rife with conflict and uncertainty, Khunying would eventually overcome her fears to bravely face the risks inherent with her runaway status, largely as a result of her family's early establishment of a sound moral foundation, her incessant love of learning, and the basic tenets of her deep Buddhist faith. This was inevitable as Khunying had been imbued, early on, with a life-long commitment to continuously seek both self and community betterment – all grounded in multi-faceted allegiance to Nation, Religion, and Royalty.

Although Thailand is not recognized as championing equal treatment for girls and women, it is important to note that it does not significantly deprive females of education or work opportunities – generally. However, women are systematically excluded from holding prominent positions in government, in the military, and in private business organizations.

With respect to early education, Thailand enacted the *Primary Education Act* in 1921 when an absolute monarchy ruled the country. This primary education system sought to compel children age 7 (in some areas, adjusted to 8, 9, and 10 years of age) to be enrolled in elementary school until age 14. This act was made gender-neutral even before Thailand changed its rule to a constitutional monarchy. However, even with the introduction of a constitutional monarchy – and hence a more discernible form of government – gender rights were not heralded under new rule.

Regardless of unequal treatment, Khunying continued to advance in her field and was promoted from nurse sergeant to major general, shattering the usual institutional barriers posed to female advancement in the process. She held several important positions in local, national, and international organizations in later years, achieving benefits and























justice for historically marginalized and underprivileged groups. She unfailingly persevered in accomplishing the objectives of multiple royal project missions. Her inspiration continued to be predicated upon foundational Buddhist tenets, guiding her to promote acts of love, faith, and hope in praxis to benefit Thai society.




Her life's path metaphorically resembles a labyrinth (Smith, 1979), occupying seven levels of activity demarcation – each of which is identified by a traditional cloverleaf symbol. The cloverleaf consists of three to five petals, each symbolizing love, faith, hope, and luck, each demarcating major life events from childhood to the present day. The labyrinth's first level is foundational in nature, serving as a support base for successive life events. Her self-declared primary motivators are comprised of love of family, love of learning, love of intimate relationships, love of work, love of appointed duties, love of the marginalized, and the greatest love of all: love of virtue – sufficiently in abundance to leave a lasting legacy. Each layer of the labyrinth is labeled, indicating the various points in her life wherein hard work, integrity, determination, and perseverance all contributed to her advancement from sergeant army nurse to major general – the highest position attainable for a Thai woman.

Her most impactful experiences are shown in *Table 1* below:

**Table 1: Theme and Subtheme Concepts**

Theme	Subtheme	Cloverleaf
<b>Labyrinth Level 1:</b> Love of family and fear of departing from childhood home ) <b>Painful Point</b> (	1. Overcome fear with self-encouragement	
	2. Make progress through the study	
<b>Labyrinth Level 2:</b> Love of learning tirelessly through graduation ) <b>Transforming Point</b> (	3. Study nursing	
	4. Obtain a position as a new graduate nurse	
	5. Find a life partner	
<b>Labyrinth Level 3:</b> Love of relationships and entry into marriage ) <b>Growing Point</b> (	6. Stabilize the relationship and overcome marital obstacles	
	7. Proceed as a partnership	
<b>Labyrinth Level 4:</b> Love, work, and family ) <b>Energizing Point</b> (	8. Work diligently, seizing opportunities along the way	
	9. Travel abroad	
	10. Return from journeys and improve work performance	
<b>Labyrinth Level 5:</b> Love of duty and virtue; commitment to repay society ) <b>Empowering</b>	11. Care of aging parents	
	12. Show kindness and empathy to the members of both families	

<b>Point(</b>	13.Repay the gifts bestowed by the planet, religion, and the royalty	
<b>Labyrinth Level 6: Love of people and support of the poor )Inspiring Point(</b>	14.Support job creation and income generation	
	15. Narrow the income gap and social inequalities; promote educational opportunities	
	16. Value people for what they do	
<b>Labyrinth Level 7: Leave a legacy )Sparkling Point(</b>	17. Volunteer to support communities	
	18. Faithfully support religion	
	19. Promote and support Thai women-oriented activities	
	20. Demonstrate reverence for the royalty and Thai culture	

**Note:** 3-petal clover leaf  4-petal clover leaf  5-petal clover leaf 

**Transforming Point:** Since attending nursing school in 1951, the year of the Manhattan Rebellion, the country's economic and political stability has been repeatedly tested and witnessed chaotic times, especially after the military's failed attempt to overthrow the government; however, Khunying remained determined to continue her studies, always supported by her nursing teacher and friends.

**Growing Point:** After graduating from her nursing program, Khunying began an intimate relationship with the person who would become her spouse. The pair would be described as the "perfect couple who turned adversity into charisma," "a meritorious couple," and finally, "a majestic couple."

**Energizing Point:** Khunying's early experiences working as a practical nurse in a province were recognized before moving to Bangkok. She followed her husband there to study and shortly thereafter, worked abroad for four years. Both recognized the opportunities involved by accepting positions overseas. These experiences provided Khunying with new knowledge, alternate ways of thinking and processing data, a greater understanding of diverse societies, and new ways to confront and handle obstacles and problems. She developed workplace efficiencies which related her ability to integrate and create harmony within the context of corporate value. She was regarded as a budding leader when she assumed the position of Director of the Royal Thai Army Nursing College.

Her evolution was premised on at least three dimensions: inner self-identity, intermediate interactive frontier, and external dimension. She was regarded as a person who did the right thing, at the right time, and within the right circumstances. She pursued opportunities to expand her career as was characterized by a close colleague as follows:

*She was sincere, caring, supportive, worthy, and humble and was respected by others. Her leadership consistently sought knowledge and intelligence; many people came to rely on her advice as a correct solution for them (G4T3).*

*She fosters good human relations and shows kindness and soft verbal communication skills. She advocates working together in a democratic atmosphere where leaders are willing to listen to the team and other people along the way; when angry, she knew forgiveness and practiced mutual respect (G3P4F2).*

*She made quick decisions, which helped the public solve common problems; her actions were deemed very impressive by supervisors and workers alike (G4P2F1).*

Another colleague reflected that:

*She is down-to-earth, simple, warm, supported by family, radiates true love, and is respected; she has expansive vision, morality, and is a talented person to be honored. She always gives people opportunities in all areas. She thinks of others as a whole before consideration of self, e.g., [giving] nursing students who pass the 1st and 2nd levels [of] exams the opportunity to continue study abroad (G3P5F1).*

The National Leader of Nursing Profession mentioned:

*She has been a virtuous person since childhood. She always works hard and is lucky to have a warm, supportive family to make the job go smoothly. She is of good character, promotes well-being, is an excellent facilitator, [and is] a high-quality person — calm and gentle, able to plan great things. I am proud of her for becoming a role model in the nursing profession (G4P1F4).*

The shocking events in her life are remembered today. She stood in senior leadership soldiers' line ranks but was spurned by military medical students, perhaps due to her previous position as a military sergeant nurse. A turning point for her was the opportunity to reform the *Educational System of Thai Army Nurses* to incorporate professional nursing standards as a professional nurse. Moreover, she added to the nursing profession's capacity building by including professional nurses in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and police units, creating a united and robust network. She drove academic and professional progress to be on par with the international profession.

**Empowering Point:** She was elected President of the Nursing Association of Thailand in 1991 and held many other honorable positions, such as President of the National Women's Council and appointment to the Thai Social Welfare Council.

Her impressive contributions to Thai society improved the quality of life for children, youth, women, and disadvantaged groups in society. She championed equity and equality for all people upon attaining positions of authority. The National Women's Council represented an opportunity to help people who were marginalized and lacked primary education throughout various regions. She helped women develop their potential, secure gainful employment, earn their own livelihood, share in benefits, and additionally created social networks to stimulate self-empowerment and self-efficacy further. In Thai culture, Buddhism dharma influences Thai people's lives from birth to death. No matter what burdens or complicated duties were presented, she always felt

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indebted to her aging parents – never forsaking their contributions to her development – and unfailingly cared for them in alignment with Buddhist core tenets.

From 1996 to 1999, she served as a senator. Her constituents included women and children as well as victims of violence and sexual harassment. Until recently, she was involved in school projects throughout the country. The young senator who worked with her on women's affairs on the Women's Committee referred to her as follows:

*People saw her as a hand-molded brick, not a block brick, because she adjusted her personality, relationship, and work using a skillful hand, intelligent head, and gentle heart (G3P3F3).*

*By applying her knowledge, she sought to improve working conditions with love, faith, commitment, and mutual hope; she was able to effect significant changes more than ever in society, from raising workplace standards to advocating lifelong learning. Furthermore, as always, her subordinates and colleagues love her (G4P3F2).*

**Inspiring Point:** As a senator, Khunying had the opportunity to benefit society, such as rehabilitating and promoting the welfare of women who had been subjected to violence. Initially, campaigns and charity events were organized to stop violence against children and women. Moreover, she organized campaigns to construct homes in various provinces to provide temporary shelter for women and children who had been abused. She realized that those individuals needed help from those authorized to provide such assistance. As to her role in these efforts, the following was said:

*She is like a mother, [committed] to listen and understand and show tenderness and kindness to everyone, not only holding them in her heart, but [supporting them], teaching them how to trap fish instead of taking fish, and providing an example to fund a rural career for low educated, low income, and unemployed women (G5P2).*

*In punishing the accused, we should not focus on the law or solely on the accused issues but give them a chance to do well. She had 'the wind under the wings' to forcefully and actively [uplift] those around her who were supporters [including her] family, brothers, sisters, teachers, etc. She was the force needed to push, pull, and sustain others in order for them to achieve their best and preserve their integrity (G5P2).*

*... She highlighted the discord between men and women in Thai society as she worked to help patients, jointly committing to cases concerning children and women, as functioning as the key in society used to understand injustice in Thai society (G5P2).*

**Growing Point:** She practices her religious principles fervently by extracting the central theme of Buddhist essence, always striving to apply wisdom, virtue, and dignity in everyday life activities.

She is proud of her outstanding national achievements of providing shelter in difficult times for those in need and offering advancement opportunities to her fellow citizens. For example, the “Praewa-Thai Silk Take a Dream” project demonstrates Thais' embracing of conservation, appreciation of diversity, and observance of local wisdom

passed down throughout history. In addition to local Thais, she had value-added projects that generated praise for local female artisans:

*She is a role model, a good leader in patronizing the temple and sustaining Buddhist [principles]; she did not expect anything in return for giving alms to monks as an expression of her faith, invoking the 'jewel of jewels' – sacrifice, physical strength, wealth, the power of faith that did not decrease at all. She is a stable force in Buddhism and exhibits mindfulness and good consciousness (G4P3F2).*

The **Sparkling Point** in her life spotlights her commitment to volunteerism. In the tradition of “Mother’s Day,” she made and distributed jasmine bouquets to the poor and disabled groups. For this she received high praise from customers around the country. The proceeds from the sale of jasmine to the Queen helped to establish a “fund” from which proceeds were distributed pursuant to royal wishes, such as the Queen’s provision of particular assistance to the homeless every official day. There are over 100 people per day who await the distribution of a lunchtime meal. She aimed to ameliorate this situation head-on. She and the officers were always willing to offer their services to the Queen’s project to help Thai society overall by aiding the poor and hungry.

When Khunying served as President of the *National Thai Women’s Council*, she attended the meeting of representatives of the *International Women’s Council* to help Thais understand the legal and cultural traditions of the *Association of Southeast Asian Nations* (ASEAN) laws and to serve as active participants of the ASEAN civil society. A revered part of ASEAN operations for Thai women and for Khunying personally was a particular regional grouping that promoted economic, political, and security cooperation among its ten members (i.e., Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam), known as the *International Women’s Visiting Program*. This program was designed to strengthen the relationship between the *International Women’s Council* and the *National Council of Women* – with Khunying serving as its Chairperson. This project was introduced by lauding the Chairperson and her team members by stating that the “ASEAN women took turns dominating the meeting. In 1996, [Khunying] had the opportunity to become a vice president of ASEAN. She received overwhelming support for Thailand’s Projects for ‘Preventing Violence Against Children, Adolescents and Women.’”

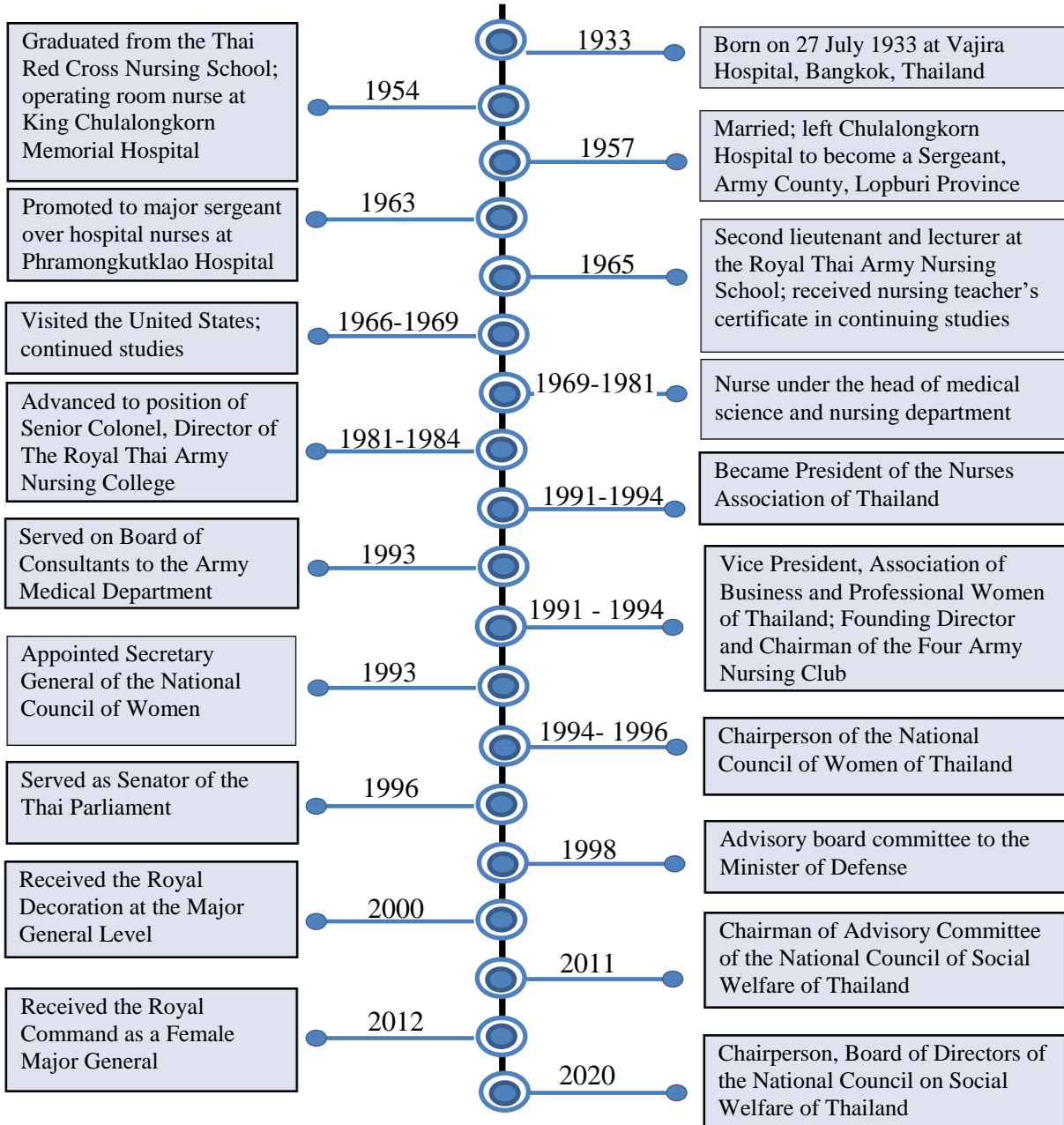
Khunying’s efforts through this program and throughout her adult life were done for the benefit of individuals, groups, and society to improve quality of life and incentivize self-reliance rather than societal dependence. She reflected that:

*For the past 58 years, the intent of my work has been to advance Thai women. It is recognized that the status of Thai women is higher than in many countries. Thai women are changing more and more because of accessing higher education. In the future, as women, we must adhere to the work delineated by the organization’s constitution and help each other elevate the status of women in Thai society.*

Loyalty and devotion to the monarchy as a female soldier and advancing from sergeant to lieutenant general, Khunying has indeed been loyal to the King and Royal Family all

while highlighting culture harmony and supporting various royal initiatives to aid disadvantaged Thais. Her timeline is set forth in *Figure 1*.

**Figure 1: Major General Lady Asanee Saowabhap's Life Path**



The life of Major General Lady Asanee Saovapap is a portrait of a Thai woman who was born before World War II and grew up under the Ratanakosin monarchy. Early in her childhood, her family's breakup affected her mind, mood, behavior, and development. It was a painful point in her history, prompting her to leave her home and to eventually find solace in pursuing medical studies – all at a time when she was caring for her ailing

father. These early experiences helped to shape her character and to mold her into a servant leader. In essence, these life events formed the necessary foundation for her to take risks wisely while preparing to courageously withstand the obstacles she would confront later in life.

Thai traditional values influenced her life early on, teaching her that children must respect and obey their parents at all times. As Buddhist doctrine deems it sinful to cause parents suffering (Khwanmuang, 2014), she unfailingly adhered to this absolute doctrine of parental respect and deference — even during her teen years. [By contrast in the United States, research indicates that the majority of teenagers aged 14-15 who had run away from their homes developed serious problems with their parents or felt general dislike, experienced depression, and were often subject to detention and addiction (Tucker et al., 2011).] Khunying's grandparents educated her in manners, respect, obedience to and love of parents, care for elders, showing benevolence to the marginalized, politeness, and steadfast worship (fortified by Buddhist teachings).

Although she came from a broken family and faced the outside world alone, she was afraid to be lonely and was determined to pursue all available opportunities for self-advancement. She could readily empathize with the plight of the poor, the homeless, the very young, the aged, and the disabled and was committed to expanding their opportunities and providing assistance. She also believed in forging partnerships to provide meaningful aid to women and the needy, all of whom primarily resided in rural areas. By elevating their economic situation, she believed that they could take better care of themselves as well as their families and communities.

Women in traditional Thai society have been metaphorically compared to the elephant's back feet but have had to follow the front feet in daily life; moreover, their prospects for vocational development and financial growth were severely limited. The quest for positions of middle and high-level management was, and remains, hindered. This disparate treatment of women largely replicates unequal gender treatment in other developing countries. According to a survey of Lebanese managers and employees, female executives with high-level knowledge and skills were routinely denied promotions solely based on their sex; men were viewed as "more appropriate" leaders — better equipped with risk-discerning and quick decision-making skills (Wiewiora & Kowalkiewicz, 2018).

Khunying's successes in her vocation developed from her inner strength; she believed in the faith of perseverance and intended to use it to achieve her objectives. Accordingly, she was ready to take on new obligations, expand her knowledge, and commit to a lifelong learner's status. She saw everything as a learning experience and an opportunity to improve and develop her identity and uniqueness as well as increase others' opportunities to grow and advance. Her energizing spirit sought to empower and inspire those she encountered and who would ostensibly become part of her individual supportive networks (Wong & Laschinger, 2013; Sosik et al., 2019).

Balancing family and work harmoniously brought her happiness in life. Strengthening and empowering people benefitted not only her own family (one of her adopted

daughters is training to be a film producer in the U.S.) but also the larger community, society, and the whole nation (Moxley, 2015). She penetrated obstacles appearing at each stage of life – from early childhood to school age, from adolescence to adulthood, because she thought outside the traditional frame of advancement. Moreover, having a husband who acted as a full partner, a committed family man, a reliable source of support, an influential mentor, and the co-architect of a social network, helped her assume direct responsibility. Therefore, she had external power commensurate with “the wind under the wings” to serve; she overcame traditional gender barriers and worked with pride and dignity (Reis & Grady, 2019).

Major General Lady Asanee Saovapap shares characteristics similar to other female leaders, including curiosity, love, and a commitment to lifelong learning. Her clear ideology has centered on showing mercy to, and reducing the suffering of, the citizens she serves. She shares with other female leaders a broad vision to increase educational opportunities and acquire new informational sources to positively change societal attitudes and make wise decisions (Heslin, Keating, & Ashford, 2020). She always believed that educated advisers were crucial to sound decision-making and to the formation of effective informational networks (Kooskora, 2005; Storberg-Walker & Haber-Curran, 2017). With her thirst for knowledge and access to experienced consultants, Khunying has demonstrated, time and again, the ability to turn a crisis into an opportunity by taking intelligent risks.

She continuously displays good ethical behavior and projects an ever-evolving positive moral image. Her educational achievement level transcends others her same age, exhibiting modernity and freedom of action within a harmonized family structure (Laekngam, 2013). Moreover, she thinks outside the box and accepts full accountability for her actions, respect for her various roles, and a firm commitment to helping people. Her actions reflect her gratitude to the land of her birth and her loyalty to the nation, her religious tenets, and the King. Her devotion to Buddhism has helped her cultivate her family while shaping the social context within the nation. She expressed the following:

*Teachings by grandparents on respect, obedience, and respect for the traditional family, cultivating a polite and respectful Thai lifestyle, and exercising self-discipline must be put into practice. Thai women's culture has been refined and follows the concept, ‘Do not be a full cup of water, that could not be filled anymore and be ready to adapt for the better.’*

By working in and learning from foreign country encounters, her demeanor and actions often differ from that of other Thai women, yet she has not eschewed traditional principles (Martin, 2020). Furthermore, in contrast to traditional male governance, her leadership style conforms more to the cumulative findings of a meta-analysis of 160 studies which indicate that women engage in a more participatory or democratic governance model rather than the more dictatorial or less orderly structure attributed to many male leaders (Hopkins, O’Neil, Passarelli, & Bilimoria, 2008).

How does the cultivation of the female leadership identity in Thai culture produce a good citizen? One values patriotism, religious faith, and loyalty to the King and Royal Family as

the triple pillars comprising the Thai ideological perspective. In this regard, Major General Lady Asanee Saovapap continues to inspire and benefit the Thai nation.

During the reign of King Rama IX and Queen Sirikit, the Queen's Royal Highness visited every region to hear people's troubles – an action which led to the creation of 4,877 projects under a blanket royal initiative. It is undeniable that these projects were beneficial and produced empirical results. For Thai people who are open-minded and think positively – like Major General Lady Asanee Saovapap who worked side-by-side with her husband as the kind physician and trustful nurse – needed services were delivered to underserved communities in remote areas. Khunying continues to help people affected by economic and social problems through her work with the Social Work Council, a Royal Patronage organization.

An authentic leader's key characteristics include a commitment to transparency, accountability, and honesty. An authentic leader's work ethic is consistent with the theoretical leadership model and centers around the values of responsibility and verifiability (Hejase, Haddad, Massoud, & Farha, 2013; Storberg-Walker & Haber-Curran, 2017; Shaddox & Letra, 2019). Her life's work has exhibited all of these traits.

Despite the coronavirus outbreak affecting more than 212 countries, including Thailand, Khunying remains the leader of a large social mobilization team, serving as the President of the Social Welfare Council of Thailand. In this manner, people in crisis are allocated necessary supplies to mitigate their suffering.

### **Limitation of Case Study**

One limitation of this study pertains to the fact that the critical informants of this study did not reveal potential biases regarding the subject's assumed loyalty to monarchy and government. Exploration of these factors would be required to strengthen future projects.

### **Conclusion**

Using a labyrinth comprised of seven levels in analogical idiom, the cloverleaf was used to record the subject's major life events, characterized by love, faith, hope, and well-being resulting in transcending the usual barriers to success encountered by Thai women. With age has come empowerment, virtue, and self-fulfilling self-actualization. Her educational attainments and Buddhist essence have guided her thinking, acting, and responding to social phenomena. Those experiences have played a vital role in developing leadership skills. Wisdom, mindfulness, and smart decision-making have resulted in necessary societal changes which have reduced inequality and increased social justice by harmonizing traditional culture with modern-day feminism.

The work and achievements of Major General Lady Asanee Saovapap provide a leadership model that could be used to develop, construct, and activate female leadership in harmonization with Thai cultural norms. Her example serves to strengthen the social networks which support a social-democratic climate for women's leadership development.

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*Courtesy, Kyle Sparks and Patagonia*

## Five Lessons from Patagonia, a Successful Company with a Conscience

— Ritch K. Eich, Thousand Oaks, California, USA

On a quiet street at the north end of Downtown Ventura, California, is a store that sells much more than high-end outdoor clothing and gear. Patagonia, named for the environmentally-rich region in South America, also pushes an idea: that minimizing humankind's footprint on the planet is a business as important as buying a well-made warm jacket for a trip to the Arctic.

Patagonia is one of the world's most innovative and environmentally-minded companies, and there's a lot corporate America can learn – and model – from Patagonia's way of doing business.

Patagonia is a hometown company I know well. My family buys their merchandise mainly as gifts especially during the December holidays, knowing we are getting high-quality goods from a company with a conscience. One reason I find Patagonia so impressive and refreshing is this company, worth over \$1 billion, isn't shoving blatant consumerism on the customer. In fact, one of Patagonia's best moments was its unique ad campaign called "Don't Buy This Jacket." Patagonia promoted anti-consumerism outright and criticized



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over-consumption by telling its customers how much water and carbon dioxide was used to make a certain Patagonia jacket the company had for sale.

It wasn't hypocrisy but another way Patagonia stokes client love and respect in an unusual way – by being honest and blunt. If you don't need this jacket, the company said, don't buy it.

Fighting climate change, protecting public lands and waterways, promoting sustainable agriculture, educating people about the need to use *Fair Trade* workers in its factories, and supporting environmentally-friendly government policies have long been the hallmark of the business founded by Yvon Chouinard, an accomplished rock climber and outdoorsman. "How you climb a mountain is more important than reaching the top," Chouinard once said.

In Chouinard's mind, winning is making progress on the environmental front and he's artfully using his company in a variety of ways to accomplish that. Among other things, Patagonia donates a portion of its revenue to environmental causes. It uses recycled, *Fair Trade*-certified and organic material in its clothing, deploys solar power at the company headquarters in Ventura, and co-founded the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (<https://apparelcoalition.org/origins/>) – a group of companies that has promised to reduce its environmental footprint.

To promote recycling in a manner that's rare to the clothing industry, Patagonia has held events where they'll fix Patagonia clothing for people for free. They've also published clothing repair guides. The company further allows some of its merchandise in good condition to be returned for credits and resold. The used products are cleaned, repaired, and sold on Patagonia's "Worn Wear" website (<https://wornwear.patagonia.com>) for lower prices. All of these novel programs have expanded the market for used goods in the clothing industry in a way that few have done before, while also increasing sales by making Patagonia's often expensive goods more accessible to customers with smaller budgets, like college students.

Patagonia has been exceptionally artful and innovative in its use of storytelling to inspire people. The company has posted several inspiring videos online that engage people to join the environmental cause. Perhaps Chouinard's most creative work is the full-length feature documentary film he co-produced with Robert Redford called, "Public Trust" (<https://www.patagonia.com/films/public-trust/>) about the fight to protect America's public lands from private industries such as oil drilling and mining companies. The film was released on *YouTube* last year in an effort to raise awareness and call people to action.

The business community would be smart to learn from Patagonia. Here are five lessons other companies can learn from Patagonia's way of doing business:

**1. Businesses can make hefty profits and do good, too.** Being a responsible company should be a goal of all businesses that's equally as important as boosting shareholder profits. Patagonia believes that if you're buying products to use while out and about in the environment, as a consumer you must care about, and protect, the environment or

you and your kids might not be able to enjoy it in the future. Promoting environmental conservation is directly tied to Patagonia's products, and Chouinard knows that businesses have a major impact on the environment and its resources; this is inevitable.

Businesses should find a way to tie their products to a positive message that helps people. For example, a company that sells skin care products could launch a healthcare campaign to educate people about ways to prevent skin cancer or take better care of their skin – and not just by using their product. Food companies and restaurant chains could support charities or programs that help low-income people or people living in isolated rural areas access fresh food. Pharmaceutical companies becoming enriched from the mass production and sale of COVID-19 vaccines could expand their charitable giving or find new ways to share their financial success with the communities they serve.

**2. Follow Patagonia's mission statement:** “Make the best product, cause no unnecessary harm, and use business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis.” Regardless of what type of business you have, a focus on value and safeguarding the environment should always be among the company's top goals.

This is also a message the public general supports. Many businesses have already taken steps to increase sustainability in their business practices and improve environmental stewardship. It's time for all of corporate America and small businesses too to jump on board in a much stronger way and consider the environment an equal stakeholder in the business along with the buying public. No company can be 100 percent sustainable – Chouinard acknowledges this – but many can, and should, do much better. Chouinard said, “Who are businesses really responsible to? Their customers? Shareholders? Employees? We would argue that it's none of the above.

Fundamentally, businesses are responsible to their resource base. Without a healthy environment there are no shareholders, no employees, no customers and no business” (<https://www.logomaker.com/blog/2013/03/11/15-quotes-to-inspire-small-business-owners-from-yvon-chouinard/>).

**3. Trust in, and use, science.** Turning to science can improve your products and help protect the environment as much as possible. Patagonia employs a team of scientists and engineers that use science to “develop, test and improve” Patagonia products as well as reduce its ecological footprint (<https://www.patagonia.com/stories/trust-the-scientists/story-94032.html>). According to Patagonia, the global clothing industry contributes up to 10 percent of worldwide carbon impacts. Patagonia has set a goal to reach “carbon neutrality” by 2025. Working toward that goal, Patagonia's scientists analyze environmental impact data and advise the company's product designers about the best fabrics and materials to use that have been found to have the least carbon footprint.

On its website, Patagonia says, “Science alone can't solve the drawbacks of different materials, but it makes the journey toward sustainability clearer. We know we can stand behind our transition to recycled materials because data gathered through life cycle assessments shows that using recycled fibers can reduce carbon emissions by 44 to 80

percent, depending on the fiber. There will always be trade-offs. For any given material, our scientists and designers need to find the best balance that does the most good.”

Businesses should embrace such a devotion to science if they haven’t already.

**4. Implement company policies that promote employee well-being and treat employees well.** Patagonia offers a flexible work schedule, one example of an employee-focused policy that many workers favor. The idea behind the flexible schedule is if a worker wants to go surfing, for instance, they should be able to surf, with a flexible shift, when the waves are good ([https://medium.com/@ash\\_sopp/the-future-of-work-what-we-can-learn-from-patagonia-2c923f70e38](https://medium.com/@ash_sopp/the-future-of-work-what-we-can-learn-from-patagonia-2c923f70e38)).

Decent pay should be a part of this. As companies become more successful and profitable, they should make changes to ensure that profitability cascades down the workforce in the form of higher wages or benefits for the employees. Amazon is one global business that has become hugely enriched by the pandemic as many people have moved to shopping more online. But while Amazon has raked in billions in additional profits during the pandemic, its workforce hasn’t shared that bounty. A few years ago, Amazon committed to paying all its U.S. employees at least \$15 an hour (which is \$31,200 annually for a full-time employee working 40 hours a week). Considering the company’s net worth is over \$1 trillion and founder and CEO Jeff Bezos’ worth was listed by Forbes as \$1.81 billion as of January 2021 (*Business Insider* reported that from March to June 2020, Bezos’ wealth rose by an estimated \$48 billion — <https://www.businessinsider.com/billionaires-net-worth-increases-coronavirus-pandemic-2020-7>), \$15 an hour isn’t enough.

**5. Be honest and true to your message.** Don’t lie to your customers about your products or services and don’t fake things in your advertising or marketing. Be very careful with photoshopped images. And remember, consumers especially don’t like a hypocrite. “If you can create a company of honest messaging and truth, your customers will look to you for what’s right,” Chouinard said (<https://alvanon.com/brands-must-speak-out-to-change-the-world-says-patagonia-founder/>).

My uncle was a Hoopa Indian who loved the earth. I think he and Yvon Chouinard would agree this Native American quote says it all: “When all the trees have been cut down, when all the animals have been hunted and the last fish eaten, when the air is unsafe to breathe, and the last stream poisoned, only then will you discover you can’t eat money.”

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## About the Author

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JOURNAL OF VALUES-BASED LEADERSHIP

# Peter Drucker's Principles, Philosophies, and Practices

— Professor M.S. Rao, Ph.D.

## Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this research paper is to explore Peter Drucker's principles, philosophies, and practices. Knowledge workers and thought leaders are explained and knowledge and wealth are differentiated. The paper advises how everyone can excel as a knowledge worker and implores the augmentation of a knowledge pipeline. It outlines competencies for 21<sup>st</sup>-century managers and offers a strategy in an unpredictable world. Despite rapid changes in technology, the impact of Drucker's ideas is shown to endure as his ideas on humanity, technology and prosperity are still relevant today. This article outlines his leadership lessons and equips the reader with his fundamental management tools. Drucker's resonance reveals that individuals are mortal and ideas are immortal. The discourse substantiates that Peter Drucker is more relevant today and his ideas and insights continue to inspire the world, calling upon management thinkers, scholars, and practitioners to keep his legacy alive and carry it forward to build a better world.

**Research Limitations/Implications:** The manuscript covers knowledge workers and management applying objectives from Peter Drucker's perspective.

## Introduction

"Management is about human beings. Its task is to make people capable of joint performance, to make their strengths effective and their weaknesses irrelevant."

—Peter F. Drucker,  
*The Essential Drucker*

I am an ardent follower of Peter Drucker and it is an honor to share his management ideas and insights. I have been sharing his wisdom with my students and audiences during my leadership development training programs regularly for many years, and most of my books contain excerpts of his knowledge and selected quotes.

I was first influenced by Peter Drucker when I attained an MBA degree in 1990 while serving in the Indian Air Force. I became more enthusiastic and curious whenever I read about him. I realized

that I was being influenced and inspired by his management principles, philosophies, and practices. I read his books and several others offered by his contemporaries detailing his thought processes. It is a coincidence that some of my passions including writing, teaching, and consulting; and hobbies including swimming and mountain hiking have matched with his own, especially as he integrates in his work-life balance. I am also a family-oriented person in a similar vein. He was an avid user of library resources and I emulate his passion for knowledge acquisition. Becoming a management educator was

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my second career the way it became for him. He was passionate about his students the way I am passionate about my students and keep in contact with them telephonically. In this light, I strive to develop one million students as global leaders by 2030.

Peter Drucker was an imaginative thought leader who predicted the birth of the knowledge economy and knowledge workers long ago. He coined several concepts including “management by objectives” (MBO) and “knowledge workers.” He encouraged nonprofits to build better communities and societies. He remarked on nonprofits in his award-winning book, *Managing the Non-Profit Organization: Principles and Practices* as follows: “The ‘non-profit’ institution neither supplies goods or services, nor controls. Its ‘product’ is neither a pair of shoes nor an effective regulation. Its product is a changed human being. The non-profit institutions are human-change agents. Their ‘product’ is a cured patient, a child that learns, a young man or woman has grown into a self-respecting adult; a changed human life altogether.” He added immense value to the discipline of management and is known as the father of “modern management.” He authored 39 books including the award-winning *The Practice of Management*, *The Effective Executive*, *The Essential Drucker*, and *Management Challenges for the 21st Century*. He authored books in diversified genres including social, political, business, and management. He had the uncanny ability to interlink knowledge from different disciplines.

Drucker manifested a multifaceted personality and worked as an employee, educator, author, and advisor before becoming a management guru. He pioneered the concept of decentralization, privatization, and social institutions. He believed in the empowerment of employees and treated employees as valuable assets. He predicted the usage of computers and transition from manual workers to knowledge workers. He predicted the rise of Japan as an industrial power. Ford Motor Company successfully implemented his ideas after World War II. General Electric – under the leadership of Jack Welch – effectively applied his ideas.

Drucker could see what was opaque to others. He envisioned the future which no other management thinker could predict. He received several awards and honors globally for his contributions. *BusinessWeek* remarked, “What John Maynard Keynes is to economics or W. Edwards Deming to quality, Drucker is to management.” Warren<sup>24</sup> said. “He had a way of saying things simply. Peter was far more than the founder of modern management, far more than a brilliant man, one of the greatest minds of the 20th century. He was a great soul. If I summed up Peter’s life in three words, it would be integrity, humility, and generosity... Peter was the only truly Renaissance man I’ve ever known. He had a way of looking at the world in a systems’ view that said it all matters.” After reading Drucker’s first major work, *The End of Economic Man*<sup>25</sup> in 1939, Winston Churchill described Drucker as “one of those writers to whom almost anything can be forgiven because he not only has a mind of his own, but has the gift of starting other minds along a stimulating line of thought.”

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.success.com/article/peter-drucker-the-father-of-management-theory>

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.druckerinstitute.com/peter-druckers-life-and-legacy/>

## **What is Thought Leadership?**

Thought leaders are experts with amazing ideas and insights into their industries and areas. They have a wealth of knowledge and experience. Those who possess, apply, and share it with others excel as thought leaders. Thought leaders are sources of intellectual capital who have risen from the position of knowledge workers. The top politicians and leaders approach thought leaders for intellectual inputs, ideas, and insights. For instance, Warren Bennis consulted American presidents as a thought leader. Thought leadership is defined as the process of engaging thought leaders to create knowledge, grow knowledge, and share knowledge with others for the benefit of society. The knowledge workers and thought leaders are predicted to dominant world governance in guiding the increasing shift from manufacturing sectors to services sectors.

## **Knowledge versus Wealth**

There is often much debate on whether knowledge is superior to money. Knowledge is distributed whereas wealth gets accumulated. Knowledge has many friends while wealth has many foes. Knowledge grows when shared while money decreases when distributed. A person protects wealth while knowledge protects the person. Hence, it is arguable that knowledge is superior to wealth. Furthermore, knowledge is wealth and, in fact, more than wealth. Knowledge makes the world move. The world has so many innovations because of knowledge. It is always the knowledge that precedes money. One can acquire substantial wealth with the addition of more knowledge. Respect can be garnered externally by viewing material possessions upon first impression. However, it is the inner wealth of knowledge that ultimately generates more attention.

One can make money from one's knowledge, not knowledge from money. To make money, the acquisition of knowledge is required; to retain that money, the application of knowledge is expected. Hence, knowledge is superior to wealth. Knowledge is intangible and invaluable while money is mostly tangible and valuable. Knowledge commands true respect while money commands artificial respect. Money produces temporary fame while knowledge establishes a legacy. Above all, money is transient while knowledge remains inculcated. Hence, knowledge is superior to money. For instance, when people who have knowledge encounter those with financial resources, their assets are often interchanged. But the people with knowledge retain their knowledge and gain monetary benefits, again indicating the superior importance of knowledge.

Some entrepreneurs lost their money but their knowledge brought them back on track and ensured their ultimate business success. For instance, renowned entrepreneurs including Richard Branson staged a smart comeback, even though his company sustained financial setbacks for some time. Colleagues would exit upon bankruptcy but these entrepreneurs learned lessons, and with their knowledge, they regained lost ground.

## **Who are Knowledge Workers?**

Knowledge workers are extraordinary workers equipped with amazing ideas, insights, experiences, and judgments. They invent new products and services and can predict

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future technological usages and modes of knowledge acquisition. They are always ahead of the times and technologies. They are the pillars of organizations with the visionary mindset to take their organizations to great heights. Peter Drucker defines them as “high-level employees who apply theoretical and analytical knowledge, acquired through formal education, to develop new products or services.” He emphasized the importance of knowledge workers in mushrooming services sectors. He remarked, “It is the individual knowledge workers, who, in large measure, will determine what the organization of the future will look like and what kind of organization of the future will be successful.”

Future organizations will be led by specialized knowledge workers, unlike the present knowledge workers. Hence, it is essential to transfer knowledge from experienced

professionals to inexperienced individuals within the organization. Presently, knowledge is growing exponentially. There is more demand for specialized knowledge which is likely to change rapidly with advanced technology. Additionally, it has become a major challenge to predict the knowledge as it is a formidable challenge to anticipate where the exact technological means to be deployed. Hence, there is an urgent

“In the knowledge society, the most probable assumption and certainly the assumption on which all organizations have to conduct their affairs is that they need the knowledge worker far more than the knowledge worker needs them.”  
— Peter F. Drucker

need to adopt new tools and techniques to ensure a seamless supply of knowledge in the knowledge pipeline in order to ensure organizational excellence and effectiveness. Future knowledge will be predicated on the volatility in the technology. It is essential to encourage continuous research to forecast future knowledge and technological trends. It is equally essential to encourage employees to learn, unlearn, and relearn quickly to keep pace with rapid global changes.

Knowledge workers are people with know-how in their various fields and selected occupations. They are different from manual workers. In 1959, Peter Drucker coined this concept in his book, *The Age of Discontinuity*, explaining that knowledge workers are the people who primarily work with information and make use of it in the workplace to achieve better performance and productivity. He further added, “The most important, and indeed the truly unique, contribution of management in the 20th Century was the fifty-fold increase in the productivity of the manual worker in manufacturing. The most important contribution management needs to make in the 21st century is similarly to increase the productivity of knowledge work and the knowledge worker.” He predicted that knowledge workers would play a crucial role in the rapid growth of the global economy.

Knowledge workers are the result of the mushrooming services sectors. They capture global attention currently and are the future leaders. They dominate the entire economy especially the services sectors. They are consultants and collaborators rather than contractors and competitors. They know where the sources of revenue originate and

work on them passionately. They ascend the corporate ladder quickly and excel as leaders. They are wise workers who believe in delivering qualitative results and strive for excellence rather than perfection.

With the mushrooming services sectors, there is a need for more knowledge workers who are paid for applying their knowledge and thinking in new, innovative ways. For instance, engineers, scientists, accountants, researchers, educators, authors, consultants, and others emanating from such similar professions belong to the category of knowledge workers. Knowledge workers are typically paid more than others. It is the consultants rather than the contractors who will earn respect and money. They constantly upgrade and update their knowledge through continuous research. Upon consulting companies and gaining exposure to the ground realities, they then investigate the best way to resolve those challenges through their innovation. Hence, consultants are better placed than contractors because they constantly reinvent themselves with changing times and technologies.

The present world expects employees with a unique blend of mindset, toolset, and skillset to deliver goods and services effectively, and it is available only among the knowledge workers who are the leaders – the carriers of knowledge to the next generation. If one wants to grow professionally, to ensure expeditious career growth and access to opportunities, I would argue that one must become a knowledge worker.

### **The Role of Knowledge Workers**

Peter Drucker advised, “Knowledge has to be improved, challenged and increased constantly, or it vanishes.” Hence, knowledge workers must not take their successes and positions for granted because what got them to the present status of knowledge workers may not help them reach the next higher level if they fail to reinvent themselves regularly. They must register where they stand in terms of talents, skills, knowledge, and capabilities at all times and document where they would like to be after two or three years. This reflection and planning provide clarity and helps achieve desired objectives. Knowledge workers must continuously document their experiences and accept feedback regularly.

### **The Role of Organizations**

Peter Drucker said, “All organizations say routinely ‘People are our greatest asset.’ Yet few practices what they preach, let alone truly believe it.” Hence, companies must walk their talk by grooming knowledge workers and identify their expectations and aspirations. Knowledge workers basically look for the right professional ambiance and talented people to collaborate to create more knowledge. They emphasize quick career growth and prefer working in an organizational environment free from politics. Most people think that it is the money the knowledge workers crave, which is fallacious. In fact, authentic knowledge workers separate monetary compensation from access to professional challenges.

Knowledge workers are the backbone of a modern economy and every organization must realize this fact and treat them as assets rather than as costs. Companies must realize

their needs from time to time and meet the same to ensure better performance and productivity. Above all, they must invest heavily to train and groom them as it is beneficial in the long run for both employers and employees.

### Challenges for Coaches

Peter Drucker remarked, “Making knowledge workers productive requires changes in attitude, not only on the part of the individual knowledge worker but on the part of the whole organization.” Therefore, there is a formidable challenge lying ahead for current coaches to manage both the employees and employers to bring out the desired objectives. In addition, the present knowledge workers are typically superior to coaches in terms of knowledge. They are also well ahead of their time. Young knowledge workers (Gen Y) are much more advanced than their older counterparts (Baby Boomers) as they are more adapt to quick thinking and have had a greater exposure to technological advancements. They shift companies and acquire knowledge from multiple domains, synthesizing and creating additional knowledge in the process. Some of the young knowledge workers prefer becoming employers to employees. Hence, managing knowledge workers is a major challenge for them. However, passionate coaches enjoy coaching such knowledgeable coachees.

### Can Everyone Excel as a Knowledge Worker?

Knowledge is not the privilege of a few people. Anybody can acquire knowledge to excel as a knowledge worker. Passion is essential to becoming a knowledge worker. An ability to learn and grow is essential to becoming a knowledge worker. The ability to reinvent with the changing times, predict future requirements, and groom oneself accordingly are essential to excel as a knowledge worker. As long as people have these traits and abilities, they can excel as knowledge workers and anticipate future advancement. Hence, acquiring specialized knowledge, believing in continuous learning, and doing extensive research form a knowledge worker and leader.

“The most valuable assets of a 20th-century company were its production equipment. The most valuable asset of a 21st-century, whether business or non-business, will be its knowledge workers and their productivity.”  
— Peter F. Drucker

### Building a “Knowledge Pipeline” to Create a Better World

A leadership pipeline is commonly understood as when leadership talent is constructed to be prepared for any kind of organizational eventuality. Additionally, with the retirement of baby boomers globally, there is an urgent requirement to train and groom fresh talent to the leadership pipeline well stocked and ready. Talent cannot be allowed to dissipate with knowledge, skills, and abilities; there should not be any vacuum in the skillset and toolset of employees within the organization. Currently, some companies follow the “buddy system” to transfer knowledge from experienced employees to inexperienced employees to keep the knowledge flowing seamlessly within the organization.

## Load Knowledge Pipeline

The employees must have an open mind to acquire knowledge, disseminate knowledge, and share knowledge with others. They must appreciate the fact that what worked in the past and present will not necessarily work in the future. Hence, they must continuously learn and update themselves, and at the same time, share their knowledge with others. Knowledge and wealth should not be confined to one place. Knowledge must be shared and wealth must be distributed to provide meaning to life. If water is stagnant, it becomes foul. If knowledge remains tied to one person, it dies along with the individual and fails to benefit society. Water must continuously flow wherein the freshwater must replace the old water. Similarly, knowledge must be shared where old ideas are replaced by advanced ideas that are more relevant and appropriate to apply to build better organizations and societies.

## Individuals are Mortal and Ideas are Immortal

Joseph L. Badaracco once remarked, “In today’s environment, hoarding knowledge ultimately erodes your power. If you know something very important, the way to get power is by actually sharing it.” Knowledge is not the property of any individual. It is the asset of the intellectuals who acquire it, and it is the magnanimity of intellectuals who share it with others. It is not important whether the intellectual is an Indian, American, Asian, African, European, or from any particular nationality. What is important is the greatness of the intellectuals who share their knowledge with others to build a better society and world. Above all, ideas are more important than individuals because individuals are mortal while ideas are immortal. Hence, adding value in any manner and sharing it with others keeps ideas immortal, and to makes the world a better place to live. Dalai Lama rightly remarked, “Share your knowledge. It’s a way to achieve immortality.”

## Competencies for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Managers

There are tremendous changes and challenges made available by the Fourth Industrial Revolution. It is essential to revise competencies for 21<sup>st</sup>-century managers since they must manage VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity). As outlined in *21 Success Sutras for CEOs*, a manager must emphasize adaptability and flexibility to manage VUCA and be open to learn lessons promptly and make decisions quickly. It is important to note, however, the potential fallibility of decisions; they must constantly adjust to address rapidly changing times and technologies marked by automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI). An authentic manager often must make decisions with limited and imperfect information and should be willing to fail and learn lessons quickly in order to act promptly. S/he must avoid the trappings of complacency as well as information overload. Hence, the adoption and development of both hard and soft skills is imperative. This leader must learn when to advance and when to abandon a course of action. S/he must learn to encounter economic decline, practice continuous dissatisfaction, and invest in the future.

## Developing Strategy in an Unpredictable World

“Management, after all, is people, and businesses are made successful by people, not by plans. Behind each success story in business are men and women who conceived the ideas, developed the strategies, and executed the planned actions.”  
—Kenichi Ohmae, *The Mind of the Strategist*

Managers in the current environment work totally in a different environment which is predictable. However, the managers of tomorrow cannot predict the environment they will have to work in. However, it is expected that they will have to work in an unknown environment without certainty and with fluctuating information which is inadequate to make decisions. Hence, it is necessary to develop a strategy and revise it regularly by emphasizing organizational culture and keeping pace with technology. The manager must execute strategy effectively without

expecting a positive outcome every time as no one can predict where and how technology will advance. Nothing can be taken for granted in an unpredictable world. What worked in the past may not work in the present and what works in the present may not work in the future. Hence, there must be a need for a fundamental reset in the wake of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

## Peter Drucker—Technology, Humanity, and Prosperity

“In the Drucker perspective ... quality of life, technological progress and world peace are all the products of good management ... at root, Drucker is a management Utopian, descended as much from Robert Owen as Max Weber.”  
— Rosabeth Moss Kanter

Peter Drucker emphasized humanity more than his books and theories. He remarked,<sup>26</sup> “What are theories? Nothing. The only thing that matters is how you touch people. Have I given anyone insight? That’s what I want to have done. Insight lasts; theories don’t. And even insight decays into small details, which is how it should be. A few details that have meaning in one’s life are important.” He predicted the increased importance of automation and AI. Technology cannot replace humans as it always remains a servant to humans. Current apprehensions of AI

replacing humans is next to impossible because AI cannot replace human imagination. Imagination is more important than intelligence and knowledge. Humans are gifted with the power of imagination and created automation for human progress and prosperity. However, technology can make a few jobs redundant that are repetitive in nature. In fact, technology will create more employment if used thoughtfully. It is a double-edged sword. Humans must use it for peace and prosperity. Albert Einstein once remarked, “Computers are incredibly fast, accurate and stupid; humans are incredibly slow,

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.inc.com/magazine/19980301/887.html>

inaccurate and brilliant; together they are powerful beyond imagination.” Hence, society must harness technology to achieve productivity and prosperity.

### **Peter Drucker – An Intellectual Guide**

Peter Drucker was against academic arrogance. He made his theories and concepts accessible to the layperson. He practiced the philosophy of “sharing is caring.” He was an intellectual guide whose influence spanned the globe. He emphasized that the important task for top management in the corporation of tomorrow must be to balance three dimensions – economic organization adopted by America, human organization practiced by Japan, and social organization followed by Germany.

Peter Drucker was in a league of his own. It is obvious from his 39 published books and award-winning articles that he will continue to inspire the discipline of management in the future. He was the rarest management thinker who added immense value to the discipline of management with his principles, philosophies, and practices. It is rightly remarked, “There isn’t any Nobel Prize for management thinking. But it’s just as well because it would have been won every year by the same man – Peter Drucker.”

### **Peter Drucker – Leadership Lessons**

Peter Drucker influenced many thinkers including Marshall Goldsmith, Frances Hesselbein, and me. The most salient leadership lessons he taught were: managing time, focusing on core competencies; following other passions to lead a complete life; differentiating between persistence and futility; reinventing constantly; focusing more on achievement than making money; emphasizing volunteerism and working for nonprofit institutions to widen mental horizons; avoiding procrastination; emphasizing excellence; learning to live in an imperfect world and making it better; working from anywhere when knowledge is portable; abandoning old practices systematically; and leaving a legacy for tomorrow.

### **Is Peter Drucker Relevant in Today’s World?**

“Management by objectives works if you first think through your objectives. Ninety percent of the time you haven’t.” —Peter F. Drucker

The concept of “Management by Objectives” (MBO) is relevant as it helps set objectives to accomplish them. It saves time, money, energy, and organizational resources. Several global organizations benefitted from it. *The Economist* quoted, “MBO is one of the rational schools of management’s successful products.”

With the rapid growth in technology, the information is inundated. The people can leverage it to excel as knowledge leaders. Most of his ideas and insights are relevant even today because his research was based on future requirements in the discipline of management.

### **Peter Drucker – Integrity, Humility, and Generosity**

Peter Drucker believed that management was an interdisciplinary subject, not confined to quantitative statistics in measuring profits as an outcome, but applicable to social missions and a catalyst for innovations to be delivered by people.

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“Organization has created an employee society... Knowledge workers are the new and growing majority – both the main cost and the main resource of all developed societies.”  
— Peter F. Drucker

Peter Drucker offered tools and techniques to become one's own successor as follows: diversify efforts and outputs; develop a powerful personal brand; maintain a global outlook and worldview; remain relevant; produce a consistently impressive body of work; and creative work that benefits others.

Drucker's management ideas and insights are pearls. He was a visionary leader who was far ahead of his time. He emphasized the significance

of soft skills long ago when only hard skills were highly respected. He preferred soft leadership to hard leadership. He valued time and emphasized human resources, work-life balance, customers, and nonprofits. He is more relevant today and his ideas and insights continue to inspire the world irrespective of the discipline. He was the rarest management thinker who added immense value to the discipline of management with his philosophy, principles, and practices. The management thinkers across the world, cutting across their national borders salute this management legend for his passion, vision, and contribution.

### Peter Drucker's Legacy

“No institution can possibly survive if it needs geniuses or supermen to manage it. It must be organized in such a way as to be able to get along under a leadership composed of average human beings.” —Peter Drucker

Peter Drucker has left his legacy because he diversified his efforts and outputs; developed a powerful personal brand; maintained a global outlook and worldview; remained relevant; produced a consistently impressive body of work and created work that benefitted others. The following are reasons that exemplified him from other management thinkers. First, he could predict the future based on the prevailing trends and technologies. He was gifted with the rare ability to offer simple solutions to complex ideas. Second, he underwent trials and tribulations in his early stage,

compelling him to locate to London to work as a journalist and subsequently move to the United States as a correspondent for the *Financial Times* in 1937. Third, he had the innate ability to adapt and embrace change. Fourth, he had the knack for synthesizing knowledge because of his diversified experiences and education. Fifth, he had connections globally. Sixth, timing mattered most for him. Above all, he had a universal network.

### Keep Peter Drucker's Legacy Alive!

Peter Drucker's efforts and intellectual contributions enabled management to achieve sanctity as a discipline globally. No other management thinker has had such a pervasive impact with his ideals and ideas. This is a testimony about his legacy. His ideas and insights are immortal. He is more relevant today than ever before. Although the world

has changed drastically due to the rapid growth in technology, his ideas on humanity, technology, and prosperity are still relevant. That is the legacy Peter Drucker has left for us! And the onus lies with us to keep his legacy alive and carry it forward to build a better world.

“The basic economic resource – the means of production – is no longer capital, nor natural resources, nor labour. It is and will be knowledge.” — Peter F. Drucker

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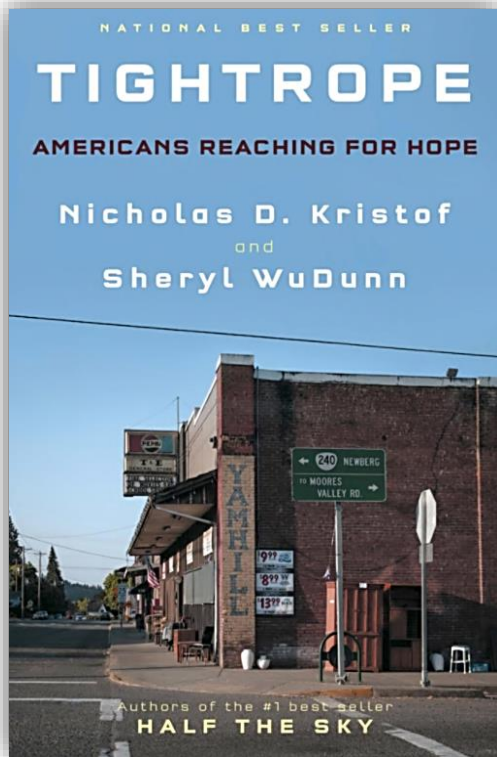
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## Book Review



# Tightrope Americans Reaching for Hope

**Authors:** Nicholas D. Kristof & Sheryl WuDunn

**Reviewer:** Noreen Ohlrich, Project Staff  
Associate — Research Foundation for the  
State University of New York

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<https://www.amazon.com/Tightrope-Americans-Reaching-Nicholas-Kristof/dp/0525655085>

Pulitzer Prize winners Nicholas Kristof (*New York Times* columnist) and Sheryl WuDunn (former *Times* business editor) begin their most recent non-fiction work, *Tightrope – Americans Reaching for Hope*, with a dedication to “all those passing through the inferno.” Such Dantesque imagery proves to be a purposeful preparation for what is to come. This inferno is referenced throughout the book through poignant narratives of “unimaginable calamity” (p. 7). The calamity is attributed to the disintegration of American working-class communities; a “wrong turn” taken by American leadership due to their “malign neglect” for over the last half-century. Indeed, this book is an urgent call for authentic and transformational leadership that has “...a coherent plan to address the challenges” (p. 10).

*Tightrope*’s twenty chapters delve into these challenges. “Wisdom quotes” cited by notable historians, political figures, artists, and children’s book characters set the tone for each chapter. The authors describe the narratives as “profoundly personal” due to their own ties to Yamhill, northwestern Oregon — the book’s key area of focus — “...where the grasses of the Willamette Valley merge into the forests of the coastal range, where fields of grass seed, golden wheat and Christmas trees, and orchards abounding with apples, cherries and hazelnuts, blanket the earth to the horizon” (p. 5). This portrait that may appear ideal to many is shattered by brutal revelations of misaligned policies linked

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to the deterioration of the region's social fabric, crumbling of its family structures, and disillusionment of too many of its individuals. While Yamhill lies at the heart of this book, similar situations are described across the country where "for much of working class America, of whatever complexion – the dream is now dead" (p. 12). The second half of the book draws more predominantly on stories of hope, resilience, and resurgence that shed light on living examples of ways to move forward and are conveyed with a heightened sense of empathy and compassion.

Chapters 1-9 succeed in conceptualizing the ongoing problem of the decaying working-class by historicizing the collapse of upward mobility. The first chapter offers a gripping introduction to the Knapp family situation in 1973. This reviewer found this opening chapter – and heart of the book – introducing readers to the "kids on the number 6 school bus," riveting. The book's lead author, Nick Kristof, was one of those kids. The tragedy is that "about one-fourth of the kids who rode with Nick on the bus are dead from drugs, suicide, alcohol, obesity, reckless accidents and other pathologies" (p. 8). The stories behind these children and their familial demise begin with Dee and Gary Knapp together with their five children. Gary is described as a "decent fellow when sober, a brute when drunk" (p. 3). The flames of violence and abuse that prove to scorch this family can shake readers to the core. Emotions may be wrenched while reading about Dee hiding from Gary's gunshots in the fields; worrying about him taking his anger out on their children...engendering the loathing they already had for him. The paradox between such destructive circumstances many working-class families face en route to the American dream is examined. For instance, in the late 1970s, the Knapps were well on their way towards achieving middle-class status due to Gary's union job and Dee's employment as a tractor driver. They were the first in their migrant-farmer families to own a home equipped with electricity and plumbing (Dee is said to have laid the pipes herself). The opportunity for their children to take the #6 bus to school was a privilege that neither Dee's nor Gary's families ever had. Despite this, only one out of the five Knapp siblings survived adulthood. Four of them "wandered off course... into a dark wood" (p. 12) by dying from drugs, alcohol, and crime-related conditions that many Americans and their ascendants increasingly face.

The book cites alarming statistics and rising trends of individual destruction. The authors claim that affluent Americans continue to ignore these phenomena. American politicians, journalists, religious leaders, business executives, and educational leaders are criticized for disregarding the growing problem of disintegrating working-class communities, and even blaming the tens of millions of victims themselves for their predicament.

Chapter two is grounded in data-driven arguments as well as references to political debates and research concerning America's world leadership claims. The medial if not low rankings of the U.S. compared to other developed countries concerning internet and clean water access parallel similar low scores in personal safety, life expectancy, and high school enrollment. Leaders of religious and public social institutions are accused of lacking the cohesive tools and positions of empowerment they once exercised. Weakening capabilities are attributed to institutional systems pushed to focus more on preserving the organization rather than attending to the needs of individuals for whom it

was designed to serve. These factually-based arguments are positioned alongside stories of “escape artists,” accountings of victims of incestual rape and similar severe childhood traumas who managed to avoid substance abuse and criminal exploits. Comparing such apples with oranges may open one’s eyes to the notion that problems working-class people face may have more to do with limited opportunities rather than a lack of ability. A call for returning to more compassionate, person-driven policies is further substantiated in Chapter three’s narrative regarding the experiences Kevin Green — another former #6 school bus kid who was once talented, driven, and lively. Failures of the American educational system are further underlined by Green’s entry into adulthood; the problem of limited vocational education avenues for children who are not academically inclined pair with the disappearance of blue-collar union jobs as opposed to the rise of more “aristocratic,” white-collar opportunities. Many children made to drop out of high school like Green did love to work, but faced diminishing opportunities. The story of his eventual destruction is linked to his low sense of self-worth due to his inability to find decent-paying work.

The authors further underscore short-sighted, systemic policies. For instance, Chapter five presents an historical overview of how America once fashioned trail-blazing economic and social policies that created more opportunities to a much greater segment of society. Much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were riddled with social safety net programs and job initiatives that other countries later emulated and many formally adopted. The authors assert that in the 1970s “America went off track, beginning a nearly half-century drift in the wrong direction” (p. 55). This is around the same time that narratives about people “lifting themselves up by the bootstraps” became popularized, shifting from a sense of collective responsibility. Much of the phenomenon was ascribed to the rise in income disparities in the U.S. compared to Canada and Europe; the growth in wealth accrual in the U.S. occurred for only the top one percent — and the notable decline in American educational leadership was evident throughout the nation. Income and tax impediments that frustrate and alienate many Americans equipped with only high school diplomas were not similarly constraining upon previous generations.

The current political environment is accused of taking advantage of grievances associated with such impediments. Chapters 5-8 offer meaningful arguments about the resulting increase in polarization, racism, and disillusionment gripping the country. They draw on inter-racial and inter-state parallels pertaining to “the suffering as well as a uniquely American story about betrayal” regarding the role of big U.S. pharma, government, the nation’s incarceration system, and the government’s war on drugs. Contrasting scenarios of American approaches to criminalization versus educational solutions other countries have applied prove staggering. The authors provide examples of remediation – incidences eliciting inspiration and constituting messages of hope. One such example concerns the account of a police officer who refuses to give up on outreach efforts extended to drug offenders. Realities regarding the despair and physical agony faced by addicts during withdrawal as well as the bleak futures ahead of them deserve the attention the book provides. Chapter 9 draws on prior chapters’ stories,

streamlining them back to Dee and Keylan Knapp — the sole survivors of what the authors refer to as people experiencing the “deaths of despair.”

Readers may appreciate the way Chapters 10-20 focus more on interventions, proposed solutions, and paradigmatic philanthropic programs. Replicating successful anti-recidivism, addiction diversion, foster care, immigration, and religious support programs proves critical. Inspiring leaders to implement systems in which educators and school counselors want to walk that extra mile to address the diverse needs of at-risk children is similarly imperative. Stories about ordinary people driven to create successful private and public collaboratives for healthcare outreach may galvanize readers. The truth about homelessness reveals that it is a social disease that affects both the unemployed and the employed. Solutions such as pressing for financial literacy curricula for school-age children are exemplified. Chapter 14’s story of a woman who was shot in the face by a juvenile later supporting his release from jail after hearing about the abuse he suffered is notably compelling. That example provides an important backdrop into the book’s discussions about pervasive corruption in for-profit prison systems and private juvenile detention centers. Chapter 16-17’s commentaries about political “lefts that talk left, but walk right” versus “rights that talk right, but walk left” when concerning family values reveals complexities seldom acknowledged.

The reader is further introduced to the children and grandchildren of the Knapps and others on that #6 school bus who have experienced their own problems with drugs, alcohol, and the law, demonstrating how “each generation inherits disadvantage” (p. 210). Evidence linking adverse childhood experiences (ACE) to “toxic stress” that is said to have a physiological effect on the brain’s anatomy is explained. This phenomenon led to the initiation of a California-based “public education campaign that has so far reached 31 million families with messages about childhood adversity, how it impairs health and how to heal” (p. 219). The campaign is being led by a former California surgeon general who facilitated the enactment of a state law providing screenings for ACEs — “a model that all states should adopt” (p. 219). Annette Drove proves to be the admired heroine of Chapter 18 as she opened a successfully-funded after-school program for teenagers at risk. The celebration of such success comes with the necessary reminder that, for whatever reason, government is still more willing to pay for incarceration rather than initiatives to actually prevent the commission of a criminal act.

The book’s final pages solidify its arguments for solutions driven by providing more opportunities for working-class communities. Examples of existing and developing initiatives for high-school dropouts in different states are extolled in their details. Commensurate with this theme, the final chapter is appropriately titled “America regained.” However, *regaining America* may seem more appropriate considering the substantial work and resources necessary to create and implement the solutions the authors promote, namely (1) high-quality early childhood programs, (2) universal high school graduation, (3) universal health coverage, (4) elimination of unwanted pregnancies, (5) a monthly child allowance, (6) an end to homelessness for children, (7) baby bonds to help build savings, and (8) a right-to-work bill.

While the nation is slowly getting there, there is much to do. The appendix lists “ten steps you can take in the next ten minutes to make a difference” that are not only insightful, but realizable in this reviewer’s opinion.

I highly recommend this powerful book, and pour my gratitude out to the brave individuals who have opened my eyes to their dynamic realities. Their life experiences can only prove to have a transformative effect on policy makers and scholars looking for avenues to advocate for change.

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### About the Reviewer



Noreen Ohlrich is a researcher and adult educator with over 10 years of experience developing programs that serve vulnerable populations. She earned her BA from the New York Institute of Technology, and MA from the University of Wales, UK before completing her EdD at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Noreen was awarded with distinction for her overseas doctoral research exploring the workforce integration experiences of migrant South-Asian women in Germany. A current affiliate of the SUNY Research Foundation, she now looks forward to furthering her research into the examination of human trauma, resilience, and the role of American faith-based organizations.

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